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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Ukrainian corps learn US tactics at drill

BY CHAD GARLAND
AND MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

MYKOLAIV REGION, Ukraine — The U.S. Marines were firing at a fictional enemy, but the Ukrainian marines firing by their side during the past few days had one very real adversary on their mind: Russia.

Exercise Sea Breeze, which launched July 9 and brings together 19 nations, is a lot like many other annual drills at the operational level, and it brought with it the standard messages from U.S. officials about European partnership and cooperation.

But in this case, Ukrainians are going to use what they learn to fight separatists backed by Russia, which took the Crimean Peninsula from them in 2014 and whose leader, Vladimir Putin, is scheduled to meet with President Donald Trump on Monday in Helsinki.

Trump and Putin will discuss Ukraine, conflict in Syria and Russian election meddling in the U.S., Trump said last week.

Trump did not rule out recognizing as legitimate Russia's seizure of Crimea, which he said happened on President Barack Obama's watch.

The Russian takeover of the peninsula, where both the Russian and Ukrainian navies had headquarters, divided the Ukraini-

an 1st Marine Battalion, as many marines stayed in Crimea and sided with Russia.

Since then, the marines loyal to Ukraine — like U.S. Marines, their motto is “Always Faithful” — have deployed frequently to the country's eastern region to fight the Russia-backed separatists.

“We will definitely use what we've learned here the next time we go to the east,” said Capt. Alexander Tonenchuk, the Ukrainian battalion's executive officer, referring to the ongoing training with U.S. Marines.

More than 30 ships and other vessels, two dozen aircraft and nearly 3,000 troops are participating in the two-week Sea Breeze exercise, which Russia called “an attempt at provocation.”

Ukrainian troops on Tuesday are expected to mount an amphibious assault on Snake Island in the Black Sea, about 110 miles from the Crimean Peninsula.

Ukraine's military is undergoing reforms to bring it up to NATO standards by 2020, as the country hopes to join the defensive alliance.

Marine reservists of Weapons Platoon, Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 25th Regiment, based out of Harrisburg, Pa., have demonstrated new skills and techniques to help the country's fledgling naval infantry

mature.

The skills developed through Sea Breeze are not specifically about taking on Russia, said Navy Capt. Matt Lehman, one of the top commanders in charge of the exercise, who observed Saturday's land activities after spending a few days underway for naval events.

“What this is about is working with our NATO and partner nations to enhance interoperability amongst the combined force,” Lehman said. “Regardless of any adversary, this is about interoperability.”

For some of the U.S. Marines, training with European forces offered a contrast from their time deployed to Central Command.

Staff Sgt. Anthony Romberger, who deployed to Iraq in 2008 and 2009, said it was like a “flashback” to an earlier era and a more straightforward kind of fighting.

“It's different than Iraq and Afghanistan,” he said. “Here, you know where your enemy is.”

Sgt. Chad Sparks, a machine gunner in the platoon, spent a 2012 deployment in Helmand province in Afghanistan's south.

“These guys are a lot better than the ANA,” Sparks said, referring to the Afghan National Army, which has struggled to take over the fight against the Taliban insurgency in their own country.

A knife fight, a hymn at ‘Big Island’ training

BY MARCUS FICHTL
Stars and Stripes

POHAKULOA TRAINING AREA, Hawaii — A rubber knife fight and a Tongan hymn punctuated the first day of live-fire training on the “Big Island” of Hawaii on Friday during this year's Rim of the Pacific exercise.

Twenty-five nations, more than 45 surface ships and submarines, 17 national land forces, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel are involved in the drills, scheduled to run through Aug. 2 in Hawaii and Southern California.

The 3rd Marine Regiment,

comprising 2,500 Marines, is training with 11 nations at the Mars-like Pohakuloa Training Area, a lava-swept plateau in the shadow of the Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa volcanos.

The initial training involved four-man fire teams reacting to frontal ambushes by shooting at green pop-up targets. It's preparation for more complex operations later in the month, according to one of the participants, 2nd Lt. William Bourque, 23, of Ho-Ho-Kus, N.J., who leads 1st Platoon, Company B, 1st Marine Battalion.

“What we're looking for is

to give our fire team leaders [a chance] to step up and incorporate patrolling techniques,” Bourque said.

One team leader, Lance Cpl. Charles Hafner, 27, of Chantilly, Va., wasn't intimidated by the challenge. “When you get assigned a [leadership position] in the Marine Corps, it's because you did something right,” he said.

Back at base camp, Berserker Company 1st Sgt. William Radebaugh, 37, of Huntington Beach, Calif., a fourth-degree black belt in Marine martial arts, practiced hand-to-hand combat with a

Japanese soldier. Both managed to tag each other with rubber training knives, but Radebaugh prevailed by disarming his counterpart and taking him to the dirt in front of a multinational audience.

As the troops settled in for the night, 30 Tongan Marines, who represent a third of their small country's amphibious forces, sang a hymn about the history of their island.

After the live-fire training, the Marines will board Australian and U.S. ships and conduct amphibious and air assaults onto the islands of Oahu and Kauai.

US, N. Korea discuss return of remains

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — U.S. and North Korean military officials held “productive” talks Sunday in the truce village of Panmunjom on efforts to return of the remains of American soldiers killed during the 1950-53 war.

The negotiations, which were the first general officer-level talks since 2009, occurred three days after the North was a no-show for a previously scheduled round after keeping the delegation on the other side waiting for hours.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un agreed to try to recover remains, “including the immediate repatriation of those already identified,” during his June 12 summit with President Donald Trump in Singapore.

Search efforts in the North have been stalled for more than a decade amid rising tensions over the communist state’s nuclear weapons program.

“Today’s talks were productive and cooperative and resulted in firm commitments,” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Sunday in a statement.

Working-level meetings on the next steps, “including the transfer of remains already collected,” will begin Monday, he added.

The two sides also agreed to restart field operations to search for remains in the

North, he said.

The U.S. delegation was led by Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael Minihan, the chief of staff for the United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea, officials said.

The North Korean side was led by a two-star general, according to the Yonhap News Agency, citing sources.

More than 7,700 U.S. troops are still missing in action from the brutal, three-year war, with an estimated 5,300 believed to have been lost in the North, according to the U.S. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

The agency says that North Korean officials have indicated they have “as many as 200 sets of remains” already recovered that could be ready for return.

There’s no way to be sure they belong to Americans until they’re returned. The identification of remains requires a complicated forensics process that often takes years.

Joint U.S.-North Korean military search teams recovered 229 sets of American remains from North Korea between 1996 and 2005.

The United States was allowed to conduct 33 investigative and recovery operations in the country before former President George W. Bush’s administration called off the search, saying the safety of American participants was not guaranteed.

2 KIA soldiers honored

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — With a rifle salute and the playing of taps, the U.S.-led United Nations Command and South Korea on Friday repatriated the remains of two soldiers found decades after they were killed in the Korean War.

It was a somber reminder of the importance both countries place on the return of lost troops amid hopes that North Korea will follow through on a commitment to return more war dead.

The remains of the U.N. soldier honored Friday were found by South Korean search teams in 2016 in the Cheorwon area of Gangwon province, near the eastern border with the North. The soldier was not identified.

The South Korean soldier’s remains were found by the U.S. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency in 2001 in Kaechon, North Korea. He was identified as Pvt. Yoon Kyung Hyeok, assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division as a Korean Augmentation to the United States.

Yoon’s family followed the casket, which was draped with a South Korean flag, as it was carried to a waiting hearse. The other casket was draped with a blue U.N. flag.

Army test-fires naval strike missile off Hawaii

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

BARKING SANDS PACIFIC MISSILE RANGE, Hawaii — The Army has, for the first time, fired a naval strike missile at a target ship in an effort to create a force that can overwhelm an enemy with attacks from multiple sources.

“I will tell you, you’re seeing the future,” Gen. Robert Brown, commander of U.S. Army Pacific said Thursday after the missile launched from the shoreline of Hawaii’s Kauai Island.

Brown and a group of military observers and VIPs watched the experimental Norwegian-made missile strike the test ship 60 miles offshore via television screens under a tent near the launch area.

The test was commanded by the Army’s Multi-Domain Task Force set up during the month-long Rim of the Pacific exercise in Hawaii.

“We need to present multiple dilemmas

... that hit [the enemy] and cause them incredible disruption and give us a huge advantage,” Brown said.

Former U.S. Pacific Command chief Adm. Harry Harris kick-started the multi-domain battle concept a couple of years ago.

During a speech Harris gave at a Honolulu conference devoted to Army land forces in the Pacific in 2017, he envisioned a joint-service forward-deployed force that could mix-and-match its surveillance sensors and firepower seamlessly. Such a force would not be limited by domain, be it air, sea, land, space or cyber, nor the service in which a warfighter was in.

The Army’s test missile struck the USS *Racine*, a tank landing ship that was also watched and attacked by planes, helicopters, missiles and rockets operated by the Army, Air Force and Japanese Self-Defense Force.

First came rockets fired by Army Apache helicopters, then the naval strike missile

and a volley from the Army’s High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS.

That was followed by two Japanese Type 12 Surface-to-Ship Missiles and another HIMARS barrage.

In battle these attacks would take place simultaneously or in close sequence. The test-firing was done over a five-hour period.

To keep the ship afloat the test missiles and rockets lacked warheads or carried minimal explosives.

“There are so many attacks on the ship sequenced today, and we want the ship to still stand at the end of it so some of them were designed not to sink the ship on the first shot,” said Col. Chris Wentland, the task force commander, before the final firing sequence. “There was damage to the structures on the top but not the hull.”

The goal wasn’t to see how fast the ship could be sunk but to test the task force’s ability to command and communicate across services and weapons systems to coordinate an attack.

Trump sets expectations for summit low

Associated Press

GLASGOW, Scotland — President Donald Trump said “nothing bad ... maybe some good” will come out of Monday’s summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin, as he attempted to lower expectations for what the meeting may actually achieve. Trump’s national security adviser said they aren’t looking for “concrete deliverables.”

Trump also said he “hadn’t thought” about asking Putin to extradite the dozen Russian military intelligence officers indicted last week in Washington on charges related to the hacking of Democratic targets in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, but said that “certain-

ly I’ll be asking about it.”

He blamed the Democratic National Committee for “allowing themselves to be hacked.”

The U.S. has no extradition treaty with Moscow and can’t compel Russia to hand over citizens, and a provision in Russia’s constitution prohibits extraditing its citizens to foreign countries.

Asked whether Trump would ask Putin to turn over the 12 military intelligence officials, U.S. national security adviser John Bolton called the idea “pretty silly” and said doing so would put the president in a “weak position.”

He said Trump is going into the summit with a stronger hand because of the indictments.

“I think the president can put

this on the table and say, ‘This is a serious matter that we need to talk about,’” Bolton said. He said asking for the indicted Russians to be turned over would have the opposite effect.

“For the president to demand something that isn’t going to happen puts the president in a weak position, and I think the president has made it very clear he intends to approach this discussion from a position of strength.”

In an interview with CBS News, Trump said he’s entering the meeting in Finland with “low expectations. I’m not going with high expectations.”

Trump taped the interview Saturday in Scotland. CBS News released excerpts Sunday, hours before Trump was set to

fly to Helsinki for the summit. Trump said such sessions are beneficial. He cited his historic meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in June as “a good thing” and said “having meetings with Russia, China, North Korea, I believe in it.”

Trump and Putin have met twice before during international summits last year in Germany and in Vietnam. But Jon Huntsman, the U.S. ambassador to Russia, said Monday’s meeting “is really the first time for both presidents to actually sit across the table and have a conversation, and I hope it’s a detailed conversation about where we might be able to find some overlapping and shared interests.”

Trump faults Obama for US hacking response

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Saturday scolded the Obama administration for not responding aggressively enough to Russian hacking of Democratic targets in the 2016 U.S. election — cyberattacks underpinning the indictment of 12 Russian military intelligence officers.

Trump’s first response to special counsel Robert Mueller’s initial charges against Russian government officials for interfering in American politics came in tweets the president posted while at his golf resort in Scotland, two days before a high-stakes summit in Finland with Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

“The stories you heard about the 12 Russians yesterday took place during the Obama Administration, not the Trump Administration,” Trump tweeted. “Why didn’t they do something about it, especially when it was reported that President Obama was informed by the FBI in September, before the Election?”

President Barack Obama imposed harsh sanctions on the Russian intelligence services blamed for both the hacking and harassment of U.S. diplomats

working in Russia. It has previously been reported that Obama was hesitant to make the Russian intrusion into the election a more public issue out of concern it might be seen as meddling in the then-ongoing campaign.

The indictment announced Friday said the Russians hacked into Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign and the Democratic Party and released tens of thousands of private communications as part of a broad conspiracy by the Kremlin to meddle in an American election that ended up putting Trump in the White House. U.S. intelligence agencies have said Moscow was aiming to help the Trump campaign and harm Clinton’s bid.

Trump said during his trip to Europe that he would “absolutely, firmly” raise the election-meddling issue with Putin at their meeting, though he added, “I don’t think you’ll have any ‘Gee, I did it, I did it. You got me!’”

Leading Democratic senators asked Trump in a letter Saturday to scrap the summit “if you are not prepared to make Russia’s attack on our election the top issue you will discuss.”

Trump’s secretary of state,

former CIA Director Mike Pompeo, said he was confident the meeting “will put America in a better place. It’s very important that they meet.”

The 29-page indictment lays out how, months before Americans voted in November 2016, Russians schemed to break into key Democratic email accounts, including those belonging to Clinton’s campaign chairman, John Podesta, the Democratic National Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Stolen emails, many politically damaging for Clinton, appeared on WikiLeaks in the campaign’s final stretch.

The charges say the Russian defendants, using a persona known as Guccifer 2.0, in August 2016 contacted a person in touch with the Trump campaign to offer help. And they say that on the same day Trump, in a speech, urged Russia to find Clinton’s missing emails, Russian hackers tried for the first time to break into email accounts used by her personal office.

Mueller did not allege that Trump campaign associates were involved in the hacking effort.

Man fatally shot by Chicago police

Associated Press

CHICAGO — An angry crowd shouted and threw bottles at Chicago police after an officer fatally shot a man on the city’s South Side on Saturday, prompting the arrest of at least four demonstrators.

Chicago police patrol chief Fred Waller told a news conference that the man was shot in the South Shore neighborhood after police officers on foot tried to question him because “the bulge around his waistband” suggested he was armed. The man became combative and eventually broke free from the officers, Waller said.

“They thought he appeared to be reaching for a weapon, which he did have a weapon on him, and the officers tragically shot him,” he said.

At a news conference Sunday, a department spokesman said footage from body cameras and surveillance cameras showed that the man was armed with what appears to be a handgun.

Authorities haven’t released the name of the man who was killed, but police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said he was in his 30s and had no recent arrest history.

Border measures are part of bigger immigration crackdown

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The separation of families at the U.S.-Mexico border caught the attention of the world and prompted mass outrage, but it only tells a small part of the story surrounding the Trump administration's immigration policy.

In reality, the government is working to harden the system on multiple fronts to curb immigration, carving a path around various court rulings to do so. The administration is seeking to lock up families indefinitely, expand detention space, tighten asylum rules and apply more scrutiny to green card applications.

Many of the initiatives received little attention during the chaos over separated families, but they show how determined President Donald Trump is to stop immigrants from coming — both legally and illegally — even in cases where the ad-

ministration has been stymied by the courts.

Other administrations may have faced similar problems with illegal immigration and tried similar solutions, but all have been unable to stem the flow of migrants streaming through the southern border. No other president, however, has campaigned so vociferously on the topic.

"The United States will not be a migrant camp and it will not be a refugee holding facility," President Donald Trump declared days before putting an end to the separation of parents from their children. "Not on my watch."

The administration's attempts to deter Central American families and children from making the trip north are designed to send the message to immigrants — and Trump's supporters in an election year — that reaching the United States is going to get harder, and so will getting

papers to stay in the country legally.

"All of these things, I think, are part of a bigger ultimate aim, which is to significantly reduce immigration of all kinds to the United States over the longer term, and in the process, the real desire is to change the character of the country," said Doris Meissner, a former commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the Clinton administration.

Since Trump took office, the administration has ended protected status for hundreds of thousands of people from countries recovering from war and natural disasters, slashed the number of refugees allowed into the United States and said it will seek to strip the U.S. citizenship of those suspected of cheating to get it.

And applicants for green cards and other immigration benefits are facing longer waits and more detailed questions.

UK's May says Trump advised her to sue EU

Associated Press

LONDON — President Donald Trump advised British Prime Minister Theresa May to sue the European Union in the tense negotiations over Britain's exit from the bloc, May said Sunday.

Trump told reporters Friday at a joint press conference with May that he had given the British leader a suggestion that she found too "brutal." Asked Sunday on the BBC's "Andrew Marr Show" what that suggestion was, May said with an amused expression: "He told me I should sue the EU. Not go into negotiation, sue them."

She added: "What the president also said at that press conference was, 'Don't walk away. Don't walk away from the negotiations. Then you're stuck.'"

Trump's first official visit to Britain last week was overshadowed by explosive and un-diplomatic remarks he made about May's leadership, especially her handling of the Brexit negotiations.

In an interview with The Sun newspaper published Thursday — just as May was hosting Trump at a lavish black-tie dinner — Trump said the British leader's approach likely "killed" chances of a free-trade deal with the United States. He said he had told May how to conduct Brexit negotiations, "but she didn't listen to me."

The comments shocked many in Britain — even May's opponents. The U.S. president later sought to soften the blow, telling reporters at Friday's joint news conference that May was an "incredible woman" who is "doing a fantastic job" as prime minister.

He denied he criticized May, saying the Sun interview did not focus on his complimentary remarks about the British leader, but The Sun released audio that proved otherwise.

Cease-fire holds after day of intense Israel-Hamas fighting

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military lifted its restrictions along the Gaza border Sunday, indicating it had accepted an Egypt-mediated cease-fire that ended a 24-hour round of fighting with Hamas militants that had threatened to devolve into all-out war.

The military had shut down a popular beach and placed limitations on large gatherings as many residents stayed close to home on Saturday amid dozens of rockets that were fired from Gaza. But after several hours of calm, it said residents could resume their daily routines.

On Saturday, the military carried out its largest wave of air-

strikes in Gaza since the 2014 war, hitting several Hamas military compounds and flattening a number of its training camps. Two Palestinian teenagers were killed in an airstrike in Gaza City, while four Israelis were wounded from a rocket that landed on a residential home.

The military said several mortar shells were fired even after Hamas announced the cease-fire, as sirens warning of incoming projectiles wailed in Israel overnight again. The military struck the mortar launcher early Sunday, but the calm held, with neither side appearing eager to resume hostilities.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would

not accept a cease-fire unless it included an end to all militant hostilities, including incendiary kites and balloons from Gaza that have devastated nearby Israeli farmlands and nature reserves.

"The Israeli military has delivered its most punishing blow against Hamas since the 2014 war. I hope they got the message. If not, they will get it later on," he said at the weekly Cabinet meeting.

After several balloons drifted into Israel on Sunday, the military said it targeted the Hamas squad that had launched them from the northern Gaza Strip.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Former priest sells affordable caskets

MN HIBBING — A former priest is building pine caskets and urns in a century-old church in Minnesota with a goal of making funerals more affordable to his customers.

Mark Coen's company, Simple Pine Box, sells handmade caskets for \$650. He also sells handmade pine urns for \$125, KARE-TV reported.

Coen learned how to create the caskets by studying YouTube videos. He spends 20 to 30 hours a week on each casket at Hibbing's Grace Lutheran church, where he also lives.

Coen said his father's funeral showed him the need when his family was charged \$1,000 just to rent a casket prior to cremation.

Disabled veterans given chance to race

VT BARRE — A Vermont racing track is hosting a training program designed to give disabled military veterans a chance to race.

Thunder Road International Speed Bowl in Barre said the HardLuck Tour is coming to the facility Wednesday. The track said in a statement that the program uses auto racing "to honor those who have served while helping them overcome physical and mental boundaries."

The track said the event is part of the second round of HardLuck Tour's Northeast Qualifiers series.

Moxie flows freely at annual festival

ME LIBSON — Mainers celebrated all things Moxie over the weekend.

The Moxie festival in Lisbon featured a parade, road race,

food, fireworks — and plenty of Moxie.

The creator of the quirky beverage was a Maine native, Dr. Augustin Thompson, whose brew was originally marketed 132 years ago as "Moxie Nerve Foods" in Lowell, Mass.

This is the 36th celebration in Lisbon. The first Moxie Festival was held in 1982 thanks to the efforts of the late Frank Anicetti, who died in 2017.

Anicetti counseled that Moxie is an acquired taste.

He said folks may want to spit it out after the first sip. He said those who stick with it are rewarded "the true flavor of Moxie."

Teen tells police man tied her to tree

FL COLLEGE PARK — Florida police said a teenage girl was found tied to a tree just outside Orlando.

The Orlando Sentinel said police responded to a report of a suspicious incident Friday night in College Park and found the girl bound to a tree. Police did not release the girl's name. The teen suffered minor injuries to her wrists.

Orlando Police Lt. Wanda Miglio said the teen told authorities that a man came up from behind her and grabbed her. The teen said the man, described as in his 50s, then tied her to a tree, binding her with earbuds.

In video, cops flip coin to decide arrest

GA ROSWELL — Heads, you're under arrest. Tails, you're free to go.

Body camera video shows Georgia police officers laughing as they use a coin-flip app to decide whether to detain a woman during a traffic stop in April.

The video obtained by WXIA-TV shows Roswell police Officer Courtney Brown consulting

with fellow officers about whether to arrest Sarah Webb or just give her a ticket after she was stopped for allegedly speeding.

The television station said Brown opened the app on her phone, after which Officer Kristee Wilson suggested that heads meant arrest and tails meant release. The flip came up tails, but they decide to arrest anyway.

The report said both officers are on administrative leave and the charges against Webb were dropped.

Another Mud Day oozes into the books

MI WESTLAND — Made in the shade? It was more like made in the mud for hundreds of people at a Michigan park.

Scores of children — and some parents — participated in the 31st annual Wayne County Mud Day last week at Nankin Mills Park in Westland, west of Detroit. They sloshed and slid around in a shallow "pool" of mud and engaged in various races and a limbo line.

In keeping with tradition, there was something royal amid the soil: Charles Daviskiba, 3, and Molly Kofahl, 4, were crowned Mud Day King and Queen.

Video of lip-syncing cops gets 16M views

VA NORFOLK — A video of police officers in Virginia dancing and lip syncing to a Bruno Mars song has become a smash hit on the internet.

The Virginian-Pilot reported last week that the Norfolk police department's "Uptown Funk" video had been viewed more than 16 million times.

The officers were responding to a lip-sync challenge from

police in Corinth, Texas. Officers in the city outside Dallas had produced their own video using Miley Cyrus' "Party in the U.S.A."

Departments in Iowa, Georgia and California have also taken up the challenge.

Second rhinoceros born at zoo in 11 days

NC ASHEBORO — The North Carolina Zoo said another southern white rhinoceros was born, the second such birth at the zoo in 11 days.

The zoo said in a news release the female calf was born early Friday in the Watani Grasslands habitat, which was created for a breeding rhino herd.

Zookeepers described the calf as healthy and doing well.

The first rhino calf, also a female, was born on July 2. Before that, it had been 41 years since a rhino was born at the zoo.

Police seek adults shown kicking boy

PA PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia police are looking for two adults after a video emerged on social media showing a woman kicking a small boy several times at a playground.

Investigators released the video Friday and are seeking the public's help in identifying a man and woman seen in it.

In the video, a young boy can be seen kicking a little girl as an adult man separates them saying "No kicking!"

An adult woman then kicks the little boy twice, saying, "No kicking! You want to kick? How do you feel?" and profanely threatens more violence.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

France beats Croatia to win World Cup

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Kylian Mbappe and France put on a thrilling show in winning the World Cup title. All Russian President Vladimir Putin might remember is the Pussy Riot protest.

The 19-year-old Mbappe became only the second teenager after Pele to score in a World Cup final, helping France beat Croatia 4-2 on Sunday.

Mbappe had just shown his electrifying speed in the 52nd minute when play was held up by four protesters who ran onto the field in the second half. Russian punk band Pussy Riot later took credit for the incident — watched from the VIP seats by Putin, whose government once jailed members of the activist group.

About 12 minutes after play resumed, Mbappe sent a right-footed shot past Croatia goalkeeper Danijel Subasic.

The only other teen to score in a World

Cup final was Pele, who was 17 when Brazil beat Sweden 5-2 in 1958.

Mbappe, who plays for Paris Saint-Germain in the French league, was born months after France first won its only other World Cup title in 1998.

Putin was later on the field during a downpour to award medals to the players. FIFA president Gianni Infantino then handed France captain Hugo Lloris the World Cup trophy.

Paul Pogba and Antoine Griezmann, France's two other key players, also scored at the Luzhniki Stadium.

But it was Mbappe who put the match out of reach with a furious passage of play in the second half. In the 59th, a run from Mbappe started a play that ended up with Pogba on the edge of the penalty area. With his second attempt, the midfielder curled his shot beyond Subasic.

Mbappe then scored himself, his fourth of the tournament, to make it 4-1.

Griezmann scored from the penalty spot in the 38th minute after a video review.

About four minutes after his corner kick was knocked out of play, the referee ruled Ivan Perisic had handled the ball on the way.

France took the lead in the 18th when Croatia's tallest outfield player, 1.90-meter (6-foot-3) forward Mario Mandzukic, rose to meet Griezmann's free kick with the top of his head. He inadvertently sent it past his own goalkeeper.

Perisic and Mandzukic both scored for Croatia, first to equalize in the 28th minute and later as a consolation goal in the 69th, embarrassing Lloris with a flicked shot as the France goalkeeper tried to dribble the ball out of his goalmouth.

France coach Didier Deschamps became only the third man to win the World Cup as a player and a coach. Mario Zagallo of Brazil and Franz Beckenbauer of Germany are the others.

Djokovic tops Anderson for fourth title

Associated Press

LONDON — Novak Djokovic was disconsolate and injured when he left Wimbledon a year ago, quitting during his quarterfinal because of a painful right elbow that would need surgery.

Djokovic was so dispirited by his upset exit at the French Open last month that he vowed, in the heat of the moment, to skip the grass-court circuit.

Good thing he didn't stick to that. Just look at him now, back at his best and Wimbledon's champion for the fourth time. Djokovic ended a Grand Slam drought that lasted more than two seasons, grabbing a lead in Sunday's final right away against a weary Kevin Anderson and holding off a late challenge to win 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (3).

Anderson nearly managed to extend the match, five times standing just a point away from forcing a fourth set. Djokovic held steady on each one, then was as superior in the tiebreaker as he was most of the sun-drenched afternoon.

It is Djokovic's 13th major trophy, the fourth-highest total in the history of men's tennis,

trailing only Roger Federer's 20, Rafael Nadal's 17 and Pete Sampras' 14.

But it's also Djokovic's first since he completed a career Grand Slam at the 2016 French Open.

During that time, he struggled with the first major injury of his professional career, one that forced him off the tour for the last half of 2017. He eventually had an operation this February, and as his losses accumulated, his ranking fell out of the top 20 for the first time in more than a decade.

At No. 21, Djokovic is the lowest-ranked Wimbledon titlist since Goran Ivanisevic in 2001.

Under a pale blue sky interrupted by only the occasional soft white puff of cloud, with the temperature at 86 degrees (30 Celsius), Djokovic started so well, and Anderson shakily.

That might have been easy to anticipate beforehand.

This was, after all, the 22nd Grand Slam final for Djokovic, and the second for Anderson, a 6-foot-8 powerful server who was the runner-up at last year's U.S. Open and was aiming to become the first South African

man to win at Wimbledon.

Plus, Anderson could be excused for exhaustion. His semifinal was the second-longest Grand Slam match in history, lasting more than 6 hours until he edged John Isner 26-24 in the fifth set. And that followed another extended fifth set in his 13-11 upset of eight-time champion Federer in the quarterfinals.

So it was no wonder that, with all of that time on court, all of that stress on his racket-swinging arm, Anderson was visited by a trainer after Sunday's opening set to get his right elbow massaged.

Anderson was so out of sorts, his strokes so off-the-mark, that Djokovic gathered eight of the first 10 games even though he only conjured up two winners. No need for more, because Anderson gifted him 15 unforced errors in that span.

By the conclusion of a third consecutive dud of a straight-set men's singles final at the All England Club, Anderson had made 32 unforced errors, and the steady Djokovic merely 13.

Another key: Djokovic was able to handle Anderson's big

serves much better than previous opponents. Widely considered the top returner in the game today, Djokovic broke Anderson four times. Consider that Anderson held in each of his last 27 service games against Isner, and dropped his very first on Sunday.

And one more: Djokovic saved all seven break points he faced, including five that would have given Anderson the third set.

As much as Djokovic is known for his body-bending defense and unerring reads on opponents' serves, he's also someone who fills his matches with histrionics and exaggerated reactions, whether violently smacking the side of his shoe with his racket — as he did against Nadal — or tearing off his shirt to celebrate a victory.

This day was no different. Angered by fans making noise during points, he told the chair umpire to tell them to shut up, adding a colorful word in there. He pointed to his ear after winning one point, as if to say: "Who are you cheering for now?!" He blew a kiss toward the stands after another.

Pacquiao after KO: 'I am back'

Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Manny Pacquiao won by knockout for the first time in nine years to claim the World Boxing Association welterweight title, and made a proclamation.

"This is it. I am back in boxing," the 39-year-old Pacquiao said after his seventh-round knockout of Lucas Matthisse on Sunday. "I am not done. I'm still there."

It was Pacquiao's first bout since a contentious loss last year to Jeff Horn in Australia, and since parting ways with longtime trainer Freddie Roach to work with Buboy Fernandez.

"It's just a matter of time. You have to rest and get it back and that's what I did."

Pacquiao (60-7-2, 39 KOs) knocked Matthisse down onto one knee in the third and fifth rounds. He knocked the Argentine down again in the seventh, and Matthisse spat out his mouthpiece, causing a frenzy among Pacquiao fans in the stadium.

"I am not boasting but ... I think he's hurting from my punches," said Pacquiao, who hadn't won by knockout since 2009. "Every punch that I throw, he's hurt. I think he's scared of my punches."

Matthisse, who won 36 out of 39 matches by knockout, said Pacquiao was a "great fighter, a great legend," adding that he planned to take a break.

Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad attended the fight, the biggest in the country since the 1975 heavyweight clash between Muhammad Ali and Australian Joe Bugner.

"I would like to congratulate Senator Manny Pacquiao for giving us pride and bringing the Filipino nation together once more," said Duterte, who flew to Malaysia for the bout ahead of an official visit.

Duterte said in a statement that Pacquiao has proven himself again as "one of the greatest boxers of all time" and that the win will cement his legacy in the sport.

Scores of screaming Filipino fans in the stadium waved flags and chanted "Manny, Manny" throughout the match. Pacquiao's rise to fame from an impoverished rural childhood to become one of the world's wealthiest sportsmen over his 23-year career has made him a national hero.

Pacquiao said he will return to his work as a senator, but won't be hanging up the gloves just yet.

"I am addicted to boxing. I really love to fight and bring honor to my country," he said. "That's my heart's desire."

Horn, who lost his WBO welterweight title to Terence Crawford in Las Vegas last month, was quick to respond to Pacquiao's victory.

"Congratulations Manny Pacquiao," Horn posted on Instagram. "Rematch?"

In the other title fights, Filipino Jhock Tepora had a knockout win over Edivaldo Oretga of Mexico for the interim WBA featherweight title. Venezuela's Carlos Canizales defended his WBA world light flyweight title against China's Lu Bin, who had been aiming to become the first boxer to win a major world title in just two career fights. South African Moruti Mthalane got a unanimous decision against Pakistan's Muhammad Waseem to capture the IBF flyweight title.

Truex wins again at Kentucky Speedway

Associated Press

SPARTA, Ky. — No matter which driver led Martin Truex Jr., the advantage always seemed temporary as he positioned himself to make a pivotal move.

Distance usually followed his passes, particularly after his final one that sealed his dominance.

Truex Jr. won the NASCAR Cup Series race at Kentucky Speedway, passing Brad Keselowski and then Kurt Busch late on the way to repeating as champion on Saturday night.

Truex's No. 78 Toyota Camry appeared even more dominant than last July as he led five times for 174 of 267 laps and swept the first two stages from the pole. The defending Cup champion was always in contention in the 400-mile race, even while trailing. He proved it at clutch moments late, overtaking Keselowski on lap 201 and Busch 23 laps later to become Kentucky's first back-to-back winner, earning his fourth victory this season and 19th of his career.

"It feels good, you know," said Truex, who won by 1.901 seconds on the 1.5-mile track. "You never know how these races are going to play out. You never know quite what is going to happen, and we had such a strong Toyota tonight they weren't going to beat us."

His competition certainly couldn't hold him off.

"We had better speed than we've had at mile-and-a-halves, but not enough to run with the 78 (Truex)," said Keselowski, who led twice for 38 laps.

Ryan Blaney and Keselowski were next in Fords, followed by Kyle Busch (Toyota) and Kevin Harvick (Ford).

Rounding out the top 10 were Kurt Busch, Erik Jones — who started second in a Toyota — Aric Almirola, Kyle Larson and Joey Logano.

Degenkolb masters cobblestones, Porte crashes

Associated Press

ROUBAIX, France — John Degenkolb won a three-man sprint to conclude the action-packed cobblestoned Stage 9 of the Tour de France on Sunday, while overall contender Richie Porte crashed out of the race and favorite Chris Froome overcame a tumble.

Yellow-jersey holder Greg Van Avermaet crossed second and increased his overall lead to 43 seconds ahead of Geraint Thomas, a teammate of Froome at Team Sky. Yves Lampaert of Quick-Step finished third.

Four-time Tour champion Chris Froome crossed in the main pack, 27 seconds behind, having had a fan help him get going again when he fell with 45 kilometers (28 miles) to go.

Froome moved up to eighth overall, 1:42 behind Van Avermaet, who is not a threat in the mountains.

Porte, the BMC team leader, crashed 10 kilometers into the 156.5-kilometer (97-mile) leg — before any of the 15 cobblestone sections — and abandoned with an apparent right shoulder injury.

Porte also crashed out of last year's Tour in the ninth stage, on a mountain descent.

Rigoberto Uran, last year's runner-up, and Mikel Landa, one of three leaders of the Movistar team, also each crashed and lost time.

Romain Bardet, the French hope who finished on the podium the last two years, struggled through three punctured tires but kept his losses to a

minimum.

Among the favorites in the overall standings apart from Froome: Alejandro Valverde is fifth (1:31 behind); Rafal Majka sixth (1:32); Jakob Fuglsang seventh (1:33); Adam Yates ninth (1:42); Landa 10th (1:42); and Vincenzo Nibali 12th (1:48).

It was the first career victory at the Tour for Degenkolb, a German who rides for the Trek-Segafredo team. Degenkolb won the Paris-Roubaix single-day classic, which covers much of the same course, in 2015.

"This is a very big victory," said Degenkolb, who came back from a serious training accident 2 1/2 years ago. "I have been through a lot of things, it was such a hard time."

Red Sox beat Jays on walkoff slam

Associated Press

BOSTON — Xander Bogaerts relaxed to the beat of his favorite walk-up song. Three pitchers later, he was stunned by excitement rounding the bases.

Bogaerts hit a game-ending grand slam with one out in 10th inning, and J.D. Martinez hit his major league-leading 29th homer to carry the Boston Red Sox to a 6-2 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays on Saturday.

Mookie Betts opened the winning rally by reaching on an error against Chris Rowley (0-1) when shortstop Gurriel, who moved there in the beginning of the inning, had his grounder

go right through his legs. Brock Holt had a hit-and-run single and Martinez was intentionally walked before Bogaerts hit his shot to left-center that caromed around the edge of the bleachers.

Before he came up, Bogaerts heard 'X Gon' Give It To Ya' by DMX.

"The music. I'm going to be honest," he said, smiling. "It was a good time for it. I have certain spots where I like to hear that. It really helped me. I kind of smiled going up there."

It was Boston's first game-ending slam in extra innings since Hall of Famer since Jim Rice on July 4, 1984, and Bogaerts' third slam of the season.

Cards fire Matheny after loss to Reds

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Jose Peraza's best game at the plate turned out to be Mike Matheny's last in the Cardinals' dugout.

Peraza had a career-best five hits, Scooter Gennett drove in two runs and the Reds waited out a pair of rain delays before beating St. Louis 8-2 on Saturday night.

Peraza is hitting 14-for-33 (.424) on the Reds' eight-game road trip.

"I felt good," Peraza said. "I just swung the bat and something happened."

The Cardinals fired Matheny, who was in his seventh year as manager, after the game, a defeat that dropped St. Louis to 47-46 and 7½ games back of the NL Central-leading Chicago Cubs.

Bench coach Mike Shildt was named the team's interim manager. Hitting coach John Mabry and assistant hitting coach Bill Mueller were also fired.

The Cardinals haven't missed three straight postseasons since 1997-99.

"These decisions are never easy, but we felt that a change in leadership was necessary as the team prepares to enter into the second half of the season," Cardinals President of Baseball Operations John Mozeliak said. "I would like to thank Mike for his exceptional commitment and devotion to the Cardinals organization, including many fond memories of our years working together."

This will be the club's first midseason managerial change since Joe Torre was replaced by Mike Jorgensen in 1995.

Matheny went 591-473 as manager, and his tenure included a loss to the Boston Red Sox in the 2013 World Series. Matheny was a Gold Glove Award-winning catcher with St. Louis from 2000-04 before getting his first managerial job with the club prior to the 2012 season.

Roundup

Calhoun HR lifts Angels over Dodgers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kole Calhoun homered on his first pitch from All-Star closer Kenley Jansen (0-3) in the 10th inning, lifting the Angels over the Dodgers 5-4 after blowing two leads.

Four of the Angels' five games against the Dodgers this season have been decided by one run. The Angels lead the season series 3-2. The Angels led 3-0 in the second and 4-3 in the seventh before the Dodgers rallied twice to tie the game.

The Dodgers put the potential tying run on in the bottom of the 10th when Andrew Toles doubled to deep left. Justin Upton collided with the wall trying to make the catch and the trainer came out to check on him, although he stayed in the game.

Toles took third on a passed ball by pinch-hitter Chase Utley flied out to center and Yasmani Grandal struck out swinging against Jose Alvarez (4-3) to end the game.

Royals 5, White Sox 0: Jorge Bonifacio homered for the first time since he was suspended for testing positive for a performance-enhancing substance, and visiting Kansas City beat Chicago for just its second win in July.

The 25-year-old Bonifacio broke into the majors last year, hitting 17 homers in 113 games for Kansas City. But he missed

the first part of this season after a positive test for Boldenone, resulting in an 80-game suspension.

Marlins 2, Phillies 0: All-Star Aaron Nola gave up two runs in the first inning and Philadelphia never recovered, losing to host Miami.

The NL East-leading Phillies have scored only 24 runs in their past nine games.

Diamondbacks 3, Braves 0: Zack Greinke added another road win to his strong first half by allowing only four hits in 7⅔ innings, extending Atlanta's offensive slump, and visiting Arizona shut out the Braves.

Greinke (10-5), named to the NL All-Star team on Thursday as a replacement for Chicago's Jon Lester, has won five straight decisions.

Astros 9, Tigers 1: Gerrit Cole struck out eight in 5⅔ strong innings, and host Houston hit three home runs in a win over Detroit.

Mets 7, Nationals 4: Zack Wheeler won for the first time since April 29, Michael Conforto homered and New York defeated visiting Washington.

Rays 19, Twins 6: At Minneapolis, Jake Bauers homered for the second straight game and drove in four runs, Carlos Gomez homered and had two RBIs, and Tampa Bay scored 15 times in the final three innings to rally past Minnesota.

Pirates 2-6, Brewers 1-2: Pittsburgh's Starling Marte and Gregory Polanco hit back-to-back homers in both games on Saturday as the host Pirates swept their doubleheader with Milwaukee.

Athletics 4, Giants 3: Pinch-hitter Mark Canha hit a go-ahead home run in the seventh inning and Oakland continued its late-game success, rallying to beat host San Francisco.

Yankees 5, Indians 4: Austin Romine came all the way around to score when Cleveland committed two errors on his routine double in the seventh inning, and visiting New York edged the Indians.

Cubs 11, Padres 6: At San Diego, All-Star slugger Javier Baez hit a three-run home run and drove in five, Kyle Schwarber and Ian Happ also went deep and NL Central-leading Chicago beat the Padres.

Rockies 4, Mariners 1: Jon Gray returned from a two-week demotion to the minors to pitch effectively into the eighth inning, Carlos Gonzalez homered and host Colorado extended its strong finish to the season's first half by beating Seattle.

Orioles 1, Rangers 0: Rookie Yefry Ramirez and four relievers combined on a four-hitter, Jonathan Schoop drove in a run with a sixth-inning sacrifice fly and Baltimore beat visiting Texas in a matchup of last-place teams.