

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Sunday, July 21, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Navy facility simulates warship training

*The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot*

NORFOLK, Va. — Few things can match training on a warship for a naval battle.

But the Navy believes it's created something even better on shore.

A new facility on Naval Station Norfolk will start training sailors Monday to conduct anti-submarine warfare, air defense and surface combat in a way that allows them to simulate every step required to fire weapons — which they can't do on an actual ship because of safety protocols.

The trainer at the Center for Surface Combat Systems even pipes in the same sounds sailors would hear when a missile

or another weapon is fired.

"When you're training on a ship, there's safety measures that you obviously put in place because there's ordnance on board and you're integrating many different systems," said Capt. Dave Stoner, the center's commanding officer. "Here, because it's a pure training environment, you can train to the full tactical capability of the system in a way that just can't be done on a ship."

The new facility is only the second of its kind in the Navy. The first opened in San Diego about seven months ago. The cost for both was about \$150 million, Stoner said.

The trainer is equipped with the same systems found in the

combat information center aboard destroyers and cruisers. Large screens can show footage from a simulated helicopter or video that would be streamed from a ship itself, such as missiles launching. And unlike on actual ships, instructors can record, replay and stop a scenario at any time and go over what went well and what needs to be improved.

"On board a ship, you would sort of huddle up like you would after a football practice ... and talk about how it went. This is now game tape," Stoner said. "We can hear the audio of the watch standers as they go through their cadence; we can see what they saw on their screens and what the system

was really doing and what the watch stander perceived it to be, have that discussion and then come right back in here and roll through it again."

Rear Adm. Jesse Wilson, commander of Naval Surface Force Atlantic, said every ship's crew will eventually train in the new facility, but that priority will go to those getting ready to deploy, who need to be most proficient. He also said one of the facility's benefits is to not only train sailors on existing battle doctrine but to try out new concepts that could be brought to the rest of the fleet.

"The Navy the nation needs requires us to be better," Wilson said. "This facility does that."

## Audio: UK navy tried to thwart Iran ship seizure

*Associated Press*

LONDON — In an audio recording released Sunday, a British naval officer insists that a British-flagged oil tanker must be allowed to sail through the Strait of Hormuz as Iranian paramilitary forces demand that the vessel change course before commandeering it.

The audio, released by maritime security risk firm Dryad Global, shows how the British navy was unable to prevent the ship's seizure Friday by Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces. The seizure has prompted condemnation from the U.K. and its European allies as they continue to call for a deescalation of tensions in the critical waterway.

The free flow of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is of international importance because one-fifth of all global crude exports pass through the

narrow waterway between Iran and Oman.

In the recording, an Iranian officer can be heard telling the Stena Impero to change course, saying, "You obey, you will be safe."

"Alter your course to 360 degrees immediately, over," the officer says, before saying the ship is wanted for security reasons.

A British naval officer from the HMS Montrose frigate that was patrolling the area around the Strait of Hormuz is heard telling the Stena Impero, which had a crew of 23 onboard, that its passage must be allowed. British officials say the HMS Montrose was roughly 60 minutes from the scene when the Iranians took control of the tanker, too far away to intervene effectively.

"Sir, I reiterate that as you are conducting transit passage in a recognized international

strait, under international law your passage must not be impaired, intruded, obstructed or hampered," the British officer says.

The British officer then tells an Iranian patrol boat, "Please confirm that you are not intending to violate international law by unlawfully attempting to board the MV Stena."

Iranian officials say the seizure of the British oil tanker was a justified response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker two weeks earlier off the coast of Gibraltar, a British territory located on the southern tip of Spain.

European nations, which are trying to save the nuclear deal and keep Iran from isolation, have tried to come up with ways to keep trading with Iran but have run smack into Trump's sanctions.

The tanker seizure comes at a ticklish time for Britain,

which on Wednesday will see a new prime minister replace Theresa May. The two contenders for the job are front-runner Boris Johnson and Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who has a key role in dealing with the shipping crisis.

British officials say they have no good military options and are seeking a diplomatic solution. Defense Minister Tobias Ellwood reiterated calls for deescalation Sunday on Sky News.

"Well, firstly we need to try and deescalate this. There has been a ratcheting up of tensions in the Middle East," he said before calling Friday's seizure "a hostile act" by Iran.

Ellwood also noted that the British Royal Navy "is too small to manage our interests across the globe" and that this would be an issue for the next prime minister to handle.

# Military studying 'hyperfit' women able to pass most grueling courses

Associated Press

ARMYSOLDIERSYSTEMS CENTER, Mass. — In the nearly four years since the Pentagon announced it was opening all combat jobs to women, at least 30 have earned the Army Ranger tab, two have graduated Marine infantry school and three have passed the grueling initial assessment phase for Green Beret training.

Their numbers are small, but their completion of some of the military's most arduous physical and mental courses has raised an intriguing scientific question: Who are these "hyperfit" women and what makes them so competitive?

Army medical researchers hope to uncover answers in a just-launched voluntary study.

"We're really interested in those elite women that are the first to make it through physically demanding training," said Holly McClung, a nutritional physiologist at the Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine in Massachusetts.

"The real point of the study is to characterize this unique cohort of women that has made it through these traditionally male trainings," she said.

During early debate on the move to open all combat jobs to women, military leaders raised questions about whether women were up to the jobs or if putting them on the front lines would make units less capable. The Marine Corps sought an exemption to keep some combat jobs closed for precisely that reason, but they were overruled by then-Defense Secretary Ash Carter.

Women, however, increasingly have made it through the nine-week Ranger course, and the numbers of those trying out for other special operations jobs is slowly inching up.

The courses all encompass a number of phases and run from about nine weeks to a year or

two for the most elite commando jobs.

They involve a wide array of grueling physical fitness tests, combat water survival, day and night land navigation, long road marches carrying heavy packs, extended patrols through various climates and extensive mental, psychological and leadership testing.

The goal of the study is to identify the attributes — whether mental, physical or psychological — that help the women succeed, McClung said. By unlocking those secrets, maybe they can help other women compete for the same jobs.

In a small basement office at this Army base in Natick, Mass., McClung and Julie Hughes, a research physiologist, were setting up a treadmill that's linked to a nearby computer. They plan to have the women use a mask and breathing apparatus to calculate each participant's  $\text{vo}_2$  Max score, a key fitness indicator. The score measures how many millimeters of oxygen are used per kilogram of body weight per minute; in other words, how much oxygen is being used at a person's peak exercise rate.

An average sedentary person may have a score of about 30. Top athletes — runners and cyclists — can score in the 80s.

The plan, at this point, is to have the military women come to Natick in groups of two or three and go through a range of tests over three days to identify biological and physiological markers that help define them as hyperfit. Having several tested at the same time will make it more interesting and encourage competition, McClung said.

"This is a unique historical time," said Hughes. "There's this group of women who made it through the training, so we want to get them to at least do these observational investiga-

tions to explore what makes them unique."

That breathing test, along with others on their blood, calcium and iron levels as well as bone density scans and exercise programs, will be used to determine the women's physical fitness. Other written tests and interviews will evaluate their mental toughness and psychological resilience.

The women will take three psychological exams that are designed to determine their grit, hardiness and resilience.

For example, the military version of the resilience test lists statements and asks people to determine on a scale of 1 to 5 if the statement is definitely or mostly false, "don't know" or mostly or definitely true. Some examples of the statements are: I enjoy most things in life; I often feel helpless; I like to have a lot of structure in my life; I carefully plan just about everything I do; it bothers me when my daily routine gets interrupted; and my successes are because of my effort and ability.

Mark Esper, President Donald Trump's nominee for defense secretary, said the study will be important to help understand fitness and perhaps reduce injury rates. He was serving as Army secretary when the study was first broached.

"My belief is it's grit — grit gets them through this," he said. "You have to have a certain level of athletic ability, but they take it to an extraordinary level. These women are tough."

McClung said she received word on July 12 that the final study was approved. She said that if more women graduate from any of the military training courses, they could be added to the study.

McClung and Hughes also said they hope to be able to compare the women's results with similar testing on men.

## USAF lauds new medical program as successful

BY CHRISTOPHER DENNIS  
*Stars and Stripes*

A test run of a new Air Force medical program was so successful at reducing the number of airmen who were sidelined and unable to perform their jobs that it's being rolled out at bases across the U.S., officials said.

The 366th Medical Group at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, in a pilot study last year was able to significantly reduce the number of active-duty servicemembers who were not mission-ready by visiting airmen in their duty locations rather than waiting for airmen to come to them.

They learned about the challenges the servicemembers faced and partnered with unit leaders to manage the airmen's care, the Air Force surgeon general's office said.

"We had more than 400 airmen on the base who were considered non-mission-capable when we launched in March 2018," Col. Steven Ward, then commander of the 366th Medical Group, was quoted as saying by the surgeon general's office. "In six months, we reduced that number by nearly one-fourth."

Following the success of the test run, the system is being taken nationwide, the Air Force has said. Initially, it will be rolled out at 43 Air Force medical facilities in the continental U.S. The new system brings agencies that previously had separate, distinct health care roles under the umbrella of a service called the Air Force Medical Readiness Agency.

The AFMRA is expected to streamline the Air Force Medical Service "from a dual-focus on health benefit delivery and readiness to one laser-focused on readiness," Air Force Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Dorothy Hogg said.



# China's actions in disputed waters troubling

Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam — The United States said it's concerned by reports of China's interference with oil and gas activities in the disputed waters of the South China Sea, where Vietnam accuses Beijing of violating its sovereignty.

State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said in a statement that China's "repeated provocative actions aimed at the offshore oil and gas development of other claimant states threaten regional energy security and undermine

the free and open Indo-Pacific energy market."

Vietnam on Friday demanded China remove a survey ship from Vanguard Bank, which it says lies within Vietnam's 200-mile exclusive economic zone. China claims the South China Sea almost in its entirety and has rattled smaller neighbors by constructing seven man-made islands in the disputed waters and equipping them with military runways and outposts.

Chinese coast guard vessels also have been reported near

a drilling rig in the same Vanguard Bank area where Vietnam has contracted Russia's Rosneft to develop gas fields.

"Vietnam has made contact with China on multiple occasions via different channels, delivered diplomatic notes to oppose China's violations and staunchly demanded China to stop all unlawful activities and withdraw its ships from Vietnamese waters," Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang said in a statement Friday.

Chinese Foreign Ministry

spokesman Geng Shuang earlier last week urged Hanoi to respect China's sovereign rights and jurisdiction "and not to take any move that may complicate matters."

In May 2014, Chinese and Vietnamese vessels engaged in a dangerous confrontation when China's national oil company moved its oil platform into waters Vietnam considers its territory.

Ortagus called on China to "cease its bullying behavior and refrain from engaging in this type of provocative and destabilizing activities."

## Propeller shaft problem delays McCain's return to sea

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The USS John S. McCain will be out of service longer than anticipated due to problems discovered during testing after the destroyer moved out of dry dock in November, according to a report Thursday in Defense News.

The destroyer — assigned to the 7th Fleet at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan — underwent two years' worth of repairs following its collision in August 2017 with a commercial tanker near Singapore. A berthing area

on the warship was impacted, leaving 10 sailors dead.

Defense News, citing unnamed sources, reported that a waterborne test discovered high vibrations due to a misaligned port shaft that turns one of the ship's twin screws.

The news site reported that Naval Sea Systems Command confirmed the misaligned shaft will delay the McCain's return to service. The vessel was expected back at sea this past spring, the new site reported.

A spokesman for 7th Fleet on

Friday confirmed essential elements of the report.

Following its launch in November, the McCain underwent a sequence of tests.

"During the testing, Navy maintenance subject matter experts determined the ship's port shaft was misaligned likely due to the August 2017 collision," Lt. Joe Keiley told Stars and Stripes in an email.

The process of correctly aligning the shaft is underway and is scheduled to be complete in October with remain-

ing work in the Ship Repair Facility finished in November, he wrote. Afterward, the McCain will undergo training and certification to prepare it for a return to service.

At a change-of-command ceremony July 2, the outgoing skipper, Cmdr. Micah Murphy alluded to the ship being back in service in the fall.

The McCain spent 11 months in dry dock as part of repairs following the collision. The ship, which just marked 25 years in service, incurred about \$200 million in damages.

## Navy halts search for sailor reported overboard last week

BY CHAD GARLAND

Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — A sailor who was reported overboard from a U.S. aircraft carrier in the Arabian Sea last week remains missing after the Navy ended its search and rescue efforts, officials said Saturday.

After "extensive attempts to locate the sailor" involving three ships and aircraft from two patrol squadrons, the search was concluded Friday, the Navy's 5th Fleet said in a statement.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the family, friends and shipmates of our lost sailor," Vice Adm. Jim Malloy, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces commander, said in a statement.

The service withheld the sailor's identity, citing policy, but said the missing servicemember was assigned to the Norfolk, Va.-based Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 5 aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln.

Next of kin had been notified that the sailor's whereabouts

remain unknown, 5th Fleet said.

The search began after a "man overboard" report on Wednesday. The Lincoln, the USS Leyte Gulf and patrol squadrons VP-10 and VP-40 were joined by the Spanish Mendez Nunez frigate in searching the Arabian Sea area where the sailor had been reported missing, the statement said.

"During this tragic time, I want to thank the Spanish Alvaro de Bazan-class frigate Mendez Nunez for their assistance in the search operations and all the sailors involved in

the search for their valiant efforts to find our shipmate," Malloy said.

Officials at the 5th Fleet told Navy Times that an earlier statement incorrectly said the Pakistani navy ship PSN Aslat had aided in the search.

The squadron the sailor belonged to, made up of about 200 servicemembers, is part of Carrier Air Wing 7 and is assigned to the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, which had its deployment to the region expedited in May amid escalating tensions with Iran.

# Heat grips East as Central US sees relief

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The East Coast on Sunday sweated through another day of heat and humidity in a stretch of weather so oppressive that a New Jersey drawbridge got stuck and suburban Boston police jokingly asked criminals to take it easy.

The central part of the country, meanwhile, enjoyed some relief. A cold front was steadily moving southward and eastward across the country, bringing down the temperatures in the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes, according to the National Weather Service.

But portions of the Central Plains and Mississippi Valley and much of the East Coast were still expected to see temperatures approaching nearly 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The cooler weather settling in Mon-

day and Tuesday will also bring severe storms and heavy rain that could cause flash flooding and produce damaging winds, the agency warned.

The Carolinas up to Maine were expected to see the highest temperatures Sunday. Daytime highs were expected in the mid-to-upper 90s, which, coupled with high humidity, could feel as hot as 110 degrees Fahrenheit.

Boston opened up city pools free to residents over the weekend as the region could see temperatures again approach 100 degrees, and area police posted a tongue-in-cheek request on their Facebook page.

"Due to the extreme heat, we are asking anyone thinking of doing criminal activity to hold off until Monday," Braintree police wrote as the high temperatures set in Friday. "Conducting criminal activity, in

this extreme heat is next level henchmen status, and also very dangerous."

New York City directed office buildings to set thermostats no lower than 78 degrees through Sunday to reduce strain on its electrical grid.

In Philadelphia on Saturday, several hundred people were evacuated from a retirement community because of a partial power outage that officials say may have been heat-related.

In New Jersey, the Oceanic Bridge over the Navesink River was closed Saturday evening after it got stuck open. Monmouth County officials say heat caused expansion of the metal encasing the drawbridge, which is a popular route for residents and beachgoers.

The heat wave is starting to break in the northern reaches of New England.

A Canadian cold front

brought a series of thunderstorms Saturday evening that dropped temperatures across northern Vermont and upstate New York. A heat advisory remains in effect Sunday for southern sections of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, where heat indexes could still top 100 degrees.

But in many parts of the country, it wasn't expected to get much better when the sun goes down. Temperatures are expected to remain at or above the high 70s overnight.

Storms knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of residents in Michigan and Wisconsin Saturday.

Experts warned residents in affected areas to limit their time outdoors. The risks are greatest for young children, the elderly and the sick.

## Trump offers to 'vouch' for A\$AP Rocky's bail

Associated Press

BERLIN — President Donald Trump said he spoke with Sweden's prime minister Saturday about jailed rapper A\$AP Rocky and "offered to personally vouch for his bail."

Trump tweeted that during "a very good call" with Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, he also "assured him that A\$AP was not a flight risk."

The platinum-selling, Grammy-nominated artist has been in custody since early this month over an alleged fight.

Urged on by the first lady and celebrities including Kanye West and Kim Kardashian West, the president had said in a Friday tweet that he would intervene to try to free Rocky, whose real name is Rakim May.

"Our teams will be talking further, and we agreed to speak again in the next 48 hours!" Trump wrote Saturday after speaking with Lofven.

The prime minister's press secretary, Toni Eriksson, confirmed hours later that Lofven and Trump had a conversation that "was friendly and respectful and lasted about 20 minutes."

Lofven "made certain to emphasize the complete independence of the Swedish judicial system, prosecutors and courts," Eriksson said in a statement. "He underlined that in Sweden everyone is equal before the law and that the government cannot and will not attempt to influence the legal proceedings."

The two leaders may have a follow-up call, "but nothing has been booked or planned," she said.

Lofven had issued a statement earlier Saturday saying he would be glad to speak with Trump about A\$AP Rocky's detention but giving the same warning about his government's unwillingness to interfere.

## Japan's Abe secures a majority in upper house

Associated Press

TOKYO — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling coalition secured a majority in Japan's upper house of parliament in elections Sunday, according to vote counts by public television and other media. Exit polls indicated Abe could even close in on the supermajority needed to propose constitutional revisions.

NHK public television said Abe's Liberal Democratic Party and its junior partner, Komeito, had won 64 seats in the upper house after two hours of vote counting. The two-thirds majority needed for constitutional revision could be within reach if the ruling bloc can gain support from members of another conservative party and independents.

Up for grabs were 124 seats in the less powerful of Japan's two parliamentary chambers. There are 245 seats in the upper

house — which does not choose the prime minister — about half of which are elected every three years.

The results appeared to match or even exceed preelection polls that indicated Abe's ruling bloc was to keep ground in the upper house, with most voters considering it a safer choice over an opposition with an uncertain track record. To reach the two-thirds majority, or 164 seats, Abe needs 85 more seats by his ruling bloc and supporters of a charter change.

Opposition parties have focused on concerns over household finances, such as the impact from an upcoming 10% sales tax increase and strains on the public pension system amid Japan's aging population.

Abe has led his Liberal Democratic Party to five consecutive parliamentary election victories since 2012.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Another alligator sighting in Pittsburgh

**PA** PITTSBURGH — A baby alligator has been found far from the tropics in the parking lot of a grocery store. It's the fourth alligator discovered around the city since May.

Shaler Township Police Lt. Dave Banko told the (Pittsburgh) Tribune Review an employee found the 2-foot-long creature Friday morning near a garbage can at the Giant Eagle grocery store. Paul McIntyre, of Big Daddy Wildlife Removal, said the animal was healthy, docile and seems like a pet.

It's not illegal to own an alligator in Pennsylvania.

## Chicago gator settles into its new home

**FL** ST. AUGUSTINE — An alligator that eluded capture for days in a Chicago lagoon is settling in its new home in Florida.

The St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park said in a Facebook post Friday that it welcomed the reptile known as Chance the Snapper with a banner, pizza and Chicago's greatest hits.

The 4-foot, 18-pound American alligator became an instant sensation from the day he was spotted in the Humboldt Park lagoon and photos popped up online. Investigators don't know why the animal was in the lagoon.

## Chiropractor, track standout win chip toss

**NE** CHADRON — A Chadron chiropractor and a former Chadron High School track standout have won top honors in the World Championship Buffalo Chip Throw

contest during the 43rd annual Fur Trade Days celebration in Chadron.

Station KCSR reported that Eric Landen, 35, won the men's title Saturday by tossing a piece of dried buffalo dung nearly 146 feet. The record is 204 feet by Chadron State College track All-American Kail Bowman in 1990 during a since-discontinued team event.

Winning the women's overall and 18-and-over titles was recently graduated Chadron High track standout True Thorne with a throw of a little over 107 feet.

## 'Got the Spider!' joke circulates online

**SD** RENNER — A photo of a demolished house with the words "Got the Spider!" painted on the roof has made the rounds on social media after a couple decided to have a little fun.

Jeff Hopkins and Dawn Cronk told the (Sioux Falls) Argus Leader they wanted to write something on the roof of the crumbled house and "Got the Spider!" made them laugh.

So Cronk bought a can of spray paint and the joke was set in motion. A stranger took a photo Tuesday and it's since been shared online tens of thousands of times.

## Police: Eagle stolen from wildlife refuge

**NY** QUOGUE — Police on Long Island are searching for a bald eagle that was stolen from a wildlife refuge.

Police said the approximately 35-year-old male bald eagle was removed from its enclosure at Quogue Wildlife Refuge in Quogue early Tuesday morning.

Police said the eagle was sent to the facility in Suffolk County by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1988 after being injured. Its right wing is partially amputated and it can't fly.

Officials said possession of a bald eagle, which is a federally protected species, is a federal offense punishable by fines and jail time.

## Attached firecrackers cost cat its leg

**PA** PITTSBURGH — An animal rescue group in said someone strapped firecrackers to a cat's front left paw with rubber bands and set them off, causing such severe injuries. The animal's leg had to be amputated.

Humane Animal Rescue said on its Facebook page that two good Samaritans brought the cat in after finding it limping around on a mangled and bloody leg.

The cat, who staffers have named Pickles, is on the mend and will be up for adoption soon.

## Company sued in dispute over spirits

**VA** RICHMOND — A trade association is suing a distillery, claiming it is trying to pass off whiskey as Scotch.

In a federal lawsuit filed last week, the Scotch Whisky Association alleges the Virginia Distillery Co. has engaged in "false, misleading and deceptive" labelling of whiskey sold under the brand name "Virginia-Highland Whisky."

The lawsuit claims the use of the term "Highland" and its spelling of "Whisky" falsely imply that the product is Scotch whisky wholly produced in Scotland.

Whiskey made in the U.S. is spelled with an "e."

In a statement, CEO Garrett Moore said Virginia Distillery has always been upfront with its customers, with labels stating: "Whisky from Scotland, Married with Virginia Whisky." Moore said he's confident the complaint will be resolved.

## Cleveland moves to LED streetlights

**OH** CLEVELAND — Cleveland plans to replace 61,000 streetlights with brighter, longer-lasting, energy-efficient LED lamps in a \$35 million project aimed at improving safety and saving the city money.

Cleveland.com reported the city is pairing some of those lights with about 1,000 high-definition security cameras to be installed near crime hot spots, recreation centers, busy streets and intersections to better allow police to monitor those areas and have higher-quality footage.

The project is expected to take 18 months.

## Annual butterfly festival scheduled

**TN** KNOXVILLE — The University of Tennessee Arboretum Butterfly Festival is offering educational sessions and a butterfly release next month.

The fourth annual festival is set for 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Aug. 3 at the UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge.

Admission is \$5 per car to benefit the UT Arboretum Endowment and ongoing operations. There are additional charges for some activities, including the butterfly release, which is \$10 per butterfly.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news  
updated 24/7 from bases  
around the world.  
Now online at [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

STARS AND STRIPES®

# Ireland's Lowry wins first major title

*The Washington Post*

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland — As a happy story played out in sad-story weather on Sunday at Royal Portrush, the time-honored idea that heartbreak can wind up boosting strength got a rowdy and touching reiteration. An affable 32-year-old Irishman went squarely to the juncture of his bygone bummer — four shots ahead with one round to play, just like in 2016 — and learned he had mastered this rare and eccentric art, his nerves clearly toughened from before.

Shane Lowry, the world's No. 33 player who painted himself as "bitterly disappointed" when he squandered his four-shot lead at the 2016 U.S. Open, found his way to an exhilaration that might even make that prior dud worthwhile. (Might.) He never even strayed into peril or even very many weeds as he won the 148th British Open Championship by six handy shots over Tommy Fleetwood, Lowry's promising 28-

year-old playing partner. It made Lowry Ireland's first major winner since Padraig Harrington finished hoarding his third at the 2008 PGA Championship.

So the first Open at Royal Portrush in 68 years, a matter of a meaning unusual in its depth, wound up with booming cheers as a man from Clara in County Offaly, four driving hours south, got the privilege of walking No. 18 without a shred of stress. He stood at 15-under-par with none of the world's other best golfers in double digits. His lead had never dwindled beneath three all afternoon. His father, Brendan, a renowned Gaelic footballer back in his day, accepted hugs.

Galleries, who had appeared beneath umbrellas in droves along ropes and on hills all through the 7,344 yards, clearly shared the mirth. "Come on, Shane!" went the first-name refrain even from those who don't know him personally. A big sound followed when he knocked in his closing par.

Meteorologists had promised on Satur-

day night that the North Atlantic Ocean had been out there rousing up one of its typical Open brews, and the Royal & Ancient that oversees the old tournament moved the tee times up two hours in anticipation. That, of course, would not daunt one trained in Ireland, and along Lowry's scarcely troubled way, the rain varied from piddling to insistent to end-of-time to gone. On No. 8 in particular, it combined with gusts for the outright atmospheric rudeness long deemed almost essential to Open golf.

Yet things never got hairy on a day when Tony Finau finished third at 7-under-par and fourth place went shared by 46-year-old Lee Westwood and No. 1-ranked Brooks Koepka, who became only the fifth player ever to finish top-five in all four majors in a calendar year.

The Irish golfer who is the fans' darling held off Fleetwood through rain and mist with a steady performance before raucous fans delighted to celebrate an Irishman's win.

## Sports briefs

# Ledecky suffers rare 400 free defeat at worlds

*Associated Press*

GWANGJU, South Korea — Katie Ledecky is usually there in the end, her endurance powering her to the wall well ahead of the competition.

Someone else got there first at the world championships on Sunday night.

Ariarne Titmus of Australia chased down Ledecky over the last lap to win the 400-meter freestyle and deny the American star a record fourth straight title. It was Ledecky's first defeat in the event at a major international meet since 2013.

"This stings a little," Ledecky said. "It's not what I'm used to."

China's Sun Yang was able to do what Ledecky could not: win his record fourth consecutive title in the men's 400 free.

As expected, it didn't come without controversy.

Sun's rival, Mack Horton of Australia, ignored Sun on the medals podium. They didn't

shake hands and Horton didn't even step onto the podium; instead he stood behind it when given his silver medal.

Sun is currently facing alleged doping rule violations that risk a ban from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and he has requested a public trial at the Court of Arbitration for Sport in September to defend himself.

The World Anti-Doping Agency is challenging a decision by FINA, swimming's world governing body, merely to warn him over incidents during a doping control team's attempts to take blood and urine samples at his home in China last September, while allowing him to continue competing.

Titmus overcame a 0.62-second deficit going into the last lap and won by 1.21 seconds over Ledecky. The 18-year-old Aussie touched in 3 minutes, 58.76 seconds.

"I knew that I probably had that in me," Titmus said, "but, yeah, it's pretty surreal at the moment."

Ledecky finished in 3:59.97 — well off her world record of 3:56.46 set at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

"She ran me right down," the American said.

American Leah Smith took bronze in 4:01.29.

An admittedly nervous Ledecky had the slowest last lap of anyone in the eight-woman final. Titmus went 1.83 seconds faster over the last 50 meters.

"I made a move and then I came in at the last turn and felt like I could barely push off," Ledecky said. "My legs and arms just tightened up that last 50 and she took advantage of that."

## Yates wins Tour stage, Alaphilippe loses time

FOIX, France — Simon Yates of Britain posted a second stage win with a solo raid during the last Pyrenean trek of the Tour de France as Frenchman Thibaut Pinot gained more

time on his rivals in the fight for the yellow jersey with a ferocious attack in the final climb on Sunday.

Yates triumphed at the summit of the Prat d'Albis in Stage 15, three days after his first stage victory in the southwestern mountain range.

Pinot crossed the finish line in second place, 33 seconds behind Yates, and moved to fourth overall.

Julian Alaphilippe was isolated without a single teammate to help him in the nearly 7.5-mile final climb and cracked but managed to salvage his yellow jersey.

Defending champion Geraint Thomas remained second in the general classification.

Coming right after the ascent of the Tourmalet — where Pinot had already showed his great form and stamina with a stage win at the famed Tour mountain — Stage 15 ran close to the ancient Cathar castles and was a punishing ride, totaling more than 24 miles of climbing.



# Pacquiao hands Thurman 1st loss

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — From his first-round knockdown punches to his tenacious 12th-round finish, Manny Pacquiao gave another one-sided thrashing to Father Time.

Keith Thurman was a whole lot tougher to beat, but the 40-year-old Filipino senator managed to win that vote as well.

Pacquiao floored Thurman early and persevered late to an exciting split-decision WBA welterweight victory Saturday night, adding a third straight win to his late-career resurgence.

Pacquiao (62-7-2) dropped his previously unbeaten opponent with a combination late in the first round, and the Pac-Man dominated the opening rounds with a combination of flair and power that recalled the incredible prime of the only eight-division champion in boxing history.

Thurman (29-1) showed remarkable tenacity in rallying

through the middle rounds, repeatedly testing Pacquiao's chin with big shots. Neither fighter managed another knockdown, but they pushed relentlessly in front of a sellout crowd at the MGM Grand Garden that repeatedly chanted Pacquiao's name from the moment he reached the ring.

"It was fun," Pacquiao said. "My opponent is a good fighter and boxer. He was strong. ... I think he did his best, and I did my best. I think we made the fans happy tonight because it was a good fight."

Two judges scored the bout 115-112 for Pacquiao, while Glenn Feldman scored it 114-113 for Thurman. The Associated Press also scored it 115-112 for Pacquiao.

"I knew it was close," Thurman said. "He had the momentum because he got the knockdown in Round 1. ... I wish I had a little bit more output to go toe-to-toe. My conditioning, my output was just behind Manny Pacquiao's to-

night. Tonight was a blessing and a lesson."

Pacquiao appeared to be declining as recently as two years ago, when he lost a listless decision to Jeff Horn. But while his political career flourished, Pacquiao also revived his ring career with solid back-to-back victories over Lucas Matthysse and Adrien Broner.

Thurman represented another major step up in competition, but Pacquiao's strong start quieted any speculation that he would suddenly look old in a matchup with an elite welterweight champion.

Thurman's effort was impressive on paper: He landed slightly more punches than the famously active Pacquiao, and his 192 power punches landed were the most by any Pacquiao opponent in his 43 fights that were tracked by CompuBox. But Pacquiao had a dominant jab, and he outworked Thurman in the 12th round, throwing 56 punches to win the round on two judges' cards.

Both fighters started quickly with a series of good-looking exchanges, but Pacquiao changed the bout in an instant. He moved forward to land a left to the body and a right hook that sent Thurman to the canvas with 25 seconds left in the first round.

Thurman got up comfortably while the ecstatic crowd roared, but Pacquiao kept up his superior work for the next two rounds, repeatedly rocking Thurman with a variety of shots. Even when Thurman put together a solid fifth round, he was stunned several times in the final minute and left with blood on his face.

But Thurman gathered himself and soundly beat Pacquiao through the middle rounds, forcing Pacquiao to show off his durable chin. Pacquiao reversed the momentum in the 10th with a series of big shots, including a punch to the body that sent Thurman stumbling away in obvious pain.

## Biles captures 6th straight gold at U.S. Classic

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Simone Biles had a lot to feel good about, even with some rare missteps that were quickly forgotten in her latest climb atop another podium.

What mattered most to the world's top gymnast was keeping things moving forward, which Biles did.

Biles won the U.S. Classic on Saturday night to maintain her six-year winning streak.

The four-time Olympic gold medalist and reigning world champion had an all-around score of 60.000, 2.100 points ahead of runner-up Riley McCusker. Grace McCallum was third at 57.700.

Biles won her 19th consecutive all-around title, a streak that began with the 2013 U.S. Championships. She surged from fifth following the first rotation on the uneven bars into first on the next. She had the highest score in the vault (15.650), though Jade Carey won the event with a two-vault average score of 14.800.

Biles left no doubt in the floor exercise, which generated the most curiosity for

what she would add to her top-flight exercise routine.

Biles delivered, unleashing a high-speed punch layout front onto her second flip on her signature move known as "The Biles," a double layout with a half turn. Momentum from the high-energy move sent her out of bounds, though it didn't hurt her score in that segment or overall.

"I definitely wanted to stay in bounds for one routine," said Biles, who smiled at the mistake before getting back at it. "But it's more to work on. I overpowered it a little bit, but I'm kind of happy with it. I'd rather go over than under."

"At least I didn't fly completely off of the floor."

Biles also was third on the balance beam in the first of just two U.S. appearances this year; the second is next month at the U.S. Nationals in Kansas City, Mo.

Her intense approach to the floor exercise and elsewhere pleased co-coach Laurent Landi and has him confident Biles can grow even more.

"We tried it, and hopefully we can try

something else at the nationals," Landi said. "It's mainly for me to see what she can do, to see if it's something we can (be) pushing or something to get away from. It was good."

McCusker, one of Biles' teammates on the gold-medal winning U.S. squad at the world championships, was just as happy with her second-place finish that began with her finishing second on the beam to Kara Eaker.

"I didn't come in expecting anything, just to take it one skill at a time. It was great to start off and hit a beam routine, because that's always a nerve-wracking event to start on, so I was glad I did what I did every day in the gym."

Morgan Hurd, who won the 2017 world championship while Biles took off, won the parallel bars over Sunisa Lee with McCusker and McCallum tied for third. McCallum was pleased on many levels, coming in second to Biles on the floor exercise and improving from seventh at last year's Classic to her best finish at the event.

# Guerrero slam lifts Jays past Tigers

Associated Press

DETROIT — When rookie slugger Vladimir Guerrero Jr. came to the plate with the bases loaded, there was an air of anticipation at Comerica Park.

Toronto and Detroit are a combined 60 games under .500, but this was still a moment to remember.

Guerrero hit his first career grand slam, a 441-foot drive toward the bushes that helped the Blue Jays rally for a 7-5 victory over the Tigers on Saturday night. The home run erased a 5-1 deficit in the fifth, and Brandon Drury added a two-run shot an inning later to put Toronto ahead.

"It was a good pitch to hit," Guerrero said through a translator. "He gave me my pitch, and I hit it pretty good."

Niko Goodrum and John Hicks went deep for the Tigers, who are 7-33 since the

start of June. Goodrum's two-run homer in the second gave Detroit a 3-1 lead, but a 59-minute rain delay in the fourth knocked out both starting pitchers.

Wilmer Font (2-0) came on in the bottom of the fourth and gave up a two-run homer to Hicks that put the Tigers up by four, but Gregory Soto (0-4) quickly gave away the advantage. Toronto loaded the bases in the fifth, then Guerrero hit his home run a bit to the left of straightaway center.

"That's a strong young man," Detroit manager Ron Gardenhire said. "I think Soto was trying to get that on the outer corner but he left it over the middle and you saw where that young fellow hit it. I think they've got a good one there, but I don't think they need me to tell them."

It was the ninth major league homer for Guerrero, who had three hits in a win Fri-

day and two more on Saturday.

"That's the Vladdy that we know," Blue Jays manager Charlie Montoyo said. "That's what he can do, and that's what we're waiting for, everybody was waiting for. He's looking good at the plate now."

Guerrero came into the year as one of the game's top prospects, but his debut season has been uneven. He's hitting .249 with an OPS of .729.

"He's 20 years old, and he's going to have his ups and downs, but he's always going to find a way to smile," Montoyo said. "That's just who he is."

Guerrero said he already had the ball from his grand slam, and indicated he would give it to his Hall of Fame father.

Drury's homer gave the Blue Jays the lead, and the Tigers didn't score again off the Toronto bullpen.

## MLB roundup

# Sanchez outduels Soroka, Nationals edge Braves

Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Nationals' Anibal Sanchez outpitched Mike Soroka and scored the go-ahead run in the fifth inning, Matt Adams homered and Washington beat the Braves 5-3 on Saturday night.

The second-place Nationals pulled within 5½ games of NL East-leading Atlanta.

Sanchez (6-6) got a big assist in the bottom of the fifth when shortstop Trea Turner turned a bases-loaded double play. He allowed three runs and six hits.

Sean Doolittle got the last five outs for his 21st save in 25 chances.

Brian McCann hit a two-run homer, his ninth, in the sixth.

**Red Sox 17, Orioles 6:** Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a pair of three-run homers, Mookie Betts homered and had three RBIs, and Boston routed host Baltimore with its most prolific offensive performance of the year.

Bradley's second home run of the game highlighted an eight-run fourth inning. It was the Red Sox's highest-scoring

outburst since a 19-3 rout of the Orioles last Sept. 26.

**Athletics 5, Twins 4:** Khris Davis lined a two-out, two-run single off the glove of diving first baseman Ehire Adrianza in the ninth inning and visiting Oakland beat Minnesota.

The A's won for the 21st time in 27 games. Miguel Sano, Mitch Garver and Nelson Cruz all homered for the AL Central-leading Twins, who have lost five of six.

**Cubs 6, Padres 5:** At Chicago, Javier Baez hit a go-ahead, three-run homer and Cubs relievers combined for one-hit ball over the final four innings, lifting Chicago over San Diego.

Anthony Rizzo had two hits and drove in two runs and Robel Garcia added an RBI triple as the NL Central-leading Cubs improved to 7-1 since the All-Star break.

**White Sox 2, Rays 1 (11):** Yoan Moncada scored from first base on a single in the 11th inning and Chicago beat host Tampa Bay.

The loss was Tampa Bay's season-high fifth straight and dropped the Rays 10 games be-

hind the AL East-leading New York Yankees.

**Yankees 11, Rockies 5:** Edwin Encarnacion chased Anthony Senzatela with a two-run double in a five-run second inning, and New York beat visiting Colorado for its fifth straight win.

**Mets 11, Giants 4:** Pete Alonso came off the bench and hit his 33rd home run, setting the Mets rookie record for RBIs as New York snapped host San Francisco's seven-game winning streak.

**Reds 3, Cardinals 2:** Yasiel Puig hit a game-tying double to end Miles Mikolas' shutout bid, Josh VanMeter followed with his first major league home run and Cincinnati snapped a four-game losing streak with a win over visiting St. Louis.

**Royals 1, Indians 0:** Hunter Dozier homered in the first inning and Jakob Junis pitched two-hit ball through six innings as Kansas City snapped host Cleveland's six-game win streak.

Kansas City is 7-2 since the All-Star break, with Junis accounting for two of the

victories.

**Astros 6, Rangers 1:** Jose Urquidy threw seven dominant innings for his first major league win and Yuli Gurriel hit a three-run homer, sending Houston past visiting Texas.

**Pirates 5, Phillies 1:** Joe Musgrove scattered two hits over six innings, collected his first double of the season and scored on a textbook head-first slide to lead host Pittsburgh over Philadelphia.

**Brewers 8, Diamondbacks 3:** Mike Moustakas hit a three-run homer in the eighth and visiting Milwaukee scored six runs after Zack Greinke left to beat Arizona.

**Angels 6, Mariners 2:** David Fletcher singled home the tie-breaking run in the ninth inning, Mike Trout followed with a three-run homer and Los Angeles took advantage of a big mistake on defense by host Seattle.

**Dodgers 10, Marlins 6:** Matt Beaty broke an eighth-inning tie with a three-run homer and Los Angeles beat visiting Miami after blowing a six-run lead.