

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Navy offers new incentives to help man growing fleet

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy will promote petty officers who take “hard jobs in hard locations” as it expands its force to man a growing fleet, top service leaders announced Tuesday.

“We’re going to recognize talent, and we’re going to put that recognition in the hands of commanding officers who are closest to that talent,” Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said during an online all-hands meeting.

He was joined during the live-streamed event by Adm. Robert Burke, chief of Navy personnel, who laid out steps the service is taking to retain and grow its cadre of sailors.

“It’s a good time to stay Navy. We want to retain our best talent,” Burke said.

The Navy is adding 21,000 sailors through fiscal year 2023 as its fleet grows to 326 ships, a number expected to increase to 355 by the 2050s.

“Certainly, as we work our way up to that 355-ship Navy, there will be even more people, probably another 20,000 to 25,000 people on top of that. We’re trying to build a deep bench,” Burke said.

The Navy is starting a pilot program called Advancement to Vacancy, which will reward chiefs and senior chiefs “eligible to take hard jobs in hard locations” with early promotions, Burke said.

“Chief would advance to senior chief, senior chief would advance to master chief by going to those hard jobs and hard locations, immediately, regardless of the time in grade, if they’ve got the talent and willingness to go,” he said.

Those hard jobs are located throughout the continental United States, Pearl Harbor in Hawaii and Iwakuni, Sasebo and Yokosuka in Japan.

The Navy has also announced five sets of re-enlistment bonuses this year, an “unprecedented” number in such a short period, Burke said.

The Navy has taken heavier-handed steps to fill high-priority positions at sea.

In June, the service announced it would begin requiring enlisted sailors to transfer from shore duty to sea billets where the need is critical.

## Trump labels Germany ‘captive of Russia’ at NATO gathering

BY JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

BRUSSELS — President Donald Trump opened a summit of NATO allies Wednesday by blasting Germany as a “captive of Russia” and failing to meet its commitments to the alliance in what is expected to be the most contentious meeting of allies in years.

A trans-Atlantic showdown is now underway at NATO headquarters in Brussels, where heads of state are facing intense pressure to ramp up military spending.

“They have to step it up immediately. Germany is a rich country. We are not going to put up with it,” Trump said during an opening meeting with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg.

Trump, flanked by a stone-faced Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, also criticized a multibillion-dollar energy deal between Moscow and Berlin that he says NATO “needs to look at.”

“Germany is a captive of Russia,” Trump said.

In the buildup to NATO’s annual summit, Trump has delivered one rhetorical assault on the alliance after another as he hammers members for not spending enough on their militaries. In doing so, Trump also has said the U.S. benefits less from the military pact than Europe, which has fostered doubts about his commitment to collective defense.

Trump’s messages have roiled the 70-year-old alliance, where concerns about the president’s commitment to the future of NATO are now at a near-panic level in parts of Europe.

Stoltenberg said his goal for the summit is to keep allies unified despite their differences.

When pressed by reporters Wednesday on whether Trump’s tough rhetoric is tearing the alliance apart, Stoltenberg acknowledged differences within NATO but avoided criticizing Trump.

“My task is to make sure we stick together,” Stoltenberg said. But he acknowledged that NATO’s long-term survival shouldn’t be taken for granted.

“It is not a law of nature that we will have NATO forever,” he said.

To quell doubts about American commitment to NATO and security in Europe, the U.S. Senate on Monday voted 97-2 to reaffirm the country’s commitment to the alliance.

Still, Trump’s ambivalence about NATO and an upcoming meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin that Trump said would be the “easiest” of meetings on his European tour has caused consternation.

In Brussels, think tanks with a pro-NATO bent have assembled on the sidelines of the summit to mount a defense of the alliance’s values and the role it plays in global security. The anxiety was captured in a Monday open letter to heads of state by scores of former alliance officials that included former NATO supreme allied commanders Philip Breedlove, James Stavridis and other generals and diplomats.

“NATO is at a crucial decision point,” the letter stated. “If NATO were to fail because of short-term political frictions, the loss would not only be felt by the allies but by freedom-loving peoples the world over, as they could no longer rely on this anchor of legitimate security.”

While Trump has questioned NATO’s value to the U.S., NATO’s previous secretary general, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, called the president’s outlook shortsighted.

“Europeans need to spend more on defence,” Rasmussen said in a Wednesday tweet. “But to pretend the USA doesn’t gain from NATO ignores 70 years of relative peace that enabled the USA to become the strongest, richest power on earth.”

During the two-day summit, allies finalized plans to build two new commands — one in Germany and the other in the U.S. — to ensure that their militaries can quickly deploy forces across land and sea borders in a crisis. To improve combat readiness, participants also adopted the so-called “Four Thirties” initiative that calls for 30 mechanized battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 combat vessels to be ready for deployment within 30 days. The readiness plan is to be in effect by 2020.

The moves are a continuation of reform inside NATO brought on by Russia’s 2014 intervention in Ukraine, which sparked the alliance’s largest military reinforcement since the end of the Cold War.

# Navy expanding hairstyle options

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

Women in the Navy will soon have more hairstyle options while in uniform, according to an announcement Wednesday about upcoming changes to female grooming standards.

Female sailors will soon be able to wear ponytails and dreadlocks while working or in dress uniforms. Women who chose to wear buns will be allowed to style the bun as wide as the back of their heads, according to the Navy.

Further, women in dinner dress uniform will soon be authorized to let their hair down below the collar of their shirt or jacket.

There are some limitations to wearing ponytails. If the hairstyle presents an occupational hazard or safety concern, female sailors will need to pull their hair back into a bun, according to the Navy. Previously, ponytails were allowed only during physical training.

The changes were announced

during a live online broadcast Wednesday with Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson and Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Bob Burke.

Richardson highlighted a team of six female sailors who worked to devise the new standards, which the admiral said was evidence that sailor-borne suggestions can come to fruition. "If you've got a recommendation, we just demonstrated that that recommendation can make things happen," Richardson said in the broadcast. "If you make a good proposal and we can make it fit, we can make it happen."

The last major hairstyle regulation announcement for female sailors came in 2014, when changes were made to allow more hairstyles for women of color. That's when two-strand twists and multiple braids were authorized as long and they hung freely above the collar and covered the whole head.

Those changes were made after legislators criticized earlier hair regulations for all ser-

vices that they said unfairly targeted black women.

The Air Force and Army also allowed more traditionally black hairstyles — such as two-strand twists and braids — in 2014, followed by the Marines in 2015. The Marines and Army authorized dreadlocks in 2015 and 2017, respectively.

Richardson said the upcoming changes are happening to build a more inclusive force.

"All of this really is again to allow us to be an inclusive team that is focused on being more lethal to our competitors, more lethal towards our rivals, our enemies, and much more inclusive inside our team," Richardson said in the broadcast.

Women should continue to go by the Navy's current grooming standards until the new regulations are put into place.

Further details on the new standards and a timeline of their implementation will come later in an official written announcement from the Navy Personnel Command, according to the broadcast.

# 2 SEALs fired over misconduct

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Two Navy SEAL leaders were relieved of their duties Monday following investigations into sexual misconduct accusations while they were deployed in Africa, Navy officials said Tuesday.

Cmdr. Jarrod Donaldson and Master Chief Petty Officer Jon Franklin were fired from their positions as a unit commander and a senior enlisted adviser by Capt. Jamie Sands, the commander of Naval Special Warfare Group Two, said Navy Lt. Jacqui Maxwell, a spokeswoman for the Virginia Beach-based SEAL unit. She said both men had been reassigned to other duties within Naval Special Warfare Group Two.

Donaldson and Franklin were serving as the commander and senior enlisted SEAL for Special Operations Command Forward-East Africa when they were suspended May 10 and sent back to the United States amid misconduct accusations, Maxwell said.

The men retained their leadership positions within the SEALs until Monday.

Maxwell declined to confirm the nature of the misconduct investigations.

According to an ABC News report, the men were under investigation for accusations of sexual harassment, and one of them was also accused of sexual assault against a female servicemember.

A defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed officials had investigated those claims. The official did not confirm the investigations' findings.

Both SEALs are likely to face some form of nonjudicial punishment, the official said. Nonjudicial punishments can include reduction in rank or loss of pay. They are often the first step toward a servicemember's separation from the service.

# Ex-Fitzgerald commander pleads not guilty

BY DIANNA CAHN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The former commanding officer of the Navy destroyer USS Fitzgerald pleaded not guilty Tuesday to criminal charges stemming from the deadly collision of his ship and a commercial vessel off Japan just over one year ago.

Cmdr. Bryce Benson was arraigned at the Navy Yard in Washington, where a Navy prosecutor read the three charges against him aloud. Seven sailors died aboard the Fitzgerald on June 17, 2017, when it was traversing the busy waters of the southern coast of Japan after midnight.

Benson is charged with two specifications of dereliction of performance of his duties through neglect — one count "resulting in death." He is also charged with one count of im-

properly hazarding a vessel. A charge originally brought against him of negligent homicide was dropped from the indictment.

In the first count, Benson is accused of having "negligently failed to ensure the safe navigation" of the Fitzgerald and "provide adequate oversight of the ship's watch considering the navigational and traffic conditions; approve an adequate watch bill; revise standing orders to account for degraded equipment."

The charge says that dereliction resulted in the deaths of the seven sailors, listing the rate, rank and initials of each man who died.

The second dereliction count charges that Benson "negligently failed to adequately train and inspect the conduct of members under his command, as was his duty ... to not foster a client of

complacency and to assure proper watch standing practices are executed."

The last charge states that by failing to ensure safe navigation using proper watch standing measures, Benson negligently hazarded the vessel resulting in the collision with the ACX Crystal.

Details of the collision, released through investigations and pretrial or other court proceedings, revealed that Benson was in his quarters the night of the collision, leaving a more junior officer to serve as officer of the deck. She and other junior officers in the combat information center below deck barely communicated throughout that night as the ship crossed through busy waters to get out to sea.

Benson's court-martial is scheduled to proceed Jan. 28.

# DOD: Canceled drill would have cost \$14M

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The United States' annual August military drills with South Korea canceled last month by order of President Donald Trump as his administration negotiates a halt to North Korea's nuclear program would have cost the Pentagon about \$14 million, according to defense officials.

Pentagon officials were unable last month to provide a cost-savings estimate for canceling the Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise. After Trump met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on June 12, the president announced he would halt all joint "war games" with South Korea so long as North Korea was negotiating in good faith.

On Wednesday, Army Col. Rob Manning, the Pentagon spokesman who provided the \$14 million figure for the suspended military drill, did not have a breakdown explaining how defense officials arrived at that cost.

Manning also did not have an estimate for cost savings for additional joint exercises in South Korea that could be canceled in the future.

Since Trump's announcement suspending all joint military exercises with the South Koreans following his meeting with Kim in Singapore, the president has touted the cost savings of canceling the exercises, which he has characterized as "very expensive" and "provocative" to the North Koreans.

The \$14 million cost for Ulchi Freedom Guardian represents a microscopic portion of the Pentagon's roughly \$700 billion budget. The amount is less than the purchase price of a fighter jet or slightly more than the cost of two M1 Abrams tanks, according to Pentagon documents.

Following Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's visit to Pyongyang last week, North Korea blasted the United States in a statement, calling American denuclearization requests "gangster-like." Meanwhile, Pompeo remained positive about the nego-

tiations and called the meeting productive. Pompeo did not meet with Kim during the trip, his third to North Korea.

The Pentagon has not received direction to restart military drills with South Korea, Manning said. He also said he did not know how long it would take to reinstate the exercises should negotiations break down.

Those decisions rest firmly with Trump and his advisers, Manning said.

"Certainly they can make a decision whether or not those drills are reinstated if they decide to do so based on North Korea's actions," he said.

The colonel also said Pentagon leaders were not concerned that halting the drills with their South Korean allies would immediately affect the combat readiness of the roughly 28,500 American troops in South Korea. The troops have continued to train unilaterally, he said.

"Across all domains, we will be able to maintain (combat) readiness," Manning said. "We've got a series of things we do to maintain readiness."

# UK to nearly double troops in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The United Kingdom will nearly double the number of troops it has in Afghanistan in response to a request by President Donald Trump for additional support in America's longest war.

British Prime Minister Theresa May said Tuesday that 440 more British servicemembers would deploy to the country, bringing the U.K.'s total contribution to about 1,100 troops.

Her announcement was made on the eve of a summit of NATO heads of state in

Brussels, where Trump on Wednesday continued his calls for more defense spending contributions from allies.

The new British support will add to the roughly 16,000 coalition troops who make up NATO's Resolute Support mission, which trains, advises and assists Afghan forces fighting Taliban and Islamic State militants. Americans comprise over half of the mission.

"NATO is as vital today as it ever has been and our commitment to it remains steadfast," May said Tuesday, according to Reuters. "The alliance can rely on the U.K. to lead by example."

NATO ended combat operations in Afghanistan in 2014, but a separate U.S. counterterrorism mission continues.

The announcement of more British troops came as Reuters reported that the U.S. is preparing to review its Afghanistan strategy after Trump expressed frustration over a lack of progress.

Additional U.S. troops were sent to Afghanistan and the U.S. has increased air support under Trump's strategy. But nearly a year after it was announced, the war remains a stalemate. The Afghan government controls or influences just 56 percent of the country, according to U.S. military data.

# Navy P-8A Poseidon helps Sri Lankans find lost fishermen

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

The crew of a Navy P-8A Poseidon aircraft found a lost fishing boat in the Indian Ocean on Tuesday after responding to a request from the Sri Lankan navy.

The boat and six fishermen had been missing for two days when they were spotted from

above by 7th Fleet sailors from Patrol Squadron 45, the Navy said in a statement.

The Poseidon is commonly used for surveillance, intelligence and scouting missions. It's also capable of combat and can be used to conduct anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare, according to Naval Air Systems Command.

Poseidons have searched

for lost mariners before and helped look for an Argentine submarine and a South Korean vessel last year.

After the aircraft crew found the lost fishing boat, the Sri Lankan navy sent a ship to help the fishermen.

Cmdr. Mark Zematis, who leads Patrol Squadron 45, said in a statement that the Navy's "positive relationship" with

Sri Lanka made the mission possible.

"As we continue to explore the operational reach and agility of the P-8A Poseidon, the trust and relationships we build with our multinational partners becomes more and more apparent in such a complex and broad Indo-Pacific region," he said.

# Government falls short of reunion deadline

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Some immigrant toddlers are back in the arms of their parents, but others remained in holding facilities away from relatives as federal officials fell short of meeting a court-ordered deadline to reunite dozens of youngsters forcibly separated from their families at the border.

In Grand Rapids, Mich., Ever Reyes Mejia walked out of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement center Tuesday carrying his beaming son and the boy's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles backpack. The boy was secured in a booster seat, and

father and son were driven away.

Another boy and a girl who had been in temporary foster care were reunited with their Honduran fathers at the center about three months after they were split up.

The three fathers were "just holding them and hugging them and telling them that everything was fine and that they were never going to be separated again," said immigration lawyer Abril Valdes. The children were "absolutely thrilled to be with their parents again."

Late last month, U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw in San Diego set a 14-day deadline to reunite children under 5 with

their parents and a 30-day deadline for older children.

It wasn't immediately clear how many children left detention facilities Tuesday or how many remain.

In trying to meet the first deadline, the government began with a list of 102 children potentially eligible to be reunited and whittled that to 75 through screening that included DNA testing done by swabbing the inside of the cheek.

Of those 75, Justice Department attorneys told the court the government would guarantee 38 would be back with their parents by the end of Tuesday.

## Court nominee's writings draw scrutiny

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh's past writings that a president should not be distracted by lawsuits and investigations could become a flashpoint in what's already shaping up to be a contentious confirmation battle.

With special counsel Robert Mueller investigating whether President Donald Trump obstructed justice, questions about whether a chief executive can be subpoenaed or indicted could potentially reach the Supreme Court. Though there's no indication at this point that will happen, it's sure to be a major topic of questioning at Kavanaugh's confirmation hearing as the Senate weighs whether to confirm him to replace retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Democrats opposing Kavanaugh are already weighing in, saying the past writings — particularly a legal article he wrote on the separation of powers in 2009 — suggest he would be inclined to side with Trump. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said Tuesday that he "seems exactly like the kind of man President Trump would want on the Supreme Court if legal issues from the Mueller probe arise."

Here's a look at Kavanaugh's past statements on presidential powers:

**Investigations and lawsuits involving the president.** Kavanaugh was a key player in

the investigation that led to President Bill Clinton's impeachment, but a decade later he wrote that the experience, coupled with his time working for President George W. Bush, had persuaded him that presidents should not have to face criminal investigations, including indictments, or civil lawsuits while they are in office. He said Congress should pass a law temporarily protecting presidents from such distractions in office.

Clinton, for example, "could have focused on Osama bin Laden without being distracted by the Paula Jones sexual harassment case and its criminal investigation offshoots," Kavanaugh wrote in the 2009 Minnesota Law Review article.

If applied on the court somehow, those opinions could have a direct impact on Trump, who has also been dogged by allegations of sexual harassment.

**Subpoenaing the president.** In addition to indictment, another issue tied to the Mueller investigation that has not been fully resolved in the courts is whether a sitting president must respond to a subpoena from investigators.

In the 2009 article, Kavanaugh wrote that Congress should also exempt the president from questioning by criminal prosecutors or defense counsel.

"Even the lesser burdens of a criminal investigation — including preparing for questioning by criminal investigators

— are time-consuming and distracting," he wrote, adding that a president concerned about an ongoing criminal investigation "is almost inevitably going to do a worse job as president."

Mueller hasn't indicated that he will move to subpoena the president.

**Firing the special counsel.** Trump has repeatedly criticized Mueller and the investigation on Twitter, raising concerns in Congress that he will move to fire the special counsel. The White House has asserted that Trump has the authority to fire Mueller, but only Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein has the power to fire him under current regulations. Rosenstein appointed Mueller in May 2017 after Trump fired FBI Director James Comey.

In a 1998 article in the Georgetown Law Journal, Kavanaugh wrote that Congress should give the president the ability to fire special counsels, an opinion that Democrats have highlighted in the hours since he was nominated Monday.

Kavanaugh's reasoning, however, was not to protect presidents but to make them more accountable. He wrote that presidents can complain that independent counsels are politically motivated while implying they are powerless to do anything about it. Giving the president firing power would "force the president and his surrogates to put up or shut up."

## Dripping cave water helped Thai boys survive

Associated Press

MAE SAI, Thailand — The soccer teammates rescued from a flooded cave in Thailand lost weight during their 18-day ordeal and in the days before their discovery survived by drinking water dripping into their refuge, a health official said Wednesday.

The 12 boys and coach rescued over the three previous days "took care of themselves well in the cave," Thongchai Lertwilairatanapong, a public health inspector, said at a news conference at the hospital in Chiang Rai city where the group is recovering.

The four boys rescued Sunday can eat normal food and walk around, and the four pulled out Monday were eating soft food. Thongchai said one member of the final group of four boys and the coach who arrived at the hospital Tuesday evening had a slight lung infection.

Two of the first group had a lung infection as well, and Thongchai said they would need medicine for seven days.

The average weight loss was 4.4 pounds for those with known information, Thongchai said. They were able to obtain water dripping inside the cave.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Police: Woman threw 2 kittens into pond

**ME** PHIPPSBURG — Police in Maine said they rescued two kittens from a pond and they accused the kittens' owner of being inebriated and repeatedly tossing the animals into the water.

Phippsburg police Chief John Skroski said Justine Lovig was charged with operating under the influence, cruelty to animals and violation of probation.

He told the Bangor Daily News that an officer arrived to find Lovig emerging from a pond with two soaked kittens on July 4.

The kittens were taken to Coastal Humane Society in Brunswick.

### Changing TV channel leads to assault

**NC** LEXINGTON — Sheriff's deputies in North Carolina have accused a woman of biting her boyfriend after he changed the channel on a television she was watching.

The Winston-Salem Journal reported that the Davidson County Sheriff's Office said the man told investigators Abby Nicole Saunders, 21, attacked him Saturday when he went into a bedroom to change the channel on the television.

Deputies said the man sustained bite marks on his neck, right forearm and the inside of his left arm. He also had a red mark on his chest where investigators said Saunders hit him.

### Mighty Mike leaving aquarium in fall

**KY** NEWPORT — Visitors to the Newport Aquarium in northern Kentucky have two more months to see Mighty Mike, the largest American alligator outside of Florida.

The Kentucky Enquirer reported the last chance to see the 14-foot, 800-pound alligator before he heads back to Florida is Sept. 9.

Newport Aquarium Executive Director Eric Rose said in a statement that educating the public about alligators is critical to helping the animals sustain populations after being listed as endangered for decades.

Mighty Mike will be taken to the Crocodilian Conservation Center in Frostproof, Fla.

### Family's insurance pays for sculpture

**KS** OVERLAND PARK — A city in Kansas has received \$107,000 from a family's insurance company after a 5-year-old boy accidentally knocked over a sculpture at a community center.

Overland Park spokesman Sean Reilly said the city plans to send \$99,000 to artist Bill Lyons, who created "Aphrodite di Kansas City." Reilly said that's the amount Lyons would've received had the sculpture sold at the center's art fair.

The sculpture was damaged in May at the Tomahawk Ridge Community Center. A video showed the child wrapping his arms around it and then struggling to hold it up as it fell.

### Police say man faked his own kidnapping

**WV** MORGANTOWN — Police said a West Virginia man is accused of faking his own kidnapping to get money from his family.

WBOY-TV reported that Monongalia County sheriff's deputies arrested Preston Smith, 24, of Morgantown. Smith was charged with conspiracy and was being held on \$10,000 bond in the Northern Regional Jail.

Deputies said Smith allegedly

sent a text message and called his brother indicating he was being held at gunpoint and that a kidnapper was demanding \$2,000 in order to release Smith. Smith's brother called the sheriff's department, and deputies found Smith without anyone holding him against his will.

### Man arrested over threats to mom, cop

**WA** BREMERTON — Bremerton police arrested a 37-year-old man who they allege threatened his mother and an officer with a machete.

Police were called to the home about 8 p.m. Sunday on a report of a domestic violence incident involving a mother and her son. While an officer spoke with the mother outside, police allege the man approached with a machete, threatening to kill them. He then barricaded himself in the house.

The state patrol and Kitsap County Sheriff's Office secured a warrant and entered the home. They recovered the machete and discovered the man had fled.

Police said they found the suspect in downtown Bremerton. He was arrested on domestic assault and felony harassment charges.

### Man, yanks woman's hijab, turns himself in

**NH** MANCHESTER — Police in New Hampshire said a man accused of yanking on a woman's hijab at a restaurant turned himself in.

Authorities said the 25-year-old woman was sitting at a table at The Farm in Manchester on June 22 when the man, unfamiliar to her, pulled on her hijab without saying a word.

He left shortly afterward when the woman's co-workers confronted him at the bar. Po-

lice said the woman suffered discomfort to her chin and head.

They said Robert Carrigg, 45, of Hooksett, went to police Tuesday following an arrest warrant charging him with simple assault.

### Police say man died after swallowing drugs

**VA** WAYNESBORO — Authorities said a Virginia man choked to death after swallowing an apparent bag of cocaine during a police raid.

News outlets reported William Tucker, 52, of Waynesboro died afterward.

Police said a drug task force and a Waynesboro police SWAT team went to a Waynesboro home for a drug investigation. When they entered, police said, they found Tucker forcing a bag filled with white powder into his mouth.

Police said Tucker lost consciousness while resisting attempts to remove the bag and was declared dead at a hospital.

### Trail offers visitors taste of food, drink

**VT** MONTPELIER — Visitors to Vermont can now take a culinary route through the Champlain Valley by visiting food producers, restaurants, farms, breweries and wineries on the state's new tasting trail.

Officials said the Lake Champlain Tasting Trail is part of a larger effort to develop an international culinary trail in Vermont, New York, Ontario and Quebec that would focus on farm and food experiences.

Vermont's trail includes sites in Addison, Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties that meet certain criteria and standards.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# France earns berth in World Cup final

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — France is back in the World Cup final for the first time since Zinedine Zidane's headbutt in 2006.

Twelve years after one of soccer's most infamous moments, Samuel Umtiti used his head to score from a corner kick in the 51st minute and earn France a 1-0 victory over Belgium on Tuesday in the first of the all-European semifinals.

The French danced on the field after the final whistle and shook the hand of Thierry Henry, who helped Les Bleus win the World Cup in 1998 but had been hoping to eliminate his native country as Belgium's assistant coach.

France's fans sang in the stands long past the end of the match, surrounded by yellow-clad security.

They certainly hope to keep the party going on Sunday in the final in Moscow. France will face either Croatia or Eng-

land, who play Wednesday at the Luzhniki Stadium in the Russian capital.

"Vive la France! Vive la Republique!" France forward Antoine Griezmann shouted during the post-match celebrations.

France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris made a great save in each half, denying the potent Belgian attack of Eden Hazard, Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku the chance to advance the country to its first major final. Belgium reached the quarterfinals at the 2014 World Cup and the European Championship in 2016 but has yet to fulfill its lofty expectations.

The world now gets to see France's luxury squad, collectively valued in excess of \$1 billion and headlined by teenage sensation Kylian Mbappe, in another major final.

Two years ago at home, the French surprisingly lost to Portugal 1-0 in the Euro 2016 title match. In 2006, they were beaten in a penalty shootout by

Italy in a World Cup final that was overshadowed by Zidane headbutting opposing player Marco Materazzi in the chest in extra time. Zidane was sent off in what was his final match.

In a tournament dominated by goals from set pieces, France took the lead from a corner. Griezmann curled in the ball from the right and Umtiti got in front of tall Belgium midfielder Marouane Fellaini to knock in his header at the near post.

"It's me that scored," Umtiti said, "but we all delivered a big game."

Up in the corporate seats, French President Emmanuel Macron reacted to the goal by shaking the hand of King Philippe of Belgium as FIFA president Gianni Infantino watched on between them.

The goal capped an impressive display by Umtiti, who helped to shut out the most productive attack in the World Cup with 14 goals, and meant three defenders have now scored on France's route to the final.

Benjamin Pavard and Raphael Varane scored in previous matches.

In search of the equalizer, Belgium repeatedly sent over crosses from both wings but Umtiti and Varane, both center backs, used their bodies cleverly to hold off Fellaini and Lukaku. Varane, in particular, was outstanding.

France coach Didier Deschamps has faced some criticism for being too pragmatic and functional despite having so many stars in his squad, but the organization of the team was superb and Belgium was largely restricted to only minor chances that were kept out by the flying Lloris.

Deschamps now has the chance to become the third person to win the World Cup as a player and a coach, after Germany great Franz Beckenbauer and Brazil's Mario Zagallo. As France captain, Deschamps won soccer's most prized trophy in 1998.

## Belgium's golden generation comes up short – again

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — Belgium's golden generation has come up short at a major tournament. Again.

With Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard in fantastic form creating chances for themselves and Romelu Lukaku up front, Vincent Kompany fit again at the heart of the defense and Thibaut Courtois standing tall in goal, these Red Devils racked up more goals than any other team in the World Cup. Through five matches, it looked as if they could finally deliver on their promise.

But with their King Philippe watching from the stands, there was to be no coronation.

After reaching the World Cup semifinals for the first time since 1986, Roberto Martinez's talent-packed team lost 1-0 to France on Tuesday at St. Petersburg Stadium on a Sam-

uel Umtiti second-half header from a corner kick.

"Damn set piece, that's all I can say," Kompany said.

A Belgium team featuring many of the same stars lost 1-0 to Argentina in the World Cup quarterfinals four years ago and then was shocked 3-1 by Wales in the European Championship quarterfinals two years ago.

Even through the first 30 minutes in St. Petersburg, this side had looked different, carving out chances and containing France's counterattacks.

"We had more chances today, we had more control of the match," Kompany said. "We weren't in control (four) years ago against Argentina."

But the potent Belgian attack gradually faded as France's rock-solid defense handed Belgium its first shutout of the tournament.

Instead of playing Sunday in

Moscow for its first World Cup, Belgium will be back in St. Petersburg on Saturday, playing in the third-place match and wondering if its championship window has closed.

Belgium's beaten players did not want to talk about the end of an era — not with stars like 27-year-old De Bruyne, 26-year-old Courtois and 25-year-old Lukaku on the team and more coming through the youth ranks.

"Generations. Who talks about generations?" De Bruyne said. "We are a small country. We can be very happy and lucky that we can have the team what we have. We don't have the resources, the infrastructure, the money that other countries have. What we have is a really good team that performed really well."

The last time a Belgium team got this far at the World Cup, it lost 2-0 to Argentina at the 1986

tournament in Mexico. A pair of Diego Maradona second-half goals sank Belgium that day.

Long considered a lesser footballing nation than its neighbor the Netherlands — whose orange-clad teams have reached three World Cup finals and lost them all — this Belgium team has at least dispelled the Dutch shadow.

Kompany, an injury-prone 32-year-old who may well have played his last World Cup, believes that, despite the loss, the class of 2018 has done his nation a favor.

"Generations come and go," Kompany said. "For Belgian football I think eventually there will still be an opportunity to do well. It allows the country to be more ambitious and believe in its own talent. So maybe for the future we've still done something good for Belgian football."

# Top seed Federer ousted at Wimbledon

Associated Press

LONDON — Roger Federer was a point away from a rather tidy, straight-set victory in the Wimbledon quarterfinals. One lousy point.

And then, slowly, over the next two-plus hours, all the way until the fifth set reached its 24th game, as the temperature dropped and the spectators' cries of "Let's go, Roger!" echoed through the shadows, everything came apart for the eight-time champion against an opponent who'd never beaten him before nor made it this far at the All England Club.

In a stunning turnaround in an unfamiliar setting — No. 1 Court instead of Centre Court — the top-seeded Federer blew a third-set match point and, eventually, all of his big lead in a 2-6, 6-7 (5), 7-5, 6-4, 13-11 loss to No. 8 Kevin Anderson on Wednesday in a 4-hour, 14-minute tussle.

"It was just one of those days where you hope to get by somehow," Federer said. "I almost could have. I should have."

He was leading by two sets and 5-4 in the third when, with Anderson serving, he got to Ad-Out. Could have ended things right then and there. Federer managed to return a 134 mph

serve, but on his next stroke, he shanked a backhand.

Back to deuce. From there, it all began to change. Anderson held for 5-all, broke to 6-5 with a violent return winner off a 97 mph second serve, then staved off three break points and closed the set with a 133 mph ace.

The comeback was just beginning.

"I had my chances," Federer said, "so it's disappointing."

This was only the third time in Federer's 20 years of contesting Grand Slam matches that he lost one after taking the opening two sets; both of the other defeats came in 2011. And, according to the ATP, it's the fifth time Federer lost a match at a major tournament after holding a match point, something else that last happened seven years ago.

Federer was 4-0 against Anderson entering the day, winning every set they'd ever played against each other. But there was more. So much more. Federer was attempting to reach his 13th semifinal at Wimbledon and move closer to title No. 9, both of which would have broken his own records.

He came into the match having won 32 consecutive sets at

Wimbledon, a run he stretched to 34 before faltering. And he had held serve 81 games in a row at the grass-court major, a streak that grew to 85 before Anderson broke him a surprising total of four times.

"I just kept on telling myself, 'I have to keep believing.' I kept saying that today was going to be my day, because you really need that mindset taking the court against somebody like Roger," Anderson said. "If you go out there with doubts or unsure what's going to happen, like I maybe did a little bit in that first set, it's not going to go your way."

Not that Anderson is anything other than an elite tennis player. He was, after all, the runner-up at last year's U.S. Open. That also was the closest he's come to winning a Grand Slam trophy, while Federer owns 20.

Anderson never had made it beyond the fourth round at Wimbledon until this week, carried by his booming serve. He hit 28 aces against Federer, saved 9 of 12 break points and managed to hold his own in the rare lengthy baseline rallies.

"It's like that with the big servers," Federer said. "You're never really safe."

As the fifth set became as much a test of mental strength as anything, from 4-all to 6-all to 8-all to 10-all, Anderson was as steady as he needed to be. And it was Federer who blinked, double-faulting to face a break point at 11-all, then slapping a forehand into the net to cede the key break.

Anderson then served it out, ending things with a 128 mph service winner, and raised both arms overhead.

Now the 32-year-old South African moves on to a semifinal against No. 9 John Isner of the U.S. or No. 13 Milos Raonic of Canada.

That will be played at Centre Court, of course, a spot Federer knows well. His loss to Anderson was the first match he'd played at No. 1 since 2015.

Three-time Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic got his wish to play in the main stadium, and he reached his first Grand Slam semifinal since 2016 by beating No. 24 seed Kei Nishikori of Japan 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Djokovic is a 12-time major champion who's been in something of a rut, due to right elbow troubles that lasted more than a year until he finally had surgery in February.

## Sagan collects his 2nd Tour de France stage win

Associated Press

QUIMPER, France — Peter Sagan had the yellow jersey holder to thank for his victory on Stage 5 of the Tour de France on Wednesday.

Chris Froome could also thank his Team Sky colleagues for keeping him out of danger — and helping overcome a mechanical problem — in the race's first hilly stage.

Greg Van Avermaet mistimed his sprint and Sagan, the three-time reigning world champion with the Bora-Hansgrohe team, took advantage to claim his second victory in this year's event.

"I don't know if he did it on purpose or if he wanted to drop everybody but I have to say thanks," Sagan said.

Van Avermaet still increased his overall lead over BMC teammate Tejay van Gar-

deren to two seconds by gaining precious time in an intermediate bonus sprint.

After a move from Philippe Gilbert, Van Avermaet accelerated out of the final turn with 300 yards to go but couldn't maintain his pace.

"I tried to win the stage but it was pretty complicated," Van Avermaet said. "Phil went early and he's still pretty close on GC (general classification) so I couldn't let him go. I think I went too early in the sprint. I thought the corner was closer to the finish than it really was."

In a repeat of Stage 2, Sagan held off Sonny Colbrelli in the sprint, with Gilbert finishing third.

Sagan clocked nearly five hours over the undulating leg through Brittany, which contained five categorized climbs over a

127-mile route from Lorient to Quimper, and resembled a single-day classic.

Gilbert, a former world champion, moved up to third overall, three seconds off the pace.

Froome, the four-time champion who trails Van Avermaet by 57 seconds in 15th spot, finished in the main pack with the other favorites.

There was a nervy moment for the British rider when he had to stop due to a mechanical issue with 43.5 miles remaining.

Teammate Michal Kwiatkowski attempted to fix the problem but Froome was later forced to stop again and change his bike.

Kwiatkowski and two other teammates then quickly escorted Froome back to the peloton.

# Indians blow Bauer's gem on bullpen flub

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Indians manager Terry Francona expected to see Oliver Perez run out of the bullpen. Pitching coach Carl Willis made the call for Dan Otero instead.

The mixup was a miserable one for the AL Central leaders.

Joey Votto hit a go-ahead, three-run double off Otero in the ninth inning as Cincinnati scored seven times with two outs, overcoming a gem by Trevor Bauer to beat Cleveland 7-4 on Tuesday night.

Francona instructed Willis to have "O-P" warm up, referring to Oliver Perez, with the bases loaded and a 4-3 lead with closer Cody Allen struggling. Willis misunderstood the message, believing he had used Otero's nickname of "O-T."

"When I saw O-T coming through the gate, it's not that I don't think he can pitch, but

it just wasn't the guy I was expecting," Francona said. "We had a communication [error]. That one lands squarely on me, no getting around it. I know Carl is beating himself up right now, but that one lands on me."

Willis, who rejoined the staff this season, accepted responsibility for the mistake. He noted that Votto was 0-for-4 in his career against Otero, but said he should have asked Francona for clarification.

Allen (2-4) initiated the sequence by loading the bases after recording two outs in relief of Bauer, who struck out 12 in eight shutout innings. Cleveland's bullpen entered the day with the third-highest ERA in baseball at 5.13.

"Quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation," Willis said. "But you know, I made the mistake, got the wrong guy up. It's not that O-T can't get the

job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."

Adam Duvall also doubled in a pair in the ninth, while Jose Peraza and Eugenio Suarez had RBI singles off Allen. Cincinnati's final seven batters reached base before Scooter Gennett ran into the third out on Suarez's hit.

"I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there," said Allen, who was charged with a career-high six runs. "We're confident in every guy that runs out of that gate and we shouldn't have been in that position in the first place."

Making his first start since being named to his first All-Star Game, Bauer only allowed three singles and didn't surrender a hit until Jesse Winker's one-out liner up the middle in the fifth.

The right-hander became the second major leaguer to post seven consecutive qual-

ity starts with eight-or-more strikeouts and no homers allowed, according to the Indians. Pedro Martinez holds the record with eight in 2002.

"Bauer was a handful for us and we ended up scoring all of our runs when he exited the game," Votto said.

**Very memorable:** Reds interim manager Jim Riggleman earned his 700th career win, but was unaware of it until after the game. Cincinnati is 38-36 since he took over for Bryan Price on April 19.

"This is really an energetic, high-energy group, a fun-to-manage group," he said. "It was on display at its best right there. That's probably the best inning I've been involved in for a long time."

The four-run comeback in the ninth was the Reds' first since June 30, 2006 against the Indians.

## MLB roundup

### Bregman lifts Astros with bizarre walk-off hit in 11th

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Alex Bregman agreed when someone called the final play on Tuesday night in Houston a circus. Oakland catcher Jonathan Lucroy described it as "a big zoo."

Both descriptions could work for the wild way this one ended.

Bregman homered twice and his tapper just in front of the plate in the 11th inning led to a bizarre sequence that ended the game, as Lucroy's throwing error handed the Astros a 6-5 victory over the Athletics.

"It was a crazy play," said Oakland manager Bob Melvin, who had to watch it from the clubhouse after being ejected for arguing a check swing in the fourth. "Crazy way the game ended."

Justin Verlander pitched six sharp innings and the Astros took a 4-0 lead into the ninth before the Athletics tied it.

Stephen Piscotty hit a solo homer with two outs in the top of the 11th off Collin McHugh (5-0) to put the A's ahead, but the Astros staged their own rally.

**Red Sox 8, Rangers 4:** Andrew Benintendi bolstered his All-Star credentials with a pair of doubles and two RBIs in his final game before fan votes are tallied, and host Boston extended its winning streak to eight games.

**Rays 5, Tigers 2:** Wilson Ramos hit a three-run homer, five Tampa Bay pitchers combined on a five-hitter and the host Rays beat Detroit.

**Brewers 8, Marlins 4:** Christian Yelich had three hits and four RBIs, Travis Shaw homered and Milwaukee beat host Miami.

**Phillies 7, Mets 3:** Enyel De Los Santos won his major league debut and Philadelphia got home runs from Maikel Franco and Odubel Herrera in

a victory over host New York.

**Orioles 6, Yankees 5:** Manny Machado hit two home runs, Jonathan Schoop singled in the winning run with two outs in the ninth inning, and host Baltimore rallied past New York.

**Blue Jays 6, Braves 2:** Russell Martin's sharp single in Toronto's five-run eighth drove in the go-ahead run, Marcus Stroman allowed pitched seven strong innings, and visiting Toronto beat Atlanta to knock the Braves out of first place.

**Nationals 5, Pirates 1:** Anthony Rendon hit a two-run homer, Daniel Murphy doubled twice and had four hits, and Washington beat host Pittsburgh.

**Cardinals 14, White Sox 2:** Dexter Fowler broke out of a slump with his fourth career grand slam, Miles Mikolas tossed six innings of three-hit ball and St. Louis routed host Chicago.

**Royals 9, Twins 4:** Adalberto

Mondesi had a three-run homer and a career-high four RBIs to help visiting Kansas City snap a 10-game skid.

**Padres 4, Dodgers 1:** Rookie left-hander Eric Lauer came within one out of his first career complete game before allowing Max Muncy's home run, and Wil Myers homered for the sixth time in four games to lead host San Diego.

**Diamondbacks 5, Rockies 3:** David Peralta and A.J. Pollock homered in Arizona's four-run seventh inning, and the Diamondbacks won for the fourth straight time at Coors Field.

**Cubs 2, Giants 0:** Victor Caratini hit an RBI double during a decisive seventh inning, helping visiting Chicago back Jose Quintana in a close game.

**Angels 9, Mariners 3:** Kole Calhoun and Andrelton Simmons each had three hits and two RBIs to lead host Los Angeles.