

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## ISIS rebounds in Iraq after win declared

*The Washington Post*

BAGHDAD — Islamic State is creeping back into parts of central Iraq just seven months after the government declared victory in the war against the group, embarking on a wave of kidnappings, assassinations and bombings that have raised fears a new cycle of insurgency is starting.

The small-scale attacks are taking place mostly in remote areas that have been neglected by the government and are chillingly reminiscent of the kind of tactics that characterized ISIS insurgency in the years before 2014, when the group captured a vast swathe of territory across Iraq and Syria.

The militants have since been driven out of all but two small pockets in Syria near the Iraqi border, where they are surrounded by U.S.-backed or Syrian government forces. Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared “final victory” over ISIS in December, and President Donald Trump said in Helsinki on Monday that the battle is now “98 percent, 99 percent” complete.

The resurgence of violence, in a triangle of sparsely populated territory stretching across the provinces of Diyala, Kirkuk and Salahuddin, has prompted many Iraqis to question whether the victory declaration was premature.

Over the past two months, dozens of people, including local government officials, tribal elders and village chiefs, have been abducted and killed or ransomed by fighters claiming affiliation with ISIS. Electricity infrastructure and oil pipelines have been blown up. Armed men dressed as security forces and manning fake checkpoints have hijacked trucks and robbed travelers, rendering the main Baghdad-Kirkuk highway unsafe for a period of weeks.

In one of the most sinister attacks, six members of the Iraqi security forces were captured at one of the fake checkpoints and forced to appear in a somewhat wobbly video. Kneeling before the black-and-white ISIS flag and flanked by two heavily bearded figures, the men took turns warning they would be killed if the Iraqi government did not release Sunni female prisoners. Days later, the bullet-ridden bodies of the men were found dumped in the area.

The video jolted Iraqis, stirring memories of the worst of ISIS’ excesses during the years that it ruled over its self-proclaimed

**‘The fight is not over, and if people are putting their guard down, it’s a little too early.’**

**Col. Sean Ryan**

U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad

“caliphate.” Traffic on the Baghdad-Kirkuk highway came to a near standstill as nervous travelers refrained from driving and instead booked flights, which sold out weeks in advance.

“Of course people are nervous,” said Imad Mahmoud, a member of the Diyala Provincial Council. “People finally thought there was stability and that they can travel wherever they want, and then there are these attacks and this video and people are afraid again.”

It was inevitable that ISIS would attempt a comeback after its crushing defeat, said Hisham al-Hashemi, an Iraqi counterterrorism expert based in Baghdad who advises the government. But, he said, “they are returning faster than I anticipated. That they have returned this fast is very dangerous.”

He blames the government’s failure to deliver aid and reconstruction to an area that was among the first to be freed from ISIS control but has seen little in the way of assistance. “The Iraqi government did well on the military side but it didn’t do well in bringing stability to those areas. It is to the advantage of ISIS that the government has not implemented any of its plans.”

This latest iteration of the insurgency is a long way from being in a position to capture whole cities or control territory, analysts and military officials say. The Iraqi security forces have launched operations over the past two weeks aimed at rooting out the militants, and they have claimed some successes.

The government has declared that the Baghdad-Kirkuk road is now safe, and drivers and passengers who take the route say there are new checkpoints every kilometer. An operation this week by Iraqi and Kurdish security forces, backed by U.S. airstrikes, succeeded in eradicating an

ISIS safe haven that had emerged in mountains near the town of Makhmour, the U.S. military said Tuesday in a statement.

The Iraqi security forces are in better shape today to contain the violence than they were in 2014, when whole divisions fled the ISIS advance, said Col. Sean Ryan, the U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad. “They’re just doing small-scale attacks because they don’t have large-scale abilities anymore,” he said. “But what they do have is the ability to scare the population. The fight is not over, and if people are putting their guard down, it’s a little too early.”

Although ISIS doesn’t control territory in the way it did before, it does appear to have freedom of movement across a large stretch of terrain and especially at night, said Michael Knights, a military analyst at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The territory in question spans an area that was only briefly held by ISIS before forces mostly comprising Shiite militias swept through and drove the militants out in late 2014 and early 2015. The fighting displaced tens of thousands of people, most of whom have not returned, leaving scores of largely destroyed, depopulated villages scattered across inhospitable terrain.

These ghost towns offer a perfect environment for a guerrilla army to regroup, Knights said.

“It was very predictable that the ISIS guys would reboot the strongest in this area. These are the most difficult ungoverned spaces in Iraq for the Iraqi security forces to garrison, and it is also the place where ISIS has had the longest to regroup,” Knights added.

They appear to be acting in accordance with instructions issued in an April audio-tape released by ISIS’ current spokesman, Abu al-Hassan al-Muhajir, in which he urged surviving ISIS fighters to conduct attacks targeting Iraq’s economic infrastructure and Iraqi Sunnis who collaborate with the government.

“This is a model they’ve maintained in the past, and it seems they’re moving ahead and gaining momentum” said Renad Mansour of the London-based Chatham House think tank. “There’s a lot of frustration over why Abadi declared victory when it seems they are still there. It seems the insurgency is starting again.”

# Polar fitness app tracked US military users

*The Washington Post*

A team of Dutch reporters discovered that a second fitness app was divulging sensitive information about U.S. servicemembers.

Less than seven months ago, a group of journalists and internet sleuths reported that the fitness-tracking application Strava was revealing highly sensitive information about U.S. military personnel around the world, including in Iraq and Syria. The security breach, which alarmed lawmakers and Pentagon officials, prompted the U.S. military to launch a review of its guidelines for wireless devices at military facilities.

Now, a group of reporters in the Netherlands has found another fitness app that may have placed U.S. military personnel at even greater risk.

Until recently, a fitness app called Polar allowed virtually anyone to access the names, addresses and activities of thousands of soldiers and secret agents, wrote

reporters at De Correspondent, a Dutch news website, and Bellingcat, a site that publishes citizen-journalist investigations. In an article published last week, the reporters explained how they were easily able to procure the personal information of more than 6,460 U.S. military and security personnel, including people working at the National Security Agency and the U.S. Secret Service.

Like Strava, Polar created an activity map that showed the exact routes where users exercised. But Polar also tracked and consolidated all the sessions of any single user onto that same map. By simply clicking on a user's profile, the reporters were able to access that user's routes, heart rates and activities going as far back as 2014, making it far easier to follow any single user in Polar than it had been in Strava.

Screenshots provided to The Washington Post confirmed that the journalists were able to track the running histories of users

stationed at military bases overseas, including Guantanamo Bay Naval Base and Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, the primary base of operations for U.S. Africa Command in the Horn of Africa.

Given that most users tend to turn their fitness trackers on or off when leaving or entering their homes, government personnel on Polar not only revealed where they worked but also "unwittingly mark(ed) their houses on the map," Dutch researcher Foeke Postma said in a post for Bellingcat.

"Strava allowed people to identify sites ... but this one here centers in on the individuals that work at that site and where they live," said Eric Vanderburg, the vice president of the cybersecurity consulting division at TCDI, a software company. The risk posed by Polar for individual users was "definitely more significant," he said.

It is unclear whether Polar is as widely used as Strava, which reportedly adds 1 million new users every 40 days.

## Navy looks to stabilize subs

BY SCOTT WYLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

In the Navy's ongoing quest to build a more stealthy submarine, service-funded research is close to yielding a new method for boatbuilders to test how much vibrational noise a sub will emit before it ever touches water.

The University of Connecticut research team's method sounds simple at first — much of it centers around studying a pair of modified, shaking tables — but years of complex math and advanced physics have gone into creating precise measurements for how much an individual submarine component will shake.

After seven years and \$1.6 million in funding from the Office of Naval Research, the researchers say the method will help submarine builders incorporate simpler, less expensive details into the design phase of the boats.

The research comes as the U.S. submarine fleet shrinks due to the retirement of aging Los Angeles-class submarines from the Cold War era while demand for submarine missions from U.S. combatant commanders around the world remains high. The Navy is building two Virginia-class submarines annually, but the 2019 30-

year shipbuilding plan calls for an additional 16 to be built beyond that rate, in line with the White House's stated goal of a larger Navy.

Meanwhile, Navy officials say Russia is deploying its submarines more often and China has rapidly modernized its undersea program.

The Navy already uses sound-dampening technologies like polymer-rubber tiles and quieter propulsion to prevent detection by other navies, but in the undersea world, even tiny noises can tip off an adversary.

"The more quiet they can be, the better," said Rich Christenson, a civil and environmental engineering professor who advises the university's graduate students working on the project.

Christenson and his students add parts to the two shaking tables, which seismic engineers normally use to test how a structure will hold up to an earthquake.

The tables are hooked to a computer that tells them to jiggle the parts at the same rate as if they were installed in a submarine operating underwater.

A big challenge is devising the complex numerical models for the computer to run the simulations, Christenson said, adding that the team must consider how the water interacts with the submarine's structure.

## US sailors evacuate Chinese mariner in medical distress

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS  
*Stars and Stripes*

A Chinese commercial mariner is in stable condition thanks to the efforts of a group of U.S. sailors near Guam.

About 12:35 p.m. Sunday, the U.S. Coast Guard alerted sailors assigned to the Guam-based Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 to a Chinese mariner suffering "life-threatening" symptoms aboard the Belgian cargo ship Wangaratta, a Navy statement said.

HSC-25 crewmembers, including aircraft commander Lt. Samantha Telles-Goins, headed for the ship about 120 miles west of Guam. They brought the distressed mariner aboard for an airlift evacuation.

"This was my first lifesaving Medical Evacuation as a member of HSC-25," Telles-Goins said in the statement. "Seeing all of my training pay off successfully was a very rewarding experience."

The sailors took the mariner to Naval Hospital Guam, and he was later transferred to Guam Memorial Hospital for treatment, according to the Navy statement.

The Navy said Sunday's incident marked the 21st time the sea combat squadron has responded to an emergency call from the Coast Guard assigned to Guam. It was also the seventh time the squadron recovered a survivor during search and rescue or medical evacuations this year, the statement said.

## South Korea grounds its military helos

BY KIM GAMEL  
AND YOO KYONG CHANG  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — The South Korean military grounded dozens of new helicopters after five marines were killed in a crash during a test flight, officials said Wednesday.

The amphibious MUH-1 helicopter was being test-flown after repairs when it plunged to the landing strip from about 33 feet in the air, then caught fire on Tuesday at a marine base in the southeastern city of Pohang, according to a statement.

The marines banned flights for the three other MUH-1 choppers in the fleet pending the results of an investigation into the cause of the crash.

South Korea's army also grounded more than 90 KUH-1 Surion helicopters, the original model used for the marine variant, amid safety concerns.

Closed-circuit TV footage of the crash released by the marines shows the helicopter's rotor blades being separated from the fuselage shortly after takeoff, the Yonhap News Agency reported.

The five killed were identified Wednesday as a 46-year-old lieutenant colonel who was the pilot, a 37-year-old major who was the co-pilot, a 27-year-old gunnery sergeant who was a technician and two stewards — a 22-year-old staff sergeant and a 21-year-old corporal. A 43-year-old master sergeant was hospitalized with injuries.

The deceased were posthumously promoted by one rank.

The helicopters, which can be used to transport personnel and equipment, were produced by local defense firm Korea Aerospace Industries, or KAI, and delivered in the first half of this year, according to Yonhap.

KAI was quoted as saying it will cooperate with the investigation if asked and expressed condolences for those killed.

The military said an investigation team has been formed with 23 members from the marine corps, navy, air force, army and the defense agency for technology and quality

# Despite intel, Trump asserts Russia is not targeting US

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday denied Russia is still targeting the United States, a claim sharply at odds with recent warnings from his top intelligence chief about ongoing threats to election security.

Trump was asked at the end of a Cabinet meeting if Russia was still targeting the U.S. and answered “no” without elaborating. His response followed words of alarm last week from National Intelligence Director Dan Coats, who said warning lights about overall cyberthreats to the U.S. were “blinking red” — much as “blinking red” signals before the 9/11 terror

attacks.

In the aftermath of his Helsinki meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump asserted that no other American president has been as “tough” on Russia as he has been. He cited U.S. sanctions on Russia and the expulsion of alleged Russian spies from the U.S., telling reporters that Putin “understands it, and he’s not happy about it.” Coats said last week that Russia has been the most aggressive cyberthreat but other efforts are coming from China, Iran and North Korea as well as criminal networks and individual hackers.

Trump’s comments came a day after he walked back his

public questioning of U.S. intelligence findings of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. Those previous comments, delivered alongside Russian President Vladimir Putin at a summit press conference Monday, had prompted bipartisan criticism at home.

Trump took to Twitter early Wednesday to defend the meeting, promising “big results” from better relations with Russia and hitting back at “haters.”

“So many people at the higher ends of intelligence loved my press conference performance in Helsinki,” Trump tweeted.

“We got along well which truly bothered many haters who wanted to see a boxing match.”

## Trump says supporting tiny NATO ally Montenegro could start ‘World War III’

BY JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTTGART, Germany — President Donald Trump cast new doubt on his willingness to come to the defense of NATO allies Tuesday when he said a small member state could provoke a conflict that could start “World War III.”

Trump, during an interview on a Fox News talk show Tuesday, was asked by host Tucker Carlson why his son should come to the defense of tiny Montenegro, NATO’s newest member.

“I understand what you are saying,” Trump said. “I’ve asked the same question.”

Last week, Trump gave his backing to NATO after a contentious meeting of heads of state in Brussels, where the U.S. president reportedly threatened to go it alone if members didn’t spend 2 percent of their respective gross domestic products on defense.

By the end, Trump said he was satisfied with the commitments made by members and

that NATO was now “much stronger” and a “fine-tuned machine.”

Still, doubts have lingered among NATO watchers about Trump’s underlying commitment to the alliance’s Article 5 collective defense provision that an attack on one member equals an attack on all.

“Montenegro is a tiny country with very strong people,” Trump said.

“They are very aggressive people. They may get aggressive and, congratulations, you are in World War III.”

Despite its diminutive size — slightly smaller than Connecticut and with just 630,000 people — Montenegro has a long martial tradition, having fought off the Ottoman Empire during its 400-year rule of the Balkans and having participated in both world wars on the winning side.

Trump, during a NATO meeting in 2017, drew attention when he elbowed Montenegro’s prime minister, Dusko Markovic, out of the way during a

ceremonial walk at the alliance’s headquarters. Markovic appeared taken aback at first but then patted Trump on the back.

Opponents of extending NATO membership to small nations in Eastern Europe contend that adding more security consumers, rather than security providers, adds to tensions with Russia.

Mark Hertling, the retired former commander of U.S. Army Europe and a frequent critic of the current administration, said Trump’s latest comments are eroding trust inside NATO.

“Stunning,” Hertling said in a Twitter posting. “The ‘provisions’ are what makes it a mutual security and defense alliance. Alliance trust is gained in drops and lost in buckets.”

For NATO, Article 5 serves as the linchpin to the security pact. U.S. commanders and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis have repeatedly emphasized that the American commitment to it is “ironclad.”

# Trump-backed congresswoman wins runoff

Associated Press

MILLBROOK, Ala. — U.S. Rep. Martha Roby won Alabama's Republican runoff, fighting through lingering fallout from her years-old criticism of then-candidate Donald Trump in a midterm contest that hinged on loyalty to the GOP president.

The four-term incumbent will now represent the GOP on the November ballot having defeated Bobby Bright, a former Democrat who tried to cast himself as the more authentic Trump ally in the low-turnout Republican contest.

The Trump White House was on Roby's side.

"It's been a true privilege to have the support of the White House through this campaign," Roby told cheering supporters Tuesday night, her voice cracking with emotion at times. "I am so humbled that the people of Alabama's 2nd Congressional District have again placed their trust and their confidence in me."

Trump and Vice President Mike Pence endorsed the four-term incumbent in recent weeks. The vice president went farther over the weekend and recorded robocalls distributed on her behalf saying she's a reliable vote for the Trump agenda.

Some intervention was required after Roby angered Alabama Republicans in the

closing days of the 2016 presidential election when she said Trump's lewd comments about women — captured on an "Access Hollywood" tape — made him unacceptable as a candidate for president.

She spent much of the last two years trying to convince her constituents in Alabama's 2nd Congressional District that she was sufficiently loyal to Trump.

On Wednesday, Trump credited himself for her win when tweeting his congratulations.

"My endorsement came appropriately late, but when it came the 'flood gates' opened and you had the kind of landslide victory that you deserve. Enjoy!" he wrote.

# MGM sues victims of Las Vegas shooting

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — MGM Resorts International has sued hundreds of victims of the deadly October mass shooting in a bid to avoid liability for the gunfire that rained down from its Mandalay Bay casino-resort in Las Vegas.

The company argues in lawsuits filed in Nevada, California, New York and other states this week and last that it has "no liability of any kind" to survivors or families of slain victims under a federal law enacted after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The lawsuits target victims who have sued the company and voluntarily dismissed their claims or have threatened to sue after a gunman shattered the windows of his Mandalay Bay suite and fired on a crowd gathered below for a country music festival.

High-stakes gambler Stephen Paddock killed 58 people and injured hundreds more last year before killing himself. Victims with active lawsuits against MGM don't face the company's legal claim.

MGM says the 2002 law limits liabilities when a company or group uses services certified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and mass attacks occur.

The company says it is not liable because its security vendor for the concert, Contemporary Services Corp., was federally certified at the time of the Oct. 1 shooting.

MGM claims the victims — through actual and threatened lawsuits — have implicated CSC's services because they involve concert security, including training, emergency response and evacuation.

"If defendants were injured by Paddock's assault, as they allege, they were inevitably

injured both because Paddock fired from his window and because they remained in the line of fire at the concert. Such claims inevitably implicate security at the concert — and may result in loss to CSC," according to the MGM lawsuits.

CSC's general counsel, James Service, told The Associated Press on Tuesday that it doesn't comment on litigation involving the company or a third party.

MGM wants a court to declare that the U.S. law "precludes any finding of liability" against the company "for any claim for injuries arising out of or related to Paddock's mass attack."

Brian Claypool, an attorney who was at the music festival during the shooting, called the lawsuits a "hypocritical maneuver" that will turn into a "public relations nightmare for MGM."

# Thai soccer team rescued from cave recount ordeal

Associated Press

CHIANG RAI, Thailand — The 12 boys and their soccer coach rescued from a cave in northern Thailand left the hospital where they had been recuperating and appeared at a news conference Wednesday, saying the ordeal made them stronger and taught them not to live carelessly.

The group, looking healthy, entered the news conference to applause from reporters and classmates and put on a quick demonstration of their ball-handling skills on a miniature soccer field set up in the hall where they met journalists from around the world.

They then hugged their friends before

taking seats up front with doctors and members of the Thai navy SEAL unit who helped bring them out, along with others who helped them during their ordeal, which ended after more than two weeks when they were rescued last week.

The boys, whose ages range from 11 to 16, and their 25-year-old coach answered questions submitted by the media, including about the lessons they learned during their experience.

"I feel stronger, I have more patience, endurance, tolerance," said Mongkol Boonpiam, 13.

Adul Samon, 14, said, "This experience teaches me not to live life carelessly."

Several said they want to become profes-

sional soccer players, while four said they wanted to emulate the heroes who saved them.

All said they want to apologize to their parents, most of whom they had not informed in advance about the trek to the cave after soccer practice.

"I know my mom is going to punish me and I am in big trouble with my mother," one of the boys said when asked what he expected to happen when he got home.

Doctors said the 13 were healthy in body and mind. They said the boys gained around 6.6 pounds on average since they were rescued from the cave. They were said to have lost an average of 9 pounds during the more than two weeks they were trapped.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Pug's mug posted; bail is paid in cookies

**NJ** CAPE MAY — A dog is home after police in a New Jersey shore town posted its mugshot on social media.

Cape May Patrolman Michael LeSage found Bean the pug in a yard Sunday.

He told The Star-Ledger of Newark he tried to get the dog to hop into his police car, but her legs were too short so he had to lift her.

Police posted a photo of Bean on Facebook with the caption: "This is what happens when you run away from home."

It took a few hours before Bean's owners tracked her down.

Hadley Hubbard, of Baltimore, thanked police and posted that Bean was sound asleep after an exciting run.

LeSage posted that Bean paid her bail in cookies.

### Man's 20-mile walk to work earns new car

**AL** PELHAM — An Alabama college student whose car broke down just before his first day of work made the 20-mile journey on foot, a feat that earned him fame — and a new car.

News outlets reported that hours before his first day working for Bellhops movers, Walter Carr set out from Homewood at midnight, making it to Pelham by 4 a.m. Friday.

Client Jenny Lamey said Carr declined her offer to rest, instead getting straight to work.

Impressed by the Hurricane Katrina refugee's work ethic, she started a GoFundMe that's raised more than \$6,600. When Bellhops CEO Luke Marklin learned about his new employ-

ee, he drove his own car from Tennessee on Monday to surprise Carr with it.

### Denali photograph by Adams up for auction

**AK** FAIRBANKS — An iconic image of an Alaskan landscape taken by renowned American photographer Ansel Adams is up for auction.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported the original black and white photograph of Denali and Wonder Lake is being sold in an online auction that ends Thursday.

The photograph featuring North America's tallest mountain was taken at Denali National Park.

The image mounted on board was printed in 1948 and has an estimated value of \$4,000 to \$6,000.

London-based auction house Christie's is selling the gelatin silver print in an auction of photographs from the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

### Town ends 'Footloose' ban on dancing

**AR** FORT SMITH — A western Arkansas city has a message for residents: Kick off the Sunday shoes.

Fort Smith city directors recently repealed a 1953 ordinance that essentially outlawed public dancing on Sundays.

City Director Andre Good introduced the repeal after a resident told him about the so-called "Footloose" ordinance, nicknamed for the 1984 movie starring Kevin Bacon about a town that banned dancing and rock music.

The ordinance outlawed the operation of public dance halls or any place with dancing on Sundays.

### Weeping Virgin Mary statue investigated

**NM** LAS CRUCES — The Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces continues to investigate a Virgin Mary sculpture in a Hobbs church that appears to be weeping.

The sculpture, which stands in the Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, has been attracting attention worldwide since visitors first reported the fluid in May.

Bishop Oscar Cantu, of the diocese, said a sample of the fluid collected from the sculpture was sent for chemical analysis, and it was determined that it was olive oil, the Las Cruces Sun-News reported.

An investigation is under way to determine whether there was a natural cause behind the liquid found on the hollow bronze sculpture, Cantu said.

The diocese also examined the interior of the statue and determined nothing irregular, Cantu said.

### Tweet inspires 'Blue Cheese Dressing Day'

**NY** BUFFALO — The founder of Buffalo's annual chicken wing festival is offering foodies another reason to indulge — with the creation of National Blue Cheese Dressing Day.

The inaugural celebration was Monday.

Founder Drew Cerza, known as Buffalo's "wing king," said the idea for a national holiday grew from a tweet sent out on National Ranch Dressing Day in March. The post from Frank's RedHot sauce paired buffalo wings and ranch dressing.

In Buffalo, where the appetizer was created, blue cheese is the preferred dip for wings.

### Stolen firetruck stopped after chase

**CA** SACRAMENTO — Police chased a stolen firetruck across four Northern California counties during a wild high-speed pursuit that lasted nearly two hours and ended with two suspects under arrest.

Officials said the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District truck worth about \$1 million was taken from the scene of a small grass fire Saturday.

The truck reached 70 mph as it sped about 85 miles through Sacramento, Placer, Yuba and Butte counties.

It was eventually stopped on State Route 70 near Lake Oroville and a man and a woman were arrested. No other details about the suspects were available.

Metro Fire spokesman Capt. Chris Vestal told the Sacramento Bee the truck has to be towed back for extensive repairs.

### Woman impaled by beach umbrella

**NJ** SEASIDE HEIGHTS — Police said a London woman was impaled by a beach umbrella on the New Jersey shore.

The Asbury Park Press reported Margaret Reynolds, 67, was at Seaside Heights on Monday afternoon when part of the umbrella pierced her right ankle and was driven completely through due to the "force of the wind."

Borough Police Chief Tommy Boyd said fire crews had to use a bolt cutter on the umbrella to free the woman and put her in an ambulance.

Authorities have not released further details.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Strikeouts, homers dominate diamond

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Boom or bust. This is what baseball has become — and that has owners worried.

“It’s just kind of what it is: home runs and strikeouts,” Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Ross Stripling said.

Stripling had just given up 10th-inning home runs on consecutive pitches to Houston’s Alex Bregman and George Springer on a night players combined for 10 longballs, nearly double the previous All-Star record.

Last fall, you may remember, the Dodgers and Astros totaled 25 home runs in the World Series, four more than had ever been hit before in a Fall Classic.

“It’s extremely tough to manufacture hits these days, especially with the shift,” Stripling said after the American League’s 8-6 win Tuesday night. “I certainly understand that’s where the game’s going, and so I think this game encapsulated that.”

It took until the 344th pitch for a run to be driven in on something other than a homer, Michael Brantley’s tack-on sacrifice fly that boosted the AL’s

lead to 8-5. Joey Votto added the final home run in the bottom half, four more than the previous All-Star mark.

“Everybody’s throwing 97 to 100,” Washington ace Max Scherzer, the NL starter, said in a reference to pitch velocity. “You’re not going to string three hits together like that. So everybody’s just swinging for the fence.”

Hours earlier, baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred was expressing alarm. Strikeouts (24,537) are on track to surpass hits (24,314) for the first time and are likely to set a record for the 12th straight season. This year’s average of 17.0 per game is up from 12.6 in 2005. The current big league batting average of .247 would be the lowest since 1972.

And the average of 2.28 homers per game is just below the record 2.51 set last year.

“Standard operation nowadays, right? We’re going to homer-and-punch-out as an industry,” said Astros manager A.J. Hinch, who led the AL to victory. “There’s a great love affair with both results.”

Among 90 plate appearances, 44 ended in a home run, strikeout (25) or walk (nine), at 48.9

percent the highest in All-Star history, according to STATS.

“I don’t really want to see guys shorten up and slap the ball around the infield just to avoid a strikeout. That doesn’t excite me,” said Colorado’s Charlie Blackmon, who won the NL batting title last year while hitting 37 home runs. “I don’t mind strikeouts. That doesn’t mean I want guys swinging way out of the zone, but it doesn’t bother me.”

Many cite shifts as the cause of the, well, big shift in offense, transforming groundballs that once were hits into outs. There have been 20,587 shifts on balls in play, according to Baseball Info Solutions. That projects to a full-season total of 34,668 — up 29.8 percent from last year and an increase from 6,882 for the entire 2013 season.

“There is a growing consensus or maybe even better an existing consensus among ownership that we need to have a really serious conversation about making some changes to the way the game is being played,” Manfred said. “We are not at the point where I can articulate for you what particular rule changes might get serious consideration. I can tell you the

issues that concern people: I think that the period of time between putting balls in play, the number of strikeouts, to a lesser extent the number of home runs, the significance of the shift and what it’s done to the game, the use of relief pitchers and the way starting pitchers are going to be used.”

When it comes to change, players are Luddites. Union head Tony Clark maintained his members are “stewards of the game” and are resistant to tinkering with the rules for fear of unintended consequences.

“We may get to a point where those coming to the ballpark or have an interest in coming to the ballpark for whatever reason aren’t 100 percent certain that what they are seeing is the type of game that they want to see,” Clark said.

Home runs bring the crowd to its feet, especially by the home team. Think back to the 1998 Nike advertisement with Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine, titled “Chicks Dig the Long Ball.” The Yankees’ Aaron Judge started the barrage with a second-inning solo shot off Scherzer.

“I know the fans enjoy seeing these homers,” Judge said.

## Machado may have found new home with Dodgers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Los Angeles Dodgers are making preparations to welcome Manny Machado into their pennant race.

Los Angeles entered the All-Star break with a narrow half-game lead over second-place Arizona in the NL West, and there’s a good chance the Dodgers will begin play Friday in Milwaukee with a four-time All-Star at shortstop.

Machado will undoubtedly be dealt by the Baltimore Orioles before the July non-waiver trade deadline, and speculation is centering on a Wednesday swap with Los Angeles.

“I had a conversation with

Manny. He’s a great guy, man, and we would love to have him here,” Dodgers All-Star pitcher Kenley Jansen said Tuesday night.

The Dodgers begin a 10-game road trip out of the break, and they’d love to have Machado dressed in Dodger blue.

“I think the sky’s the limit. We can do damage,” Jansen said. “Let’s see what’s going to happen.”

If Machado heads to the Dodgers, he will likely get to wear his coveted No. 13, now worn by first baseman Max Muncy.

“He deserves that number,” Jansen said.

In spite of the media that fol-

lowed his every move, Machado did his best Tuesday to enjoy himself. He walked the red carpet shirtless in a double-breasted suit, took a couple of selfies on the field and smiled through six innings of carefree baseball.

When he was done, Machado peeled off his Orioles uniform for perhaps the final time.

Then he walked out of Nationals Stadium with his family, not bothering to stick around after the game to answer another round of questions about a potential trade that would end his stay in Baltimore — perhaps before the Orioles return from the break to play in Toronto on Friday night.

In the meantime, Machado was the center of attention before and during the first All-Star Game in Washington since 1969.

A huge media throng buzzed around his locker prior to batting practice. During BP, Machado joked with Dodgers outfielder Matt Kemp outside the cage.

Then came the game. Machado went 0-for-2 — a fly ball and a popup — before exiting for a pinch hitter in the sixth inning.

Walking out toward the exit ramp, Machado ran into Nick Markakis, a longtime former teammate now with the Atlanta Braves. They hugged, shook hands and walked away.

# Back-to-back HRs lift AL over NL in 10th

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A record 10 home runs. A slew of strikeouts.

The all-or-nothing All-Star Game mirrored what baseball has become.

Astros teammates Alex Bregman and George Springer homered on consecutive pitches to begin the 10th inning, and the American League beat the National League 8-6 Tuesday night for its sixth straight win.

“To kind of empty your tank and hit homers tonight at this event is probably the best thing imaginable,” said AL manager A.J. Hinch of Houston. “Just to have that kind of emotion that comes with the home run, especially when the big boys hit it and especially when the Astros hit it.”

Mike Trout, Aaron Judge and Jean Segura also connected for the AL in a game where every run except one scored on a homer.

Scooter Gennett hit a tying two-run shot off Seattle closer Edwin Diaz in the bottom of the ninth. Joey Votto, Willson Contreras, Trevor Story and

Christian Yelich also homered for the NL.

There had never been more than six homers in an All-Star Game since Babe Ruth hit the very first one in 1933.

One of the homers came off Milwaukee’s Josh Hader. After the game, the 24-year-old reliever took responsibility for racist and homophobic tweets that resurfaced while he was pitching.

Hader said he was immature at age 17 when several of the tweets were posted. Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem said he had spoken to Hader, and the league would have no comment before Wednesday.

“There’s no excuse for what was said,” Hader said. “I’m deeply sorry for what I’ve said and what’s been going on. It doesn’t reflect any of my beliefs going on now.”

While several sluggers went deep, not everything went their way. Starters Max Scherzer and Chris Sale and the relievers combined to fan 15 in the first 4½ innings, and there were 25 strikeouts overall.

Fitting, because this season

is on pace to become the first with more strikeouts than hits, a year after a record number of home runs.

“You’re facing power pitchers right now, so that’s kind of what you expect: hit-or-miss with these guys,” Boston’s J.D. Martinez said.

Martinez, who leads the majors in homers and RBIs, singled and struck out in his two at-bats.

Orioles shortstop Manny Machado had fun, pulling out a camera to snap a selfie at second base after Matt Kemp doubled. By Wednesday, they could be teammates — Baltimore seems ready to trade Machado, with the Dodgers and Phillies in the mix.

“I’m just trying to enjoy this moment with the American League guys,” Machado told Fox in the dugout. “If this is the last time (in a Baltimore uniform), hopefully I treated them well and did everything I can for the organization.”

Major League Baseball, meanwhile, seemed to take a selfie of itself, with all the homers and strikeouts. This was

MLB 2.018, an update that’s not appealing to everyone.

“Some of us are going to get them and they’re going to get us. It’s just how it goes,” Atlanta first baseman Freddie Freeman said.

Declining attendance is a concern, and the sport’s owners worry that slower games with less action on the bases are taking a toll.

A day after hometown star Bryce Harper electrified the crowd by winning the Home Run Derby, it was eerily quiet for most of the evening at Nationals Park. Harper didn’t excite the fans, either, fanning in his two at-bats.

The popular Presidents Race drew the biggest cheer in the middle innings, with the big-headed George Washington character prevailing.

The only thing missing was a bevy of defensive shifts. With overloaded infields now the norm, Hinch and NL manager Dave Roberts of the Dodgers pretty much played things straight up.

## San Antonio sends Leonard to Toronto for DeRozan

Associated Press

The Kawhi Leonard saga in San Antonio is finally over. So is DeMar DeRozan’s time in Toronto.

An NBA summer blockbuster got pulled off Wednesday, with the Spurs sending Leonard to the Raptors — weeks after the disgruntled 2014 NBA Finals MVP asked for a trade — as part of a deal that also has DeRozan leaving Toronto for San Antonio. The Spurs also got Jakob Poeltl and a 2019 protected first-round draft pick, while the Raptors acquired Danny Green.

For Leonard and the Spurs, there’s finally closure to a relationship that obviously was fractured beyond repair and devolved into a soap opera as the season went along. For DeRozan, who has often pro-

fessed his love for Toronto, the initial reaction seemed to be one of anger and frustration.

“Ain’t no loyalty in this game,” DeRozan wrote in an Instagram story that appeared in the wee hours of Wednesday, around the time that ESPN and Yahoo Sports reported that the trade was approaching the imminent stage. “Sell you out quick for a little bit of nothing ...”

DeRozan did not specifically reference the trade in that post. But his message didn’t exactly need translation.

The trade is a huge, and potentially risky, move for both teams.

Leonard appeared in only nine games for the Spurs last season because of a somewhat mysterious right leg injury — and the level of severity was

something that even some of his now-former teammates reportedly questioned last season while San Antonio was trying to qualify for the Western Conference playoffs. Leonard’s health status, even now, is publicly unknown.

Plus, he can be a free agent next summer. When he asked the Spurs for a trade weeks ago, it was made clear that he wants to play for the Los Angeles Lakers. That means the Raptors are entering into this deal knowing that they could have given up a star like DeRozan for someone who might not be in Toronto for long.

DeRozan has led the Raptors in scoring in each of the last five seasons. He was key to Toronto winning 59 games and securing the No. 1 seed for the Eastern Conference playoffs

last season. But after getting swept in the second round by Cleveland, the Raptors decided massive changes were necessary — first the firing of coach of the year Dwane Casey, and now the trading of a perennial All-Star who once famously declared “I am Toronto.”

Leonard’s injury last season was described as right quadriceps tendinopathy, and the Spurs listed him as out on their injury reports for much of the year, citing “injury management.” During the 2016-17 season, he averaged a career-best 25.5 points and was third in the MVP voting.

Both DeRozan and Leonard are scheduled to appear in Las Vegas next week at a USA Basketball training camp — one that will be led by Spurs coach Gregg Popovich.

# Carnoustie known for bad reputation

Associated Press

Carnoustie is known as much for the calamity it causes as the British Open champions it crowns.

Any mention of Carnoustie immediately brings back that image of Jean Van de Velde, equal parts tragedy and comedy, standing in Barry Burn on the 18th hole with water up his shins and rising. He made triple bogey to lose a three-shot lead, and then completed as great a collapse as can be found in a major championship by losing in a three-man playoff in 1999.

Just don't get the idea Van de Velde owns all the rights to bad endings at Carnoustie.

Jose Jurado was the first victim.

He had a three-shot lead going into the final round in 1931 and was still two shots clear late in the round until coming undone in the brutal closing stretch, topping one shot on the 17th hole into the burn. He lost out

to Tommy Armour.

More recently was Pdraig Harrington, only it worked out well for him in 2007. Playing the 18th with a one-shot lead, the Irishman hit his tee shot into the Barry Burn. He took a penalty drop and then hit his next shot into the winding stream. Harrington managed the best double bogey of his life. It got him into a playoff when Sergio Garcia made bogey from the bunker, and Harrington went on to win his first major.

Of the six previous Opens on these menacing links, Ben Hogan is the only winner to hold a 54-hole lead.

For most everyone else, Carnoustie always seem to dish out its share of carnage. Rod Pampling once opened with a 71 and had the lead. He followed with an 86 and missed the cut. Phil Mickelson still hasn't seen a weekend at Carnoustie. Garcia made his major debut as a professional at Carnoustie. He shot 89.

"That's a brutal course," Bernhard Langer said. He speaks from experience in 1999, when Langer had his third-highest score of the 23 Opens he completed. He shot 297, and he tied for 18th that week.

The first time Tiger Woods went an entire round without a birdie in a major was in 1999 at Carnoustie.

One month after Shinnecock Hills was punishing as ever in the U.S. Open, golf's oldest championship doesn't figure to be much of a reprieve. Scotland has been going through a warm, dry patch of weather, which figures to make it firm and bouncy.

Mickelson, who played Carnoustie a week before the Open, said it was unlikely he would even carry a driver.

"I'm either going to carry a driver or that hot 3-wood, but there's only two or three holes — there's actually only two holes I plan on using it, both par 5s. I have a low 1-iron that

I've been putting in the bag and ... it's very low. Gets on the ground quick. I'll hit that on probably the last ten holes, almost every hole."

Carnoustie in any conditions is regarded as a beast, with a reputation as the toughest links in the world. Sir Michael Bonalack, the former R&A secretary, might have sized it up the best when he said, "When the wind is blowing, it is the toughest course in Britain. And when it's not blowing, it's probably still the toughest."

In recent Opens, it has picked up a nickname: Car-nasty.

For so much of the field, it will be a new experience. Only two players from the top 10 in the world have played a British Open at Carnoustie — Justin Rose and Rory McIlroy, who was an 18-year-old amateur in 2007 and immediately showed his potential when he opened with a 68. He tied for 42nd that week.

## Team Sky asserts Tour de France dominance with riders 1-2

Associated Press

LA ROSIERE, France — British rider Geraint Thomas won the first summit finish of the Tour de France and claimed the yellow jersey on Wednesday with Team Sky asserting its dominance.

Four-time champion Chris Froome moved up to second overall, 1 minute, 25 seconds behind Thomas, his teammate.

Thomas attacked on the last of four climbs over the short but grueling 11th stage, powered past longtime breakaway leader Mikel Nieve in the final kilometer, and finished 20 seconds ahead of Tom Dumoulin.

Froome crossed third, just behind Dumoulin, who moved up to third overall, 1:44 behind.

Froome is attempting to match the record of five Tour victories shared by Jacques Anquetil, Eddy Merckx, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain.

Greg Van Avermaet, who had

worn the yellow jersey since his BMC squad won the team time trial in Stage 3, lost contact midway through the stage and finished far behind.

While there were numerous attacks throughout the 108.5-kilometer (67-mile) stage, Sky calmly rode at its own pace and slowly caught most of the breakaway riders before Thomas kicked into action with 6 kilometers remaining.

"We were expecting attacks," Thomas said. "When they go, it is never nice to see them all riding away but we had confidence in each other and we rode really well."

Thomas, who is from Wales, required slightly less than 3½ hours to complete the route from 1992 Winter Olympics host city Albertville to La Rosiere Espace San Bernardo ski station.

It was his second career stage win at the Tour, having claimed the individual time

trial that opened last year's race. He wore the yellow jersey for four days last year — before dropping to second behind Froome — then crashed out on a descent in Stage 9.

"To wear the yellow jersey is always a massive honor," Thomas said. "To do it two years in a row is really nice."

Thomas has been one of Froome's most loyal lieutenants for years and Sky labeled him a co-leader with Froome for this year's Tour. So it will be interesting to see how the team handles the duo now.

After going up the beyond-category ascents to Montee de Bisanne and Col du Pre, plus the second-category Cornet de Roselend, the stage concluded with the unprecedented and lengthy 17.6-kilometer climb to La Rosiere — a ski resort linked to La Thuile in the Italian region of Valle d'Aosta.

With views of Mont Blanc atop Montee de Bisanne,

there was also a technical and tricky descent from Cornet de Roselend.

The first overall contender to attack was Alejandro Valverde up the Col du Pre. Dumoulin then escaped from the peloton with a downhill attack and joined up with Valverde on the final climb. While Valverde quickly dropped back, Dumoulin kept up his pace and showed he might be the only rider capable of competing with Sky.

The top five in the overall is rounded out by 2014 champion Vincenzo Nibali in fourth, 2:14 behind Thomas, and Primoz Roglic in fifth, 2:23 back.

More climbing fireworks are expected in Stage 12 on Thursday. The last of three legs in the Alps follows a 175.5-kilometer route beginning in the ski resort of Les Arcs and culminating in the famous 21 bends to Alpe d'Huez.