

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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84 killed in France terrorism attack

Associated Press

NICE, France — French leaders extended the country's 8-month-old state of emergency Friday and vowed to deploy thousands of police reservists on the streets after a Tunisian man drove a truck through crowds celebrating Bastille Day in Nice, killing 84 people and wounding 202 others.

Thursday night's massacre of pedestrians leaving a fireworks display along the southern city's famed boulevard ended only after police killed the armed attacker in a hail of bullets.

Video shot by witnesses shows the truck coming under police gunfire as it drives through an intersection along the palm tree-lined Promenade des Anglais, which had been turned into a pedestrian walkway for the independence day celebrations. Crowds flee in panic, taking shelter in shops or hotels or leaping off the elevated pavement onto the beach below. Police finally surround the stationary truck and fatally shoot its driver.

Police identified the attacker as Mohamed Bouhlel, 31, a Nice resident and delivery driver, and said he had drawn a gun on them. The truck's front windshield was riddled with bullets, Bouhlel's body slumped inside.

Chief prosecutor Francois Molins said police risked their own lives trying to stop the truck as it traveled almost 1½ miles down the promenade.

Molins said Bouhlel's estranged wife was arrested in Nice on Friday, while Bouhlel narrowly avoided being put behind bars months before the attack. He said Bouhlel had received a six-month prison sentence in March for a conviction for assault with a weapon, but other legal officials said his sentence was suspended because it was his first conviction. The weapon used was a plank of

Texas father, son, 11, among attack victims

The Washington Post

Two Americans from Lakeway, Texas, were killed in France when a truck struck a crowd celebrating Bastille Day in Nice.

Sean Copeland, 51, and his son, Brodie, 11, were among the at least 84 people killed in the apparent terrorist attack in Nice.

"We are heartbroken and in shock over the loss of Brodie Copeland, an amazing son and brother who lit up our lives, and Sean Copeland, a wonderful husband and father," Jess Davis, a friend who is speaking for the family, said in a statement to The Washington Post. "They are so loved."

The State Department confirmed that two U.S. citi-

zens were killed in the attack in the south of France, although it did not name the victims.

"We express our sincere condolences to the family and friends of those killed," spokesman John Kirby said in a statement. Kirby said the State Department is "providing all possible consular assistance."

The Copelands were on a family vacation that had taken them from Pamplona to Barcelona in Spain and then to the French Riviera city of Nice, Davis told the American-Statesman.

Kim Copeland, along with Maegan, 29, and Austin, 22, survived, Davis told the Post. She said they are still in Nice.

wood against another driver after a traffic accident.

Witnesses said Bouhlel first crashed into crowds near the five-star Hotel Negresco, then rolled slowly down an otherwise empty road chased by police on foot and, possibly, one on a motorcycle.

German tourist Richard Gutjahr filmed the moment when the unidentified motorcyclist sped alongside the truck, hopping a curb to try to grab hold of the driver's door as two police officers on foot nearby fired a single shot each at the driver. The motorcyclist fell to the ground, coming within inches of being struck by truck tires that partly crushed the motorcycle, but got up and briefly climbed

aboard the side of the accelerating truck before jumping off again.

The truck surged through an intersection into screaming crowds, where Gutjahr could hear the final confrontation involving 15 to 20 seconds of gunfire.

"Police were everywhere in town for the day. They clearly saw he was a danger because that truck should never have been on the road," Gutjahr said.

Damien Allemand, a journalist for the Nice-Matin newspaper, said the fireworks display had finished and the crowd was dispersing when they heard noises and cries.

"A fraction of a second later, an enormous, white truck came

along at a crazy speed, turning the wheel to mow down the maximum number of people," he wrote. "I saw bodies flying like bowling pins along its route. Heard noises, cries that I will never forget."

On video, one person could be heard yelling, "Help my mother, please!" A pink girl's bicycle lay overturned by the side of the road.

No group has claimed responsibility for the carnage, but French officials called it an undeniable act of terrorism. The assault on revelers rocked a nation still dealing with the aftermath of two attacks in Paris last year that killed 147 people and were claimed by the Islamic State extremist group.

"France was struck on the day of its national holiday, July 14, the symbol of liberty," French President Francois Hollande said as he denounced "this monstrosity."

Flags were lowered to half-staff in Nice, Paris, Brussels and many capitals across Europe. Hollande announced a three-month extension to the state of emergency imposed after the deadly Nov. 13 attacks on Paris, and the government declared three days of national mourning to begin Saturday.

"Terrorism is a threat that weighs heavily upon France and will continue to weigh for a long time," Prime Minister Manuel Valls said. "We are facing a war that terrorism has brought to us. The goal of terrorists is to instill fear and panic. And France is a great country, and a great democracy, that will not allow itself to be destabilized."

But Hollande faced public anger after traveling to Nice, 430 miles south of Paris, to offer his condolences. He visited wounded people in two hospitals, including one where officials had treated about 50 children and teenagers for a wide range of injuries.

Biden pays visit to crew of carrier Stennis at sea

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

ABOARD THE USS JOHN C. STENNIS — Vice President Joe Biden told the crew of the USS John C. Stennis aircraft carrier Thursday that the region and world depend on them to continue enforcing international norms and laws in the Pacific to maintain stability and prosperity.

“I’m told this is the first time an American vice president has ever been aboard one of our carriers at sea in the Western Pacific,” Biden told hundreds of crewmembers gathered in a hangar. “But I guarantee you, it will not be the last. We’re going to be present in the region, and we’re going to be active in the region — as long as all of you are alive.”

The Stennis is among the many Navy ships in Hawaii for the biennial Rim of the Pacific exercise, in which 26 nations

are participating. The carrier spent some of its past six months of deployment in the South China Sea, where tensions have risen over territorial disputes between China and several nations.

Biden arrived on the Stennis via an Osprey in the afternoon after spending the morning in Honolulu with his counterparts from Japan and South Korea. They discussed their trilateral partnership in the region in relation to recent North Korean provocations and tensions in the South China Sea.

Biden told reporters that when the three nations stand united on such issues as human rights or to address threats such as climate change or the spread of communicable diseases, “we amplify our input.”

“There’s power in unity,” he said. “It shows all the other nations of the region that they don’t stand alone.”

Carter slams defense budget, warns of veto

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Ash Carter blasted a House budget plan to drain the anti-Islamic State war fund in 2017 to pay for more troops, training and new equipment.

In a blistering letter issued Thursday, Carter warned the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee that the use of war money for base budget spending is his “most urgent concern” because it could cause funding for troops fighting overseas to run dry in April.

Carter also renewed a veto threat that has hung over the House plan since it was unveiled earlier this year.

“By gambling with warfighter funds, the bill risks the

safety of our men and women fighting to keep America safe, undercuts stable planning and efficient use of taxpayer dollars, dispirits troops and their families, baffles our allies, and emboldens our enemies,” Carter wrote to Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, chairman of the Armed Services Committee.

Congress has painted itself into a corner with the defense budget by passing mandatory federal spending cuts. The House plan crafted by Thornberry and his committee attempts to skirt the limits on defense spending by pulling \$18 billion from the overseas war fund — a pot of money exempt from the mandatory cuts — and using it to pay for what Thornberry says is a growing gap in training, aircraft and ships.

Sailor gets 2½ years of hard labor for rape

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE

AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A U.S. sailor must serve 2½ years of hard labor for raping an intoxicated Japanese woman at a Naha hotel, an incident that sparked anti-base protests and contributed to tightened liberty restrictions on Okinawa.

Seaman Apprentice Justin Castellanos, 24, was sentenced Friday by a three-judge Naha District Court panel. His family was required to pay \$21,789 in restitution to the victim, in addition to \$2,842 from the U.S. military. Both amounts have been paid, officials said.

Prosecutors had sought a four-year prison term, but the chief judge said a lesser sentence was accepted for the corpsman, who is assigned to Camp Schwab, because he had pleaded guilty and had shown remorse for his actions.

Judges also said the woman was partly to blame for becoming incapacitated and passing out in the hallway by the sailor’s room.

“I am sorry for what I have done,” Castellanos said June 27

during closing arguments. “My heart is filled with regret.”

He also said his required sex offender registration was a stain he would forever have to work to overcome.

Castellanos’ attorney said his client does not plan to appeal the decision.

Castellanos pleaded guilty May 27 to finding the female tourist from Fukuoka passed out in the hallway of the hotel where he was staying. He took her into his room and raped her. When she woke up and found a stranger next to her in bed, she cried out for help, which awoke her date in a nearby room.

Castellanos left the room with his belongings to seek help from a friend but returned to the hotel, where he was arrested. The victim’s DNA was detected on his body.

The incident sparked anti-base protests and contributed to tightened liberty restrictions for servicemembers on the tiny southern Japanese island.

Castellanos will serve his sentence at Yokosuka Prison in Yokosuka, Japan, where other convicted U.S. military personnel are incarcerated.

Navy chief to visit China

BY TARA COPP

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Adm. John Richardson, the chief of naval operations, will visit China next week to discuss South China Sea security issues, the Navy announced Thursday.

Richardson will spend three days visiting with the People’s Liberation Army Navy in China and will meet with his counterpart, Adm. Wu Shengli, according to a Navy news release.

In addition to the South China Sea, the admirals are expected to discuss other, less

controversial topics, including the recent joint Rim of the Pacific exercises.

Richardson will be in Beijing and Qingdao from Sunday to Wednesday. This is his first trip to China.

According to the Navy statement, Richardson will visit the Chinese Navy’s submarine academy and will tour the aircraft carrier Liaoning.

On Tuesday, a United Nations arbitration court ruled against China’s claims of right to develop a string of man-made islands in the South China Sea.

Miller, Broncos come to terms

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colorado — Von Miller has agreed to a blockbuster \$114.5 million contract with the Denver Broncos that includes \$70 million in guarantees and makes him the highest-paid nonquarterback in NFL history.

The Super Bowl MVP accepted the six-year offer two hours before Friday's deadline, tweeting a photo of himself with the caption "For Life."

Miller and agent Joby Branion parlayed patience into a record-breaking deal in terms of overall value and guarantees. Last month, Miller's camp rejected the \$38.5 million the Broncos offered in guarantees, and Miller threatened to sit out the season barring a long-term deal.

Now, he'll lead Denver's title defense instead.

Miller's agent, Joby Branion, and the Broncos agreed to the parameters of a six-year, \$114.5 million deal last month but Miller's camp held out for more guaranteed money.

The June offer included \$38.5 million in guarantees over the first two years, another \$1.3 million in workout bonuses, plus the chance to earn another \$19.5 million in guaranteed money in 2018.

General manager John Elway reignited talks last week when he offered to move up guaranteed money in Year 3 to next March.

This week, he upped the overall guaranteed money.

The latest proposal checked off all the boxes for Miller — the biggest overall contract for a non-QB in league history, most guaranteed money for an NFL defensive player and a benchmark deal that raises the bar for the next superstar.

Franchise players have to sign long-term deals by Friday. Without a signed contract delivered to NFL headquarters by the deadline, they would only be allowed to play the 2016 season for their tender, \$14,129,000 in Miller's case.

That's something Miller had insisted he wouldn't do. Last month, he threatened to sit out the season absent a blockbuster deal.

The star of Super Bowl 50 skipped the Broncos' offseason program, only joining his teammates for their White House visit and ring ceremony. But Miller stayed in tip-top shape, in part by participating in "Dancing With The Stars."

Miller predicted peaceful contract negotiations 12 hours after spearheading Denver's 24-10 win over Carolina in the Super Bowl when his two sack-strips of Cam Newton led to both of Denver's touchdowns.

But things got thorny last month. After details of Denver's June 7 offer became public, Miller cropped Elway from a photo on his Instagram account and then said there was no way he'd play this season on the franchise tag.

As negotiations reignited, Miller's teammates expressed confidence things would work out.

"I think it will happen because me and Elway went down to the wire last year," said receiver Demaryius Thomas, who signed a \$70 million deadline deal (including \$43.5 million guaranteed) in 2015 with only about 30 minutes to spare.

Concussion symptoms sideline Earnhardt

Associated Press

LOUDON, N.H. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. has dropped out of the Sprint Cup race Sunday at New Hampshire Motor Speedway because of symptoms of a concussion.

Earnhardt was evaluated in Charlotte, N.C., this week and doctors did not clear him to race. Hendrick Motorsports said Thursday it had no timetable for his return.

Alex Bowman will drive in his place. Earnhardt was involved in a 22-car wreck in Daytona this month and also wrecked last month at Michigan International Speedway. He said he was feeling fine last week and thought the problem was allergies. When that didn't help, he met with a neurologist.

Earlier this year, Earnhardt pledged his brain to researchers looking into the connection between concussions and traumatic brain injuries.

"I'm looking forward to treatment with the goal of getting back in the race car when the doctors say I'm ready," Earnhardt said.

Earnhardt Jr. at least twice in his career hid concussion symptoms to avoid being removed from his car. In 2012, he sought medical attention several days after a crash at Talladega because of symptoms he knew were concussion-related. During that examination, it was determined he'd suffered two concussions in six weeks and was sidelined for two weeks of healing.

The next year, NASCAR required drivers to submit a baseline neurocognitive assessment. When a driver in NASCAR can't return his damaged car to the garage, a trip to the care center is required, and under a new three-step process, if a driver shows any indication of a head injury they go immediately to a hospital. Concussed drivers must be cleared by a neurologist or neurosurgeon before they can get back in a race car.

Earnhardt, 41, is winless this season and 13th in the standings. Because he will not start every race, Earnhardt will need a waiver from NASCAR to compete in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship, if he's meets other eligibility requirements.

Hendrick Motorsports will provide an update next week on Earnhardt's status for the July 24 race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

"I'm proud of Dale for standing up," team owner Rick Hendrick said. "The number-one priority is his health, so we're going to give him all the time he needs. We completely support the decision by the doctors and will be ready to go win races when he's 100 percent. In the meantime, we have full confidence in Greg (Ives) and the team, and we know they'll do a great job."

Bowman, 23, has not raced in the Cup series this season and had no top-10 finishes in 71 starts in the 2014-2015 seasons.

Brady to drop appeal, will serve 4-game 'Deflategate' suspension

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Tom Brady said on Friday he will stop fighting his suspension for "Deflategate," a scandal that tarnished the reputation of one of the sport's best players, tested the authority of Commissioner Roger Goodell and exposed rifts inside the league office.

"It has been a challenging 18 months and I have made the difficult decision to no longer proceed with the legal process," the New England Patriots quarterback said in a Facebook post. "I'm going to work hard to be the best player I can be for the New England Patriots and I look forward to having the opportunity to return to the field this fall."

Brady's decision comes two days after his case was turned aside by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. His only remaining hope had been the U.S. Supreme Court, which accepts about 1 percent of the appeals submitted.

Originally suspended four games after the league concluded the Patriots intentionally underinflated the footballs used in the AFC Championship game in early 2015, Brady embarked on an odyssey through arbitration and the federal courts to clear his name. A federal judge overturned the suspension, allowing Brady to play last season, but the 2nd Circuit reinstated it this spring.

The NFL Players Association said on Friday it could still ask the nation's highest court to hear the case. But without a stay of the suspension, Brady would still sit out the first four games of the season. Backup Jimmy Garoppolo is expected to start for New England when they open on Sept. 11 at the Arizona Cardinals.

"This decision was made in the interest

of certainty and planning for Tom prior to the New England Patriots season," the union said in a statement. "We will continue to review all of our options."

An NFL spokesman said the league would have no comment.

In other NFL news:

■ The Massachusetts medical examiner's office has ruled that former New England Patriots defensive lineman Ron Brace likely died from an irregular heartbeat combined with a heart condition caused by high blood pressure.

An agency spokesman confirmed the cause of death Wednesday.

The manner of death was ruled natural and is not considered suspicious.

Brace died at his family's Springfield, Massachusetts, home in April. He was 29.

The 6-foot-3, 330-pound Brace grew up in Springfield and attended Burncoat High School in Worcester, Massachusetts. After a standout career at Boston College, he was drafted by the Patriots in the second round of the 2009 draft and played 39 games in four seasons with the team.

He is survived by his parents and six siblings.

■ The NFL has suspended Bills running back Karlos Williams the first four games of the season for a drug offense.

Bills officials announced the suspension Friday but did not specify how Williams violated the league's substance abuse policy.

Williams had a breakout rookie season in 2015, complementing LeSean McCoy. Williams had nine combined touchdowns rushing and receiving and averaged 5.6 yards per attempt.

The league said in a statement that Williams will be able to return after the Bills play the Patriots Oct. 2.

Bills officials say they're disappointed

in Williams and will work to help him "in making better decisions moving forward."

■ Buffalo Bills running back Jonathan Williams has been arrested in northwest Arkansas on a misdemeanor charge of driving while intoxicated.

Fayetteville police say an officer pulled over the former Razorback early Thursday after seeing his vehicle weave within its lane. A police report says Williams told the officer that he had one beer but he refused to take a blood-alcohol test, citing previous advice from his agent. Williams was booked in the Washington County jail and released two hours later.

Williams was a fifth-round pick this year for the Bills after sitting out his senior season at Arkansas with a torn ligament in his foot. At Arkansas, Williams had 2,321 yards rushing and 16 touchdowns and added 345 yards receiving and six touchdowns in 36 career games.

■ The Indianapolis Colts have commissioned city firefighter and artist Ryan Feeney to create a statue of former Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning.

The Colts say the statue will be placed outside Lucas Oil Stadium next year. Manning was quarterback of the Colts for 14 seasons, leading them to a Super Bowl title, and retired after playing four seasons with the Denver Broncos, leading them to a Super Bowl win last season.

Feeney is founder of Indy Art Forge and has created numerous works around Indianapolis, including the Peace Dove sculpture for the Indianapolis library, the Fallen Deputy Memorial in front of the Marion County Jail and the bronze eagle at the Indianapolis 9-11 Memorial.



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'Super' homecoming?

Hawks' Howard ready to prove he can be elite player again

BY GEORGE HENRY
Associated Press

ATLANTA — Dwight Howard watched Kent Bazemore choke up with emotion and soon did the same.

Returning to Atlanta means a lot.

"My prayers are answered," Howard said. "I'm home. I'm with my family, so thank you."

Howard has a new team, a new jersey number and a fresh start in his hometown.

After five mostly disappointing years with Houston and the Los Angeles Lakers after leaving Orlando, Howard says this time will be different. Atlanta is where he belongs.

The Hawks hosted a homecoming Wednesday for Howard, a three-time NBA Defensive Player of the Year, and welcomed back Bazemore at a youth recreation center in southwest Atlanta where Howard grew up. The gymnasium was packed with children, family members and friends.

This was all about a new beginning for Howard, who has switched his number from No. 12 to No. 8 for biblical inspiration. In the Bible, number eight signifies resurrection and regeneration. Howard says the number will motivate him as he gets in shape and changes his outlook

on life this summer.

"One of the things biblically is the purging of the heart and throughout the years there are things that have happened behind closed doors that it really hardened my heart towards different situations," Howard later told reporters. "I really have to purge my heart and come at basketball in a different manner. I was very upset with how things turned out and what people were saying. I hardened my heart towards everybody."

Orlando drafted Howard No. 1 overall out of Southwest Atlanta Christian School in 2004. He became one of the NBA's elite big men over the next few years, leading the Magic to the 2009 NBA Finals and ranking first in rebounds for five seasons and ranking second in another.

But Howard's time in central Florida ended bitterly after a falling out with coach Stan Van Gundy. He joined Kobe Bryant for one difficult season with the Lakers and slipped occasionally into mediocrity over his last three years with Houston.

The Hawks, who have signed him to a three-year, \$70.5 million contract, believed the time was right to bring Howard aboard.

"He can have a huge, positive impact," coach and team president Mike Budenholzer said. "He can take us to another level if he and everybody are kind of playing and understanding their roles. We feel like it can be

special."

Budenholzer doesn't seem concerned that Howard is step back offensively compared Al Horford, a longtime fan favorite who left in free agency for Boston.

Budenholzer compared Howard's inside presence somewhat to retired San Antonio center Tim Duncan. Howard doesn't have Duncan's or Horford's shooting touch, but Budenholzer said Howard's 6-foot-10, 265-pound frame is ideal for what the Hawks want to accomplish on both ends of the court.

"He's more of a traditional center," Budenholzer said. "It's been clear he's been one of the top defenders in our league for a long time. Offensively, he's somebody who's a presence inside, who's putting pressure on the rim whether it be in pick-and-rolls or post-ups. It will probably be something more like what San Antonio had for the majority of time I was there" as an assistant coach.

Howard cried when it was his turn to speak.

"This building is where I spent a lot of time working on my game and wanting it to make it to the NBA," Howard said. "This brings back chills. This area was home for me. My school is two minutes away."

"Every morning at 4 a.m., my dad and my cousin were back there with me on the track, trying to make it to the NBA. It's great. A man told me, 'If you want to get back to the top, you've got to go back to your roots.'"

Mattingly: Marlins not satisfied with solid half

Associated Press

MIAMI — Thanks to an All-Star ace, a solid bullpen and an abundance of .300 hitters, the Miami Marlins can savor their best record at the All-Star break since 1997.

First-year Marlins manager Don Mattingly said his job is to make sure his young team isn't satisfied with what it has accomplished so far.

"That's why they brought me in," said Mattingly, who led the Los Angeles Dodgers to division titles in 2013-15. "I'm very happy with the club, but I think there's more in there. You get the feeling that everybody is really excited the club is doing this well. There is just another level, and I think our guys have it in them."

The Marlins begin the second half of the season Friday with a record of 47-41 and are tied with the New York Mets for second place in the NL East, six games behind the Washington Nationals.

"Winning the division is our goal," Mattingly said. "The wild card is not something you really want to talk about. I'd rather be leading by six than be down by six, but there's enough time and we've got a good enough club."

That's heady stuff for a franchise that was 38-51 at the break last season, hasn't been the playoffs since 2003 and has never won a division title.

Here are reasons a first-place finish might happen in 2016, or might not:

Offensive upgrade: 2015 NL batting and stolen base champion Dee Gordon is expected to return July 28 from an 80-game suspension for a positive drug test. He will move into the leadoff spot for a lineup with five players batting over .300 at the break, the most in the majors since 1999. That does not include fourth outfielder Ichiro Suzuki, who is batting a

team-high .335 and is 10 hits from 3,000.

Gordon would not be eligible to play in the postseason.

Jose's limitations: Jose Fernandez hasn't pitched a full season since his rookie year in 2013, and the Marlins plan to limit him to about 180 innings. He's at 107 1/3 already, so he won't make his next start until week, giving him at least seven days' rest.

Fernandez is also expected to skip a turn later this year, with the goal of having him still available in late September.

Starter needed: Contention has made the Marlins buyers for a change as the trade deadline approaches, and they're shopping for a starter to shore up a rotation that's shaky after Fernandez.

As usual the market for starters is tough, and the Marlins have few top prospects for bargaining.

"It's extremely challenging right now," president of baseball operations Michael Hill said. "There are not a large number of sellers. Hopefully we'll be able to get something done."

Slugger's surge: Giancarlo Stanton won the All-Star Home Run Derby with a record 61 homers, the latest sign he's emerging from a prolonged slump. Stanton was batting .193 on June 15 and is on pace for a career-high strikeout total. But he hit five homers in the final five games before the break, increasing his season total to 20, and has raised his average to .233.

Intradivision record: The Marlins are 16-24 within the NL East and 31-17 against the rest of the majors. It would help their chances of a division title if they could figure out how to beat the last-place Atlanta Braves, who have gone 8-4 against Miami.

Former NBA players making most of coaching opportunities

Associated Press

For someone like Juwan Howard Jr., summer league is a chance to experience his dream job. Same goes for his dad.

Juwan Howard played 19 seasons in the NBA, but this summer he's been a rookie again. Howard, the Miami Heat assistant coach, is serving as the team's head coach for summer league — a job that comes with long hours, little sleep and a chance to learn what it really means to oversee a roster.

"My goal is to get better and better as a coach," said Howard, whose son of the same name is also on the Heat summer roster. "This is my first time being a head coach at summer league. I'm happy that I had two years experience as an assistant so I had an idea as far as what it would be like ... but I want to be the most well-prepared coach as I grow, year after year until I get my chance."

Such is the quest for plenty of people who were on the sidelines in Orlando and Salt Lake City, and now in Las Vegas this summer. Everyone is getting experience in this hectic few weeks of games — that goes for players, referees and coaches, many of whom are hoping that what they do now might eventually get them into the NBA job they want.

"This is an experience you can't really get during the regular season," said Utah assistant Johnnie Bryant, the Jazz summer league coach. "You can go work camps and it's kind of not really real, per se. To have NBA referees, to have NBA fans in the building, NBA players out there on the floor — there's no better experience than actually coaching summer league."

The vast majority of summer league head coaches are assistants in the NBA. Some have been college head coaches, like Detroit's Bob Beyer, the former boss at Siena. Sacramento coach Dave Joerger coached the Kings' first games in Las Vegas before handing off the proverbial clipboard to move into more of an overseeing role,

and newly hired Los Angeles Lakers coach Luke Walton has been on his team's summer sideline as well. San Antonio's Becky Hammon made headlines last summer for being a female coach, and then she guided the Spurs to a title.

There is also something to the notion that when someone like Howard speaks, guys who are on summer rosters and looking for jobs will listen.

Howard doesn't need to be working; he signed contracts worth more than \$150 million in his playing career, and the guys on Miami's summer team are more than a little aware of who is taking time to teach them the nuance of the game.

"He's new to head-coaching," Heat guard Josh Richardson said. "But when he says something, you know he's been through it. When I got drafted by Miami he was the example they would use as a professional. So his credibility, you can't question it."

Howard wasn't the only coach with an elite-playing pedigree this summer. Basketball Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing — a longtime NBA assistant who has been a candidate for bigger jobs several times in recent years — was Charlotte's summer-league coach again, as he continues to wait for that opportunity to one day be a head coach for real.

"I use every day to develop myself as a coach. Right now I'm the head coach, so that feels good," Ewing said. "It's all about learning. I keep on learning. I try to learn every day, with every chance I get, and just try to be the best coach that I possibly can be."

Howard can totally relate. He could be golfing or relaxing this summer. Instead he slept through July 4 fireworks that were going on not far from his window in Orlando, Fla., because he had been up most of the night before working on sets and out-of-bounds plays, and confessed that it's not uncommon for him to get only about four hours of sleep a night because his mind is spinning.