

STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, July 18, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Gilday picked to be next CNO

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Vice Adm. Michael Gilday has been nominated by President Donald Trump to be the next chief of naval operations, according to a senate announcement Wednesday on the nomination.

Gilday, a three-star admiral, is now the director of the Joint Staff, a position he has held since March. If confirmed, he would be promoted to a four-star admiral.

"The entire Navy should be very excited by today's announcement," Adm. John Richardson, the current chief of naval operations, said Thursday in a statement posted to his official Facebook page. "Adm. Mike Gilday is a true cutting edge warfighter, a surface warrior who, by virtue of his leadership at 10th Fleet, fully appreciates the challenges we face in the cyber warfare arena and the increasing pace of competition in new domains."

Gilday's nomination comes after Trump's first selection, Adm. William Moran, retired abruptly after reports that he had continued a professional relationship with Chris Servello, a former colleague who was removed from his position as a public affairs adviser to Richardson in 2017 following accusations of sexual misconduct, according to The Associated Press. Servello had also worked for Moran.

Gilday, a native of Lowell, Mass., is the son of a career sailor and has served as a surface warfare officer in the Navy since graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1985, according to his Navy biography.

He has served as commander of the USS Higgins and USS Benfold. Gilday also commanded Destroyer Squadron 7 while sea combat commander for the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, according to the Navy. He also has served as director of operations for NATO's Joint Force Command Lisbon and U.S. Cyber Command.

He earned a master's degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1993 and a second master's degree in 2006 from the National War College at Fort McNair in Washington.

Among his military awards: Distinguished Service Medal, four Defense Superior Service Medals, three Legions of Merit, a Bronze Star, and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with "V" device.

Iran seizes foreign tanker accused of smuggling oil

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's Revolutionary Guard seized a foreign tanker accused of smuggling oil, Iran's state TV reported Thursday. The vessel appears to be a United Arab Emirates-based tanker that disappeared off trackers in Iranian territorial waters over the weekend.

The seizure was the latest in a series of dramatic developments as tensions mount between the U.S. and Iran over the unravelling nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers.

The Panamanian-flagged oil tanker MT Riah stopped transmitting its location early Sunday near Qeshm Island, which has a Revolutionary Guard base on it, according to data listed on tracking site Maritime Traffic.

Iran's state television did not identify the seized vessel or nationalities of the crew, but said it was intercepted on Sunday. It said the oil tanker had 12 foreign crew members on board and was involved in transporting some 264,000 gallons of fuel from Iranian smugglers to foreign customers.

The report said the tanker was intercepted south of Iran's Larak Island in the Strait of Hormuz. Larak is just southeast of the larger Qeshm Island.

Crude prices, which had been falling since last week, ticked higher almost immediately after reports of the incident.

The seizure of the ship does not immediately appear to directly target any particular country and shows the Revolutionary Guard cracking down on illegal smuggling of Iranian oil.

If the MT Riah was indeed the ship seized, the move directly singles out UAE-bound and based vessels. The 190-foot Riah typically made trips from Dubai and Sharjah on the UAE's west coast before going through the strait and heading to Fujairah on the UAE's east coast.

The UAE has been calling for a deescalation of tensions between the U.S. and Iran in past weeks, but has also lobbied for tougher U.S. policies on Iran and supports the maximum pressure campaign of sanctions imposed by the Trump administration since the U.S. unilaterally pulled out

of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers.

The ship's seizure comes after a tense but brief standoff last week between the British navy and Iran's Revolutionary Guard in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude oil passes. The British government said a navy frigate had to warn away the paramilitary vessels from disrupting the passage of a British oil tanker through the strait.

It also comes after British marines helped seize an Iranian supertanker off Gibraltar, a British overseas territory at the southern tip of Spain. Britain has since said it would facilitate the release of the tanker if Iran can provide guarantees the vessel would not breach European Union sanctions on shipments to Syria.

Iran has recently increased uranium production and enrichment over the limits of its 2015 nuclear deal, trying to put more pressure on Europe to offer it better terms and allow it to sell its crude oil abroad.

The U.S. has sent thousands of additional troops, B-52 bombers and advanced fighter jets to the region amid the heightened tensions. Iran also shot down a U.S. surveillance drone, raising fears of a wider conflict.

In May, two Emirati oil tankers were among four tankers attacked in acts of sabotage that the U.S. has blamed on Iran. The UAE has stopped short of blaming any country for the attacks off its coast of Fujairah and maintains that diplomacy is the way forward.

Two other oil vessels were attacked last month. Iran denies involvement in any of the vessel attacks.

A U.S. defense official told The Associated Press this week that America had suspicions that Iran had seized the MT Riah when its tracker was turned off in the Strait of Hormuz. An Emirati official had told the AP the small oil tanker made no distress call before switching off its tracker.

Iran's acknowledgement that a vessel has been seized by the Revolutionary Guard appears to contradict statements by Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman on Wednesday saying Iran had aided a foreign oil tanker with a malfunction.

New app helps sailors change duty stations

By CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II
Stars and Stripes

Navy Personnel Command released a new app Wednesday called MyPCS Mobile that gives active-duty sailors the ability to electronically submit travel receipts, complete vouchers and apply for government housing and child care during their moves between duty stations.

The app, which can be used without a Common Access Card after a one-time setup, is available to all sailors by downloading it through the Navy App Locker — www.applocker.navy.mil — or MyNavy Portal — my.navy.mil — according to a statement from Navy Personnel Command.

“Sailors executing active-duty (permanent change of station) orders will immediately realize a better experience with MyPCS Mobile,” Rear Adm. Jeff Hughes, commanding officer of Navy Personnel Command, said in a statement Wednesday. “We have heard the sailor and family feedback and are enhancing the PCS move process through greater customer focus, increased flexibility, choice and the use of modern tools.”

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Winston Winslett on Okinawa, Japan, has orders to report to Navy Recruit Training Command at Great Lakes, Ill., in December. He downloaded the

app for his family’s move back to the United States.

“I think the app will definitely be beneficial,” he told Stars and Stripes on Thursday. “I think it eliminates the middle man and allows members to take matters into their own hands.”

The reduction of time spent waiting on paperwork and the creation of a streamlined process are things he looked forward to in the app, he said.

“It also kind of centralizes things and keeps us from having to run around to several places for information,” Winslett said. “In turn, I think it will take much of the load off of [administrative personnel] and give them more time to provide

effective one-on-one customer service.”

Within the mobile application, a personalized checklist will be tailored to the sailor’s move. Later this month it will have the ability to provide a simplified version of permanent change-of-station orders called “lean orders.”

Sailors who are not yet up for orders can still download and explore the app’s features through an online demonstration.

Other enhancements Navy Personnel Command said it would later include in the app are an entitlement calculator and a function to use the government travel credit card for travel-related expenses.

Military warns of privacy risks with FaceApp use

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — U.S. military officials in Europe have issued a “cyber alert” warning that a photo filter application owned by a Russia-based company could pose a security risk.

“A popular Facebook app that takes a current photo and shows you what you might look like in the future has raised concerns regarding privacy issues with the governments of several countries, including the United States,” U.S. Army Garrison Rheinland-Pfalz said in an alert to personnel Thursday.

FaceApp, which can transform the faces of younger users into senior citizens, has gone viral in recent days. The program was among the most downloaded apps this week as images of celebrities and ordinary citizens spread across social media.

Some lawmakers are worried the product could pose privacy and national security risks de-

spite FaceApp’s denials of data harvesting.

Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., called on the FBI and the Federal Trade Commission to launch an investigation into the app, saying the program accesses sensitive personal information.

In its cyber warning, the Army garrison said that installing the app allows FaceApp “access and ability to store information about its users, such as the images of their face, location, IP address, and where exactly a user clicks inside the app.”

“This data could then be sold to other companies,” the warning stated. “In addition, cyber experts warn that relatively small companies like the one behind FaceApp are vulnerable to hacking by criminals and foreign governments,” the warning stated.

U.S. Army Europe said soldiers must take personal responsibility to ensure military readiness isn’t affected by social media activity.

Senate panel approves Esper to lead Pentagon

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Army Secretary Mark Esper’s nomination to be the next defense secretary was approved Thursday in a voice vote by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Esper’s nomination now moves to a full Senate vote, which Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., the committee chairman, has said could happen as early as Monday.

Army Gen. Mark Milley was also approved by the committee to be the next chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, along with 1,231 other pending military nominations, according to a Senate Armed Services Committee statement.

The Pentagon has been without a confirmed defense secretary since Jim Mattis left Dec. 31. Since then, there have been three acting defense secretaries, including Esper, in seven months. Richard Spencer, the Navy secretary, is the acting defense secretary while Esper goes through the Senate confir-

mation process.

During Esper’s confirmation hearing Tuesday, he was confronted with questions by Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., about his previous position as a lobbyist at Raytheon and the potential conflicts of interests that he might face with his former employer — the third-largest defense contractor in the country.

Esper’s hearing came one day after his nomination by President Donald Trump. The Senate Armed Services Committee’s leadership had scheduled the hearing a week before, saying they were suspending the traditional seven-day waiting period between receiving a nomination and voting on the nominee due to the urgency to fill the Pentagon’s top position.

If Esper is confirmed, the next person to be nominated will be David Norquist as the deputy defense secretary, a job for which he has been performing the duties since Pat Shanahan left that position to be the acting defense secretary in January.

More than 2,000 GIs added to deployment to border with Mexico

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — More than 2,000 additional troops will deploy to the U.S.-Mexico border to assist Customs and Border Protection personnel with the ongoing immigration crisis, the Pentagon announced Wednesday.

Acting Secretary of Defense Richard Spencer on Tuesday approved a request for assistance by the Department of Homeland Security that funds up to 1,000 Texas National Guard members to assist along the southern border as well as an additional 1,100 active-duty troops in the coming weeks.

The guard deployment is approved through Sept. 30 and will fall under the command of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott.

There are now 2,500 active-duty personnel and 2,000 National Guard members supporting Customs and Border Protection operations along the border, according to the Pentagon.

The active-duty personnel are being called in to backfill the CBP's Operation Guardian Support mission because of a shortfall in National Guard volunteers, according to the statement.

Troops will provide aerial surveillance and operational, logistical and administrative

support.

Of the 1,000 Texas National Guard troops, approximately 750 will provide supplemental support to Customs and Border Protection at their temporary adult migrant holding facilities in Donna and Tornillo, Texas, according to the Pentagon.

They will assist DHS law enforcement with operational, logistical and administrative support. DHS law enforcement will supervise the migrants, according to the statement.

A new 2,500-bed facility for adult migrants is being built in Tornillo, The Washington Post reported last week, and Vice President Mike Pence visited a new facility in Donna on July 12.

It was not clear Wednesday whether those are the facilities where troops will be deployed.

Approximately 250 Texas National Guard members will also provide enforcement at designated ports of entry and airports in Texas for border security and to improve the flow of commercial traffic, according to the statement.

Whether Texas guard members are armed and the rules for the use of force that they would follow will be based on their missions, with Abbott making the decision in consultation with CBP, according to the Pentagon.

Reports: GIs heading to Saudi Arabian base

BY CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — Hundreds of U.S. troops are set to deploy to Saudi Arabia amid growing tensions with Iran, U.S. media reports said Thursday.

About 500 servicemembers are expected to be sent to Prince Sultan Air Base in the desert east of the Saudi capital of Riyadh, unnamed Defense Department officials told CNN and The New York Times on Wednesday. Defense officials at U.S. Central Command did not immediately respond to Stars and Stripes inquiries about the deployment.

Preparations were underway at the base for a Patriot missile defense battery, a runway and airfield improvements, officials told CNN, which was the first to report the deployment.

Security assessments indicate Iranian missiles would have a hard time striking the remote base, CNN said.

The Pentagon had previously announced plans to deploy some 2,000 troops to the Middle East following what U.S. officials described as an increased threat from Tehran or its proxies. The military had not detailed locations where troops would be sent, but the Saudi base is one of them, CNN said, citing officials who said further details would be announced next week.

The troop deployments were

first announced in the weeks after the White House abruptly said in May it was sending the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, along with a B-52 bomber task force, to the region to protect U.S. forces from unspecified Iranian threats.

Since May, six oil tankers have been damaged in attacks in the Gulf of Oman that the U.S. has blamed on Iran. Tehran has denied any involvement. Last week, a British warship in the Persian Gulf prevented three Iranian patrol boats from stopping a British merchant ship as it was entering the Strait of Hormuz, a major thoroughfare for the world's oil shipments.

In Iraq, rocket attacks have been reported in recent months in the area of Baghdad surrounding the U.S. Embassy and at bases that house U.S. and other international military trainers. Some officials suspect Iran-backed militias in the country are behind the attacks.

The Trump administration has been ratcheting up pressure on Iran through increased sanctions since withdrawing last year from a 2015 international agreement restricting Iran's nuclear program.

Tensions escalated further in June after Iran shot down a U.S. drone. President Donald Trump approved retaliatory military strikes but halted them minutes before they were launched.

Air Force warns against 'storm Area 51' prank event

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The U.S. Air Force has warned people against participating in an internet joke suggesting a large crowd of people "storm Area 51," the top-secret Cold War test site in the Nevada desert.

A prank event on Facebook that's attracted more than 1 million interested people suggests that a mass of people attempt to run into the mysteri-

ous site at 3 a.m. on Sept. 20.

The site is part of the vast Nevada Test and Training Range and has become the center of UFO conspiracy theories.

The Facebook event jokes "they can't stop all of us" and "Let's see them aliens."

Nellis Air Force Base said in a statement that the Air Force is aware of the Facebook posting and said "any attempt to illegally access the area is highly discouraged."

The Air Force said it does not discuss its security measures and that the test and training range provides "flexible, realistic and multidimensional battlespace" for testing and "advanced training in support of U.S. national interests."

After decades of government officials refusing to acknowledge Area 51, the CIA released declassified documents in 2013 referring to the 8,000-square mile installation by name and

locating it on a map near the dry Groom Lake bed.

The base has been a testing ground for a host of top-secret aircraft, including the U-2 in the 1950s and later the B-2 stealth bomber.

But secrecy surrounding the site has fueled conspiracy theories among UFO enthusiasts and sprouted a small, alien-themed tourist industry in surrounding desert communities.

Crowd chants 'send her back' at Trump rally

Associated Press

GREENVILLE, N.C. — Going after four Democratic congresswomen one by one, a combative President Donald Trump turned his campaign rally into an extended dissection of the liberal views of the women of color, deriding them for what he painted as extreme positions and suggesting they just get out.

"Tonight I have a suggestion for the hate-filled extremists who are constantly trying to tear our country down," Trump told the crowd in North Carolina, a swing state he won in 2016 and wants to claim again in 2020. "They never have anything good to say. That's why I say, 'Hey if you don't like it, let 'em leave, let 'em leave.'"

Eager to rile up his base with the some of the same kind of rhetoric he targeted at minorities and women in 2016, Trump declared Wednesday night, "I think in some cases they hate our country."

Trump's jabs were aimed at the self-described "squad" of four freshmen Democrats who have garnered attention since their arrival in January for their outspoken liberal views and distaste for Trump: Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, of New York; Ilhan Omar, of Minnesota; Ayanna Pressley, of Massachusetts; and Rashida Tlaib, of Michigan. All were born in the U.S. except for Omar, who came to the U.S. as a child after fleeing Somalia with her family.

Taking the legislators on one at a time,

Trump ticked through a laundry list of what he deemed offensive comments by each woman, mangling and misconstruing many facts along the way.

Omar came under the harshest criticism as Trump played to voters' grievances, drawing a chant from the crowd of "Send her back! Send her back!"

She responded Wednesday night with a series of tweets, including one quoting Maya Angelou's defiant poem, "Still I Rise," with the words "You may shoot me with your words ... But still, like air, I'll rise."

Trump set off a firestorm Sunday when he tweeted that the four should "go back" to their home countries — though three were born in the United States.

White House, Congress close on budget deal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Thursday that budget and debt negotiators have reached an agreement on the core elements of a deal to increase the government's borrowing cap and set a \$1.3 trillion overall level for the agency budgets that Congress passes each year.

Speaking on CNBC's "Squawk Box" on Thursday, Mnuchin said negotiations with Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, of California, have settled on a debt limit increase that would cover two years. He said they've agreed on spending levels too, though he did not disclose them.

Still to be resolved are offsetting spend-

ing cuts to help finance the deal and other "structural issues," Mnuchin said. The Trump administration is pressing for up to \$150 billion in such cuts, well above a figure that would be easy to quickly negotiate.

"The good news is we've reached an agreement between the administration, the House and the Senate on top line numbers for both year one and year two," Mnuchin said, speaking from France, where he is attending an economic summit. "We're now discussing offsets as well as certain structural issues, and we've agreed as a part of that deal there would be a long-term two-year debt ceiling increase."

At issue are two separate but pressing items on Washington's must-do agenda: increasing the so-called debt limit to avert a

first ever default on U.S. payments and acting to set overall spending limits and prevent crunching automatic spending cuts from hitting the Pentagon and domestic agencies in January.

Pelosi and Mnuchin spoke by phone again Thursday, Pelosi told reporters.

"Our conversations are continuing. We've been very firm though about a decision. If they want us to have this done by before we leave we have to come to a conclusion pretty soon," Pelosi said.

Reaching an agreement also eliminates the possibility of a repeat government shutdown when the current fiscal year ends Sept. 30. President Donald Trump ended up on the losing end of a record 35-day partial shutdown last December and January.

Deadly fire set at Japanese animation studio

Associated Press

TOKYO — A man screaming "You die!" burst into an animation studio in Kyoto, doused it with a flammable liquid and set it on fire Thursday, killing 33 people in an attack that shocked the country and brought an outpouring of grief from anime fans.

Thirty-six others were injured, some of them critically, in a blaze that sent people scrambling up the stairs toward the roof in a desperate — and futile — attempt to escape was proved to be Japan's deadliest fire in nearly two decades. Others emerged bleeding, blackened and barefoot.

The suspect, identified only a 41-year-

old man who did not work for the studio, was injured and taken to a hospital. Police gave no details on the motive, but a witness told Japanese TV that the attacker angrily complained that something of his had been stolen, possibly by the company.

Most of the victims were employees of Kyoto Animation, which does work on movies and TV productions but is best known for its hit stories featuring high school girls. The tales are so popular that fans make pilgrimages to some of the places depicted.

The blaze started in the three-story building in Japan's ancient capital after the attacker sprayed a liquid accelerant, police and fire officials said.

"There was an explosion, then I heard people shouting, some asking for help," a witness told TBS TV. "Black smoke was rising from windows on upper floors. Ten there was a man struggling to crawl out of the window."

Japanese media reported the fire might have been set near the front door, forcing people to find other ways out.

The building has a spiral staircase that may have allowed flames and smoke to rise quickly to the top floor, NHK noted. Fire expert Yuji Hasemi at Waseda University told NHK that paper drawings and other documents in the studio also may have contributed to the fire's rapid spread.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man with irritated eye has tick removed

KY PRESTONSBURG — A Kentucky man who went to the doctor with an irritated eye got the unsavory news that it contained a tick.

WYMT-TV reported an optometrist used tweezers to remove the tick from Chris Prater's eye.

Prater works for an electric company and had left a job site where his crew had removed a tree from power lines when his eye started bothering him.

He noticed a tiny spot on his eye and tried to flush it several times to no avail.

After numbing Prater's eye, the doctor removed the tick.

Police: Man in bar attacked trooper

VT NEWPORT — Court documents allege an out-of-control bar patron hit a state trooper, threw food and pool balls, threatened a person with a knife and slashed tires.

Benjamin Clarke, 51, of East Haven pleaded not guilty to charges including aggravated assault on a police officer at a bar in Barton.

Court documents indicate Clarke threw pool balls, threatened a person with a knife and slashed tires in the parking lot.

WPTZ-TV reported that Clarke was a part-time instructor at Northern Vermont University but is not currently teaching at the school.

City hopes kids' songs drive homeless away

FL WEST PALM BEACH — Officials in West Palm Beach are hoping a continuous loop of children's songs played throughout the night will keep homeless people from

sleeping on the patio of a city-owned rental banquet facility.

West Palm Beach parks and recreation director Leah Rockwell told the Palm Beach Post they're trying to discourage people from camping out along the glass-walled Lake Pavilion. She said the pavilion rakes in some \$240,000 annually from events.

The loop of "Baby Sharks" and "Raining Tacos" is a temporary fix. Rockwell said the city wants to formalize hours for the park, which should make it easier to enforce trespassing laws.

Dad builds his son 'Field of Dreams'

OH BROOKFIELD — An Ohio boy's wish for a "Field of Dreams" became reality two years later.

Jason Kidd initially ignored a request from his 3-year-old son to build a baseball field in the backyard of their Brookfield home in northeastern Ohio.

But a few days later he realized their backyard could fit a whiffle ball field.

Kidd estimates he has spent \$30,000 on the clay infield, regulation bases, raised pitcher's mounds and foul lines that he painted himself.

The family calls the field "The Re-Jake" in a nod to Jacobs Field, the original name of the Cleveland Indians' home ballpark.

Couple finds bullet hole, wounded cat

VA NEWPORT NEWS — A Virginia couple who found a bullet hole in the ceiling of their apartment is mourning the loss of their cat.

News outlets reported Timothy and Bianka Masters came home from a wedding July 7 to find their 11-month-old cat,

Bowie, injured.

The couple called 911 and took him to a veterinarian. They say Bowie had surgery but his condition declined and he had to be put down.

Newport News police said in a statement that Aren Floryanzia, 25, had shot through the floor of the apartment above the Masters' home during a party the night before. He's charged with property damage and a weapons offense.

Dog stranded on steep hillside is rescued

OR CANBY — The Oregon Humane Society said a dog that had been stranded on a steep hillside south of Portland for about a week was rescued.

The Humane Society said neighbors in the Canby area called them Monday with reports of hearing an animal in distress.

The Humane Society Technical Animal Rescue Team first used a drone to find the animal on the hillside.

Team training coordinator Virginia Krakowiak then descended approximately 75 feet to rescue the dog described as an older Australian Shepherd mix.

She said the dog appeared uninjured but thirsty and hungry.

Firework plan sparks worry in community

WY GILLETTE — Plans to shoot off an enormous firework during a pyrotechnics convention worry some residents of a Wyoming community.

Pyrotechnics Guild International will hold its annual convention in Gillette in August.

One feature of the event will be setting off an enormous,

mortar-style firework. The handmade shell measures 36 inches wide.

Some locals worry the big boom will be too close to their homes.

Guild President Paul Smith told the Gillette News-Record his organization is scouting out different locations.

Fossil found in 1980s declared new species

TX BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK — Experts said fossil remains discovered in the 1980s at a park in southwest Texas have been identified as a new genus and species of duckbilled dinosaur.

Officials with Big Bend National Park announced details of the creature named *Aquilarhinus palimentus* for its aquiline nose and shovel-shaped jaw.

Texas Tech University professor Tom Lehman discovered the fossil.

The peculiar lower jaw was noted, but it wasn't until recently that researchers determined the specimen was more primitive than prior identified duckbilled dinosaurs.

Ski season won't make it to August

CA MAMMOTH LAKES — The Mammoth Mountain resort in the Eastern Sierra had hoped a winter of epic snowfall would allow skiing into August but instead will end its season this month.

The resort said weather has been heating up and the remaining snow is melting fast.

The last day for skiing and riding will be July 28.

Mammoth accumulated 718 inches of snow at its summit and 492 inches at the main lodge this season.

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Martinez well-prepared for Cooperstown

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Edgar Martinez trained for every aspect of his career.

As a player, he spent nearly two decades doing daily eye exercises to overcome strabismus, a condition that prevented his eyes from seeing in tandem. Rather than letting that become the excuse that kept him out of baseball, Martinez became arguably the best right-handed hitter of his generation and the prototype for what a designated hitter can be.

As a coach, he was a meticulous planner, often one of the first in the clubhouse daily. Before taking swings during batting practice — more than a decade after his last game — Martinez spent a week taking BP. He wasn't about to be unprepared before putting on a show players and fellow coaches wouldn't forget.

Why should his training and preparation be any different for his first speech as a Hall of Famer?

"I think it's like anything — if you want to do it right and do well you have to practice," Martinez said. "In a way it's true, it's like that. You're preparing for some performance, whether it's hitting in a game or a speech."

Martinez will go into the Baseball Hall of Fame on Sunday, the first player to spend his entire career with the Seattle Mariners — 18 seasons in all — and find his way into Cooperstown.

His numbers are staggering, yet often overlooked as most of his career was spent tucked away in the Pacific Northwest on a team that until the magical 1995 season got little notice on the national stage.

Martinez hit .312 with 309 home runs in 2,055 career games with the Mariners. His

numbers would be even more impressive if he had broken into the majors earlier. Martinez never played more than 100 games in the majors until he was 27.

"Day in and day out, he was prepared," teammate Ken Griffey Jr. said. "Thirty, 40 years ago a DH was an older guy who was on his way out, but a fan favorite, they wanted to keep him around. Now, it's guys who can flat hit and get a chance to go out and play every day.

"And he made that all possible."

Whether it's the pride of joining the fraternity of Puerto Rican players or his affection for the only franchise he's ever been associated with, Martinez is grateful to those who helped along the way.

"A lot of people play a role in my success and just keep it condensed and within 12 minutes. I'm close to having it just right," Martinez said of his induction speech.

Tom Davidson was one of those who helped.

"We told him, 'Give us 10 days and let's see what you think of it,'" Davidson recalled.

Nicknamed the "eye guy" by teammates, Davidson and Martinez started working together in the late 1990s. For nearly a decade, Martinez had been doing eye exercises after Dr. Douglas Nikaita had diagnosed the eye condition.

Davidson's technique became another step in the eye training. He developed a system using tennis balls traveling at high rates of speed to help strengthen and train the eye for recognizing pitches.

The training involved watching the tennis balls, which had small numbers written on them, and trying to focus the eyes to read and recognize the numbers as they

buzzed by, sometimes as fast as 150 mph.

Martinez hit .305 over his final seven seasons after first working with Davidson. He twice led the league in on-base percentage during that span and had a career-high 145 RBIs in 2000 at age 37.

Those swings during the back-half of his career may not have been as impressive as what he did one day in Houston just a couple of years ago.

Scott Servais had never crossed paths with Martinez until being hired as Seattle's manager in 2016. Martinez was the hitting coach under the previous regime and remained on staff. Other than knowing Martinez's reputation as a hitter during the era both played, Servais rarely saw it in action.

Until one day in Houston during a session of early batting practice.

"We had another 20 minutes or whatever and I said 'Edgar you want some?'" Servais recalled.

What happened when the man in his mid-50s stepped in?

"He threw somebody's sweaty batting gloves on and grabbed their bat and got in there, and about the third or fourth swing he's peppering them off the wall out there and up on the train tracks," Servais said. "You never forget those types of things."

What Servais may not have known was Martinez had spent time in the batting cage for about a week, watching pitches and taking a few swings. He wasn't about to be unprepared.

"I did have some practice," he said. "It's excitement about it. In a way, a little bit of adrenaline, too. It was fun. It was fun to do it. I'm not ready to do it again."

Angels' P Ramirez hit with three-game suspension

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Angels pitcher Noe Ramirez has been suspended for three games and fined an undisclosed amount for throwing a pitch in the area of Houston outfielder Jake Marisnick's head, and Los Angeles manager Brad Ausmus has been suspended a game and fined.

Joe Torre, Chief Baseball Officer for Major League Baseball, announced the penalties Wednesday, a day after Ramirez drilled Marisnick be-

tween the shoulder blades with a 1-1 pitch in the sixth inning of the Angels' 7-2 home victory.

Ramirez said he will appeal the suspension. Bench coach Josh Paul will manage the Angels on Wednesday while Ausmus serves his suspension.

Ausmus said he thought his suspension was unnecessary but that since MLB thought Ramirez committed an egregious offense that he should be penalized, too.

"I thought three games for Noe was a little bit steep, but he still has the appeals process to

go through," Ausmus said.

Marisnick was playing his first game against Los Angeles since his violent home plate collision with catcher Jonathan Lucroy.

Marisnick ran over Lucroy while trying to score in Houston on July 7, leaving Lucroy with a concussion and a broken nose. He's out for at least three more weeks after having surgery on his broken nose Tuesday. Astros manager AJ Hinch said he expected Torre's office to step in after Tuesday's incident. He said he also hopes both teams

consider the matter closed.

"My reaction is really that it should be over and settled and done with," he said. "I think we will all be better served letting MLB be MLB and let us play the game on the field and get away from this issue."

Marisnick, a native of nearby Riverside, is currently appealing his two-game suspension for the collision. He said he hasn't heard from MLB about when his appeal will be heard and echoed Hinch's comments about hoping that both teams can move forward.

MLB Roundup

Padres rookie flirts with no-hitter in win

Associated Press

MIAMI — Chris Paddack said he took the mound with a chip on his shoulder and a tragedy on his mind, and the emotions of the occasion brought out the best in the San Diego Padres rookie.

Paddack took a no-hitter into the eighth inning, and two relievers got the final four outs to complete a three-hitter and beat the Miami Marlins 3-2 Wednesday night.

The performance came in Paddack's first appearance against the Marlins, who made the right-hander an eighth-round draft choice in 2015 and traded him to San Diego for reliever Fernando Rodney the following year.

Along with an eagerness to show the trade was a mistake, Paddack said he pitched mindful of the late Jose Fernandez. As a Miami minor leaguer, Paddack admired the Marlins ace, who died in a 2016 boat crash.

"I could talk about this for an hour," Paddack said. "There's just so much."

Athletics 10, Mariners 2: Homer Bailey shook off a rocky start to go six innings in

his Oakland debut and Mark Canha and Jurickson Profar each homered twice in a win over visiting Seattle.

Chad Pinder and Ramon Laureano also went deep as the A's matched their season high with six home runs.

Giants 11, Rockies 8: Donovan Solano had four hits, including a tie-breaking home run leading off the sixth inning, and San Francisco completed a four-game sweep in Colorado for the first time in nearly eight years. Pablo Sandoval sparked a three-run first inning with a two-run double and Stephen Vogt also homered for the surging Giants, who have won five straight and 12 of 14.

Mets 14, Twins 4: Dominic Smith put New York ahead with a pinch-hit, three-run homer in the seventh inning, and Pete Alonso added a 474-foot shot halfway up the third deck as host Minnesota lost a third straight game for the first time this season.

Cardinals 6, Pirates 5: Paul Goldschmidt hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the seventh inning and host St. Louis rallied to deal Pittsburgh its fifth

loss in six games.

John Brebbia (3-3) struck out four in two perfect innings. Carlos Martinez picked up his sixth save in eight chances.

Brewers 5, Braves 4: Josh Hader struck out Ozzie Albies with two outs and the tying run on third in the ninth to preserve host Milwaukee's win over Atlanta.

Christian Yelich hit his 34th homer of the season. It was Yelich's third home run in four games. The Brewers got a two-run homer from Manny Pina in the second. Josh Donaldson hit a two-run shot for the Braves.

Cubs 5, Reds 2: Yu Darvish tossed six innings of two-hit, shutout ball to finally earn his first win at Wrigley Field in Chicago's win over Cincinnati.

Kris Bryant and Addison Russell homered for the only hits off Sonny Gray (5-6) as the Cubs won for the fifth time in six games.

Indians 7, Tigers 2: Mike Clevinger matched his career high with 12 strikeouts in six innings, Oscar Mercado drove in two runs and host Cleveland beat Detroit.

Red Sox 5, Blue Jays 4:

Rafael Devers hit a solo homer and drove in four runs, Eduardo Rodriguez pitched effectively into the seventh inning and host Boston sent Toronto's Aaron Sanchez to his 13th straight loss.

Orioles 9, Nationals 2: Trey Mancini hit two home runs and host Baltimore pummeled Washington's ineffective bullpen to earn a split in the two-game interleague series.

The defeat — only the fourth in 17 games for the Nationals — kept them 6½ games behind the first-place Braves in the NL East.

Royals 7, White Sox 5: Danny Duffy pitched a strong six innings and ended a nine-start winless skid, and Jorge Soler and Nicky Lopez hit back-to-back RBI singles twice as host Kansas City beat Chicago.

Astros 11, Angels 2: Gerrit Cole struck out 11 over seven innings, Jake Marisnick had three hits amid a chorus of boos and Houston won at Los Angeles.

Dodgers 7, Phillies 2: Six Los Angeles pitchers combined on a two-hitter spanning a 2-hour, 37-minute rain delay, to complete a win at Philadelphia.

Escobar leads D-backs' rout of Rangers

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Eduardo Escobar and his Arizona teammates jumped all over Texas' pitchers en route to a record-tying night.

Escobar homered twice, and the Diamondbacks' red-hot bats tied a franchise record for a nine-inning game with 21 hits while thumping the Texas Rangers 19-4.

The 19 runs were Arizona's most since setting a franchise record with 20 against the San Diego Padres last July.

Escobar's first homer sparked a seven-run first-inning ambush against right-handed starter Jesse Chavez (3-5), who got just two outs.

"(Chavez) is a down-ball pitcher," Diamondbacks manager Torey Lovullo said. "We were aware that he was going to try

to crisscross the strike zone. Our guys had a good game plan. They knew what they were going to be looking for."

Neither Chavez, who has been in and out of the rotation this season, nor Texas manager Chris Woodward were panicking.

"I took a shower," Chavez said. "When you get your hands dirty like I tell my kids, rinse it off and tomorrow's another day."

Woodward said, "We're not giving up on anybody by any means. We just need to execute a little better."

The switch-hitting Escobar added a three-run homer batting right-handed against Kyle Bird in the sixth and had five RBIs. Kevin Cron, Jarrod Dyson and Carson Kelly also homered for Arizona.

Jake Lamb doubled twice and drove in two runs.

"We were aggressive on pitches in the

zone," Lamb said. "You feel like you're going to get more and more pitches in the zone once you get a certain lead."

Arizona also had 21 hits in an 18-2 win over San Francisco in May. The franchise record for any game is 22, set during an 18-inning, 12-7 win over Philadelphia on Aug. 24, 2013.

Robbie Ray (8-6) and two relievers cruised through the blowout. Ray has won all three of his starts in July. Back-to-back homers by Danny Santana and Logan Forsythe provided three Texas runs in the second inning, and Santana added a solo homer against Ray in the sixth.

The teams combined to hit eight homers, five in the first two innings.

"I thought I pitched pretty well," Ray said. "A couple unfortunate home runs. You saw the way the ball was flying tonight."

Lowry up one stroke in British Open

Associated Press

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland — It was about 6:30 a.m. when Darren Clarke, sporting a gray beard to match his swept-back gray hair, walked onto the first tee at Royal Portrush to hit the opening shot of a British Open he thought would never happen.

He almost welled up when his name was announced to applause from the packed horse-shoe grandstand at No. 1 and the galleries lining the fairway.

An hour later, he was leading the championship after three birdies in his opening five holes, receiving the kind of roars he hasn't heard since lifting the claret jug at Royal St. George's in 2011.

His lead didn't hold up, though.

Shane Lowry started shortly after Clarke and set the target with a 4-under 67, eight shots

lower than his best opening round in the other three majors this year.

Among those one shot back was Dylan Frittelli, the last man to qualify for the Open by winning the John Deere Classic. He was joined by Sergio Garcia, Webb Simpson and Alex Noren, along with another player who might need some introduction.

Bob MacIntyre of Scotland made it into his first Open with a pair of runner-up finishes on the European Tour this year to get into the top 20 in the points list. He has one career victory since turning pro. That was two years ago at the Sahara Kuwait Golf Championship on the MENA Tour, which stands for Middle East North Africa.

MacIntyre was tied with Lowry until a bogey on the final hole.

"I didn't think I'd feel the way I did," said Clarke, who was just

as emotional as he strode down the 18th fairway, saluting the crowds with his putter in his right hand.

Clarke wound up shooting an even-par 71. If the score wasn't memorable, the experience certainly was.

With "The Troubles" mainly behind them since the 1998 Good Friday peace accord, the Northern Irish are hosting golf's oldest major for the first time since Max Faulkner won at Royal Portrush in 1951. It is back 68 years later, in a pretty town Clarke now calls home.

Graeme McDowell, born and raised in Portrush and a member at adjacent Rathmore Golf Club, was one shot out of the early lead when he three-putted for bogey on the 15th and dropped another shot on the 17th. Then, he sent his drive well to the right on the 18th hole into grass so thick that he never found the golf ball in the

three minutes allowed for the search.

He went back to the tee for his third shot and missed a 7-foot putt to take triple bogey.

On the leaderboard for so much of his round, he signed for a 73.

Rory McIlroy said heightened expectations played no part in his 8-over 79 that has already ended any realistic chances of winning the British Open.

"I'm pretty sure anyone starting with a 79 in this golf tournament doesn't think about winning at this point," he said.

Tiger Woods was 6 over and without a birdie after 10 holes.

David Duval posted a 14 on the par-5 seventh hole.

The 2001 champion also had a quadruple-bogey 8 on the fifth at Royal Portrush. He birdied the first two holes and is 11 over through eight.

Broncos become 1st NFL team to open '19 training camp

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — The Denver Broncos were the first team in the NFL to kick off training camp Thursday, and they did it with Emmanuel Sanders on hand and also Drew Lock.

Sanders still isn't full-go as he continues his comeback from a torn Achilles tendon last December, but "Emmanuel looks good. He's not going to go on PUP. He'll start practicing from Day 1," general manager John Elway said Wednesday. "Obviously we're going to work him in slowly."

Pro Bowl running back Philip Lindsay, who hasn't taken a snap since suffering a wrist injury at Oakland on Christmas Eve, also will be eased into action.

"Lindsay's ready to go," new head coach Vic Fangio said. "Lindsay, Emmanuel, we'll ease them in, but we'll get them in quickly."

Rookies and veterans re-

ported to UC Health Training Center on Wednesday, a week earlier than usual because of the Broncos' Hall of Fame game against Atlanta on Aug. 1.

Three other teams — the Cardinals, Seahawks and Ravens — also had rookies report Wednesday but their veterans get several more days of summer vacation, unlike the Broncos.

Lock agreed to terms Wednesday afternoon, avoiding a potential holdout. He is vying for the backup job behind newcomer Joe Flacco, whom Elway acquired from Baltimore in yet another offseason makeover.

Widely viewed as a first-round prospect, Lock slipped to the second round, where the Broncos selected him with the 42nd overall pick, one spot behind their new left guard Dalton Risner. Lock has to get used to playing under center after hardly doing so at Missouri.

After the Paxton Lynch fi-

asco, Elway views his QB situation now like the Chiefs did with Alex Smith and Patrick Mahomes two years ago, with the apprentice getting to take his time learning and the veteran preparing to be the starter.

"We feel like he's in his prime," Elway said of Flacco, 34. "At least we hope he is."

Elway said he's optimistic because new offensive coordinator Rich Scangarello brings to Denver the roots of the Baltimore system in which Flacco excelled early in his career.

Adding Flacco in a trade and Lock in the draft allows the Broncos "to solidify that position for a while," Elway said. "Obviously, we've been looking for one since Peyton (Manning) retired. That's always a difficult position to fill. But I finally feel good about that position and where we are."

The Broncos are coming off back-to-back losing seasons for the first time since 1971-72 and while they have another rookie head coach, Fangio is 61

and has decades of experience coaching in the pros.

"We've got a lot of work ahead of us," Elway said. "We always have high expectations of ourselves but we just know that the position that we're in and the last two seasons that we've had we've got to take it one day at a time and that's what we're going to do."

"And we're in good shape, too. I think being in early, having the extra week, playing in the Hall of Fame game is going to help us with the new staff. I think that's a positive for us being in early."

Fangio's first camp as a head coach includes an NFL-most 19 open practices.

"I think it's good to have the fans out here," Fangio said. "You know, the history of the NFL, you had to go to college campuses back in the day because the facilities didn't look like this. When I first went to the Saints in the mid-'80s, we had an 80-yard grass field, OK? We had no cafeteria."