

STARS AND STRIPES®

Saturday, June 18, 2016

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Russia strikes US-backed forces in Syria

Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Russian warplanes hit Pentagon-backed Syrian fighters with airstrikes this week, disregarding several warnings from U.S. commanders in what American military officials called the most provocative act since Moscow's air campaign in Syria began last year.

The strikes hit a base near the Jordanian border, far from areas where the Russians were previously active, and targeted U.S.-backed forces battling the Islamic State militants.

No U.S. forces were present in the area, but the U.S. military scrambled fighter jets and used an emergency communications channel set up to avoid air accidents to tell Russian officers to end the strikes, according to the officials, who spoke Friday about the incident on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

The Russian Su-34 fighter-bombers left the area at first but came back for a second strike after the U.S. F/A-18 fighters went to refuel. The second attack killed several Syrian rebels attempting to provide medical support to the survivors of the initial one, officials said.

On Thursday, an internal State Department memo became public. It said 51 diplomats using the State Department's long-standing dissent process criticized President Barack Obama's policy and called for U.S. military strikes against forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar Assad, Russia's ally.

State Department spokesman John Kirby conceded Friday that such a large number of signatures on a dissent memo was "unusual."

"No one's content with the

Syrian militants retake government-held areas

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Militants have captured two villages from Syrian government forces and their allies in the northern province of Aleppo after days of heavy fighting that left scores of fighters dead, Syrian activists said Saturday.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the four-day offensive by different militant groups, including the al-Qaida-affiliated Nusra Front, killed 86 troops and pro-government gunmen, including 25 members of Lebanon's Hezbollah group.

The Observatory and the Local Coordination Committees, both of which monitor the conflict through networks of local activists, say militants now control the villages of Zeitan and Khalsa, south of Aleppo city.

Nusra Front and its allies have launched several offensives south of Aleppo in recent months, inflicting heavy casualties among pro-government forces. Government forces have, meanwhile, closed in on rebel-held parts of the city, which have been under daily bombardment.

"The situation is very good," a Nusra Front fighter

status quo," he said. "Too many people are dying."

Assad's army continues to bomb civilian neighborhoods as the civil war approaches its

in southern Aleppo told The Associated Press by telephone. The fighter, who goes by the name of Abu al-Hasan al-Muhajer, confirmed that the militants have captured the villages.

Hezbollah issued a statement in Beirut on Saturday saying it lost a number of "martyrs" in "direct and fierce confrontations with terrorist organizations."

The group denied Arab media reports that said Hezbollah fighters were killed in clashes with Assad's forces and struck by Syrian government warplanes, saying its relations with the Syrian army and other allies are "strong."

Hezbollah has sent thousands of fighters to Syria to back President Bashar Assad's forces and has played a key role in a string of government victories.

In Aleppo city, shelling killed seven people and wounded more than a dozen in the predominantly Kurdish neighborhood of Sheikh Magsoud.

The area is under the control of the main Kurdish militia, the People's Protection Units, or YPG, which has clashed with Syrian insurgents as well as the Islamic State group.

fifth year. Russian bombing and intervention by Iranian-backed forces have helped give Assad's embattled government an advantage over rebel groups

in recent months.

Nearly all the Russian airstrikes over the past nine months have hit northern Syria in the region around Aleppo, the country's second-largest city.

The Free Syrian Army, a loose grouping that has received aid from Washington and its allies in the Persian Gulf and Turkey, has battled government forces for control of the city.

The U.S. has carried out its own air campaign against Islamic State positions in eastern Syria.

These latest strikes occurred on the other side of the country from the usual Russian operations — around Tanf, a town near where the borders of Jordan, Iraq, and Syria meet.

U.S. officials believe the strikes were launched to pressure the U.S. into working with Russia. Moscow has long wanted the U.S. to combine its air campaign in Syria with Moscow's so they can share intelligence and targeting information.

The Obama administration has rejected that idea because it would put U.S. forces on the same side as Assad.

The administration says Assad must leave power, although officials have said he could remain for a period of "managed transition."

The Russian strike hit a small rebel base for staging forces and equipment in a desolate, unpopulated area near the border. About 180 rebels were there as part of the Pentagon's program to train and equip fighters against Islamic State group.

Pentagon officials have said in the past that the U.S. military would defend forces it trained if they were threatened inside Syria by Assad's government.

Marines' social media post probed

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Marine Corps is investigating two active-duty Marines at Camp Pendleton, Calif., for a social media post of a photo of a corporal in uniform holding an assault rifle and the message: "Coming to a gay bar near you!"

Maj. Staci Reidinger said Thursday that fellow Marines alerted officials to the post, and authorities were able to track down the Marine in the pho-

tograph and another one who reposted it.

According to the Marine Corps Times, the post appeared on a private Facebook group for male Marines with the words "Too soon?" before the administrator deleted it and banned the person from the group.

"We believe that it was a very insensitive and possibly dangerous photo that needed to be taken seriously given the nature of the possible threat,"

Administrator Michael Moss said in an email.

Reidinger said the posting goes against Marine Corps values.

She added that fellow Marines policed their own by immediately reporting the post.

"It's an embarrassment to us," Reidinger said of the post, which followed the June 12 terror attack at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Fla., that killed 49 people and injured more than 50.

Reservist among Orlando victims

By ALEX HORTON

Stars and Stripes

SAN ANTONIO — Angel Candelario-Padro, one of the victims killed in the Orlando, Fla., mass shooting, was a former soldier in the Puerto Rico National Guard and Army Reserve, Army officials confirmed Friday.

Candelario-Padro, 28, is the second person connected to the Army Reserve to be identified as one of the 49 people killed June 12, when Omar Mateen, 29, a gunman who reportedly pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, opened fire in a crowded gay nightclub with a rifle and two handguns.

Capt. Antonio Brown, 29, an Army Reserve soldier who served in Kuwait, was also killed in the shooting.

Candelario-Padro served more than six years in both Reserve and Guard components, according to service records, but he spent a majority of that time in the 248th Army Band out of San Juan, Puerto Rico. He moved to Orlando and was set to start a job as an ophthalmic technician next week, according to the Orlando Sentinel.

Brown might be eligible for the Purple Heart if an investigation concludes the shooting was a terrorist attack inspired by the Islamic State group, the Pentagon announced Thursday.

A Marine veteran working as a bouncer at the bar, Imran Yousuf, 24, was lauded as a hero this week for rushing to open a locked door in the club and allowing others to escape, according to CBS News.

"We have 49 more angels watching over us. We mourn you, we miss you and we will not stop fighting and we will do so in your honor," Matt Thorn, executive director of Out-Serve-Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, said.

Military bands on chopping block?

By TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—The House on Thursday passed legislation sponsored by former A-10 pilot Rep. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., that limits performances of the military's troop bands to formal military ceremonies and funeral honors.

It is the latest attempt to cut back the roughly \$500 million the Defense Department spends annually on bands, which date to the birth of the country's armed forces but recently have run into criticism as Congress wrangles with tight budgets.

The limits on band performances are now part of the

annual \$602 billion defense budget and also must be adopted by the Senate before it can become law.

Lawmakers have been scraping—and risking a presidential veto—to boost defense spending by about \$18 billion during the coming year.

McSally said the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps are facing pilot and aircraft shortages.

Bands often play an important role in military life and are believed to lift the morale of troops. They also act as emissaries who play to surrounding communities in the United States and abroad.

The Air Force canceled the

2016 season of its Tops in Blue entertainment program due to budget concerns and a lack of interest. The members of the traveling troupe of active-duty airmen take up to a year off from their military jobs to perform music for troops and families at bases around the world.

Earlier this year, the Army canceled the Soldier Show, its version of the Tops in Blue, to save money.

The House bill could hit the more conventional military bands stationed with commands at bases around the world by limiting their ability to play at social events on base and in the community.

Heat wave increases fire danger in West

Associated Press

GOLETA, Calif. — Firefighters battling a California wildfire that forced the evacuation of campgrounds and ranches were struggling with strong winds and bracing for rising temperatures as a heat wave was expected to sweep across the Southwest this weekend.

The blaze more than tripled in size Friday and had consumed 9 square miles of heavy brush.

The fire was 20 percent contained, but so-called "sundowner" winds that rush down

the mountains in 40 mph gusts were beginning to kick up again Friday night, fire officials said.

Weekend fire dangers already were expected to worsen as the heat wave brought potentially record-shattering temperatures across the Southwest.

Another fire erupted Friday afternoon in Northern California. The blaze southwest of Sacramento quickly burned 200 acres and prompted the evacuation of China Gulch, a community in Gold Country.

In New Mexico, a blaze that began Tuesday had destroyed

24 homes and charred more than 26 square miles near the small community of Chilili.

Lighter winds helped firefighters battle the blaze in triple-digit temperatures.

The California inferno appeared to support predictions of another difficult year for the state after years of drought.

While El Nino delivered rain and snow to Northern California this winter, the south was bypassed. What rain did fall was just enough to sprout grasses that quickly died, adding to the danger of long-dead vegetation.

Golden State feeling pressure

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — The level of tension is growing rapidly for the Golden State Warriors. Someone gets suspended, someone gets hurt, someone gets ejected, and lots of someones make no effort to hide their frustration. A comfortable two-game lead in the NBA Finals becomes a dicey one-game lead, then no lead at all.

The biggest moment awaits.

The biggest challenge does, too.

Shots aren't falling for the Warriors at the same rate they were in the regular season, stops aren't coming like they were a couple of months ago either, the aches and pains are piling up and what looked like a sure-fire title not long ago is at best a shaky proposition now. Game 7 of the Finals is on Sunday against the Cleveland Cavaliers, and Golden State is hoping being at home helps deliver a championship-saving elixir.

"Things haven't gone our way despite how the regular season went," Warriors guard Stephen Curry said. "The playoffs haven't been easy. Hasn't been a breeze. Hasn't been anything perfect about it. So, yeah, it's frustrating, but the work we've put in and the opportunity we've given ourselves with a Game 7 to win the Finals at home, you've got to be excited about that."

The Warriors got questions for months — starting around December, believe it or not — about whether they were concerned that the strain of chasing Chicago's 72-win mark that stood as the NBA's gold standard for 20 years would leave them ailing or fatigued at playoff time.

Questions like those seem a bit more valid now.

To be clear, Andrew Bogut's left knee didn't become susceptible to season-ending bone bruises because of how difficult becoming the league's first 73-win regular-season team was; J.R. Smith crashing into him in Game 5 of this series took care of that.

Curry's combination of fouling out, mouthpiece-throwing and getting ejected in Game 6 on Thursday night wasn't because the first 82 games left him tired and cranky. And the Warriors' inability to corral LeBron James in this series can be best explained by acknowledging again that when James is at his best he's the most unstoppable force in the game.

The grind of March and April has nothing to do with any of that.

But it can certainly be argued that even though the Warriors spent about half the season without head coach Steve Kerr while he recovered from back surgeries and got every opponent's best shot in every game — such is life for reigning champions — the playoffs have delivered more challenges in 20-something games (including a 3-1 deficit in the Western Conference finals against Oklahoma City) than the first 82 offered combined.

"I think if you start out every season and you say 'We get a Game 7, we get one game at home to win the NBA championship,' I'll take it every time," Kerr said. "So I can't wait for Sunday. I think we'll be fine. Obviously Cleveland has played well the last two games, and we've got to play better. But I'm confident we will. We're in a spot that 29 other teams would love to be in."

Kerr got fined \$25,000 on Friday for being critical of referees after Golden State's loss in Game 6, and Curry got fined another \$25,000 for throwing his mouthpiece into the stands after fouling out of that game.

If the Warriors — who are still steamed that Draymond Green was suspended for Game 5 because he accrued one too many flagrant fouls in this postseason — find calls more to their liking in Game 7, that'll be money extremely well spent.

"We're going to need some emotion and some grit and toughness," said Curry, who noted the Warriors are already 3-0 in elimination games this season.

Their problems go deeper than officiating issues, though. The Warriors don't have a single starter shooting 50 percent in this series, are clearly a different defensive team with Bogut sidelined, have 2015 Finals MVP Andre Iguodala playing with wince-inducing lower back soreness, have yielded two straight 41-point games to James and are in their first extended slide of the season — losing three times in a four-game span.

If shots fall at their usual clip on Sunday, the Warriors will probably win.

Otherwise, a team that looks like it's limping to the finish could see its reign end.

"We all realize if you told us at the beginning of the season it would be one game to win the championship in Oakland, we'll take that any day of the week," shooting guard Klay Thompson said. "We've just got to come Sunday with the mindset of leave it all out there, every man on this team. No hero ball, just do it as a team like we've been doing it all year."

Gilchrist picks pool over ocean

Associated Press

LOS ALAMITOS, Calif. — Kaleigh Gilchrist is being pulled in two directions, almost all the time.

On one side are the beaches of the world, and waves that keep rolling to the shore every day she is away. On the other side is a chance for Olympic gold and a team of sisters bonded in their quest for another water polo title.

The pool wins for now, but surfing is calling.

"Everything happens for a reason and I am exactly where I want to be right now," Gilchrist said. "But August 20th I am going to be a surfer, hopefully."

That's the day after the women's Olympic final in Rio de Janeiro, and she can recite that date from memory for a reason. The United States, the defending Olympic and world champion, is favored to repeat this summer, and Gilchrist's decision to delay a potentially lucrative surfing career is a major reason why.

While Gilchrist's father, Sandy, swam for the University of Southern California and competed for Canada in the Olympics, coach Adam Krikorian said Kaleigh is the worst swimmer on the speedy team. But she has come a long way — one of the most improved he has ever seen — and her vision and calm demeanor make her indispensable for the U.S. team.

"I would equate her to a Magic Johnson-type, someone who can see the whole pool, who doesn't have that tunnel vision, who can always find the open player," Krikorian said, "and the one thing that I truly love about her and why she's really important for us is that she's got a great demeanor and a great composure to herself when she plays."

The 24-year-old Gilchrist, who helped lead USC to the national title in 2013, scored five times as the U.S. clinched a spot in Rio on its way to a perfect 8-0 record at an Olympic qualification tournament in the Netherlands in March. She had six goals in the United States' run to the gold medal at the FINA Intercontinental Tournament in Texas in February.

Gilchrist grew up in the water, either in the pool for water polo or the beach for surfing. While she excelled in each sport, she began to warm to surfing as a possible profession after she was selected for the USA Surf Team and then won the under-18 Surfing America USA Championship in 2009 and 2010.

Her success in surfing helped create a bumpy transition to playing college water polo as a freshman.

She almost quit, but her parents persuaded her to stick it out for at least one year, and she regained her love for the sport by the end of the season.

Krikorian could have banished Gilchrist for good, but he welcomed her back to the national program in the fall of 2013. Since that summer, it has been a steady ride for Gilchrist with the U.S. team.

Gilchrist still surfs about three to four times a week, a total that likely would draw a careful rebuke from Krikorian out of injury concerns.

Eye injury creates difficult path for Shi

Associated Press

PHOENIX — The shirt, with blue short sleeves and U-S-A written above red Olympic rings, remained stashed in the back of Jay Shi's closet yet at the forefront of his thoughts.

He would wear it one day. It just had to be earned first.

The shirt was more than fabric, thread, logo. It was a goal, only to be pulled off the hanger when a spot on the U.S. Olympic Shooting Team was his.

"It was out of sight but not out of mind," Shi said.

Shooting is a sport everyday people believe they could do if they had the right training, support and equipment.

It's a bit like golf: An average player can hit an occasional good shot, maybe string several together for a good round.

Shooting at the Olympic level goes beyond having a steady hand and a good eye at the local shooting range. It's a mental game, locking in on the 10-ring every shot, every round under heartbeat-in-the-throat pressure, tuning out the external and internal noise to focus only on target, breath, trigger.

Shi faced even longer odds.

He was 9 when the scissors he was

using for a school project slid up a string and into his right eye.

Wanting better medical care for their son, Shi's parents moved the family from Beijing to the United States, where a friend of his grandfather worked at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Doctors restored his vision, though far from perfectly.

The accident left Shi unable to see fine details, three dimensionally or judge distances well, impairments that would seemingly black out his future as an elite shooter.

Through years of practice, trial and error, determination overcame debilitation and Shi shifted his head, lining up his left eye down the sight of the gun positioned in his right hand.

It's called shooting cross-eyed, the shooting equivalent of trying to drive a car from the passenger's seat.

"It's incredible what he's been able to accomplish," said Bill Poole, one of Shi's earliest coaches at Phoenix Rod and Gun Club. "He put in the work to figure out what he needed to do."

The 37-year-old web developer worked the angles on his cross-eyed shooting dilemma, creating a code to shooting straight.

He tilted his head centimeters to the

right. To the left. Shifted his body right. Left. His wrist, too. He tore apart his grip and rebuilt it again and again.

"It was kind of like Edison trying to find a lightbulb," Shi said. "Then one day it just kind of fell into place; 'This feels good.' Then I adopted other ways into what I had just discovered. I was like like wow, this really feels natural."

Shi's confidence and technical skill began to rise after his ah-ha moment, mind and muscle memory narrowing into fine focus.

He earned a silver medal at the 2015 Pan American Games in his first international final and peaked at the U.S. Olympics Trials in April with a dominating performance.

Shi led from the opening round in Fort Benning, Ga., and closed with a field-crushing final day, finishing 26 points ahead of his nearest competitor in men's free pistol. Only when it was over did Shi break concentration; his father had to tell him he had made the U.S. Olympic Team.

"I thought I would be really excited, but I wasn't," Shi said. "I think it was because it took so long. When you have something in the back of your mind that you think about every day for 10 years, you can only dream of it and get by on desire and determination."



Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

www.navyauto.com or nasinfo@navyauto.com

Struggling Pirates fall to Cubs

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jake Arrieta came through with the big pitches just when it seemed his control was abandoning him and things were getting “out of whack.”

Then, the Cubs broke away for another big win.

Arrieta pitched two-hit ball over six innings, Matt Szczur homered, Albert Almora Jr. had three hits and the Cubs beat the struggling Pittsburgh Pirates 6-0 on Friday.

Arrieta (11-1) struck out 11 and walked three as the Cubs started the weekend series on a strong note after dropping two of three at Washington.

He walked the bases loaded in the sixth before striking out David Freese and Matt Joyce to escape that jam. The Cubs then scored three in the bottom half to break open a 2-0 game.

If I'm down in the strike zone, good things will happen,” Arrieta said. “Got a little out of whack in the sixth but got back to just throwing in the zone down.”

Szczur hit a two-run homer in the first inning on Francisco Liriano's second pitch of the game.

Almora had an RBI double in the sixth and drove in another with a single in the

seventh. He raised his average to .429 in nine games since he was called up from the minors last week.

The Pirates fell below .500 at 33-34 with their eighth loss in nine games. They were shut out for the first time in a regular-season game since they lost to St. Louis on Sept. 28.

“We weren't able to convert the opportunities, and when you're facing an elite pitcher and you don't get him and you don't convert it usually doesn't end up well,” manager Clint Hurdle said.

Arrieta, who blanked Pittsburgh in the National League wild-card game last fall, won his second straight start since his string of 20 consecutive regular-season winning decisions ended.

The only hits he allowed were back-to-back singles by Jordy Mercer and Chris Stewart in the third. The reigning NL Cy Young Award winner struck out the next three batters and wasn't threatened again until he walked three in a row with one out in the sixth.

Arrieta got out of that bases-loaded jam by striking out Freese after falling behind 3-0 in the count and catching Joyce looking at a 3-2 pitch on the inside part of the plate.

“He's so able to take a deep breath, step

back and try to recalculate what's going on,” manager Joe Maddon said. “Some guys get to that moment and it's just going to unravel.”

Liriano (4-7) dropped his fourth straight start. The left-hander gave up four runs and six hits in 5 2/3 innings, struck out six and matched a season high with five walks. He hit Anthony Rizzo twice with fastballs, and he fell behind two pitches into his start.

“First couple pitches, you want to throw strikes,” Liriano said. “They got me.”

Cervelli 'embarrassed'

Pirates catcher Francisco Cervelli said he was embarrassed about getting injured shortly after agreeing to a contract extension.

Speaking to reporters for the first time since he broke a bone in his left hand while swinging in a game on June 10, Cervelli said expects to get the soft cast removed Monday. He's out at least three more weeks. The injury came less than a month after he agreed to a three-year, \$31 million deal through the 2019 season.

“It's a little bit of a nightmare,” Cervelli said. “I feel a little embarrassed because of the confidence they showed me with the contract and everything.”

NHL ready for Vegas

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The reality of the NHL's planned move to Las Vegas will hit home for hockey fan Sean Bollig once he finally sees ice on the floor at the new T-Mobile arena just off the Strip and he's able to buy a jersey for its fledgling home team.

“Having a team will be awesome,” said Bollig, a 28-year-old recreation league hockey player. “It's going to bring in a lot of the locals.”

California resident and Los Angeles Kings season-ticket holder Jim Altier said he's already lining up friends to head to Las Vegas for hockey. For 12 years, he has done the same when the Kings play exhibition games at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

“We'll definitely be there,” Altier said from Ontario, a more than three-hour drive away. “And we'll bring others with us.”

Excitement is high among hockey fans and civic boosters, with the NHL poised to finalize plans to expand to Las Vegas.

A person with direct knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press that the league has settled on Las Vegas as the home for its next expansion franchise, provided organizers can come up with a \$500 million fee. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because details weren't released by the league ahead of its Board of Governors meeting next Wednesday in Las Vegas.

In Las Vegas, hockey will have to elbow into an entertainment lineup featuring casinos, celebrity shows, Cirque du Soleil productions and pulsing nightclubs — not to mention boxing matches, UFC fights and events like NASCAR, the National Finals Rodeo and Electric Daisy Carnival.

In other NHL news:

■ The Calgary Flames hired Glen Gulutzan, an assistant coach for the Vancouver Canucks for the past three seasons, as their new head coach Friday.

The move is a homecoming of sorts for Gulutzan, who was coach and general manager of Calgary's ECHL affiliate in Las Vegas from 2003 to 2009.

Gulutzan's previous experience as an NHL head coach came with Dallas from 2011 to 2013. The Stars went 64-57-9 under Gulutzan and missed the playoffs both seasons.

Gulutzan replaces Bob Hartley, who was fired May 3 after the Flames finished 35-40-7. Only Vancouver and Edmonton posted fewer wins in the Western Conference.

Coates says IOC won't overturn Russian ban

MELBOURNE, Australia — IOC vice president John Coates says he doesn't think the International Olympic Committee will overturn an IAAF ban on Russia's track and field federation.

On Friday, the IAAF decided to uphold a competition ban on Russia, ruling the country had not met readmission criteria imposed when it was suspended last year over state-sponsored doping.

Coates, who is also president of the Australian Olympic Committee, said Saturday “we will consider it (overturning the ban) but I'd be very, very surprised ... it's an international federation's right to suspend a national federation and I don't think we would overturn that at all.”

Coates will attend a meeting in Switzerland on Tuesday, a summit called by the IOC to address “the difficult decision between collective responsibility and individual justice” over the Russia situation

Tanaka strong in Yanks' win over Twins

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Masahiro Tanaka pitched eight strong innings and Carlos Beltran hit a two-run homer to help New York beat Minnesota 8-2 on Friday night.

Tanaka allowed one run and seven hits, recovering nicely from his rough outing last Saturday when he gave up five runs at home against Detroit. He is 3-1 with a 1.32 ERA in seven road starts — the second-lowest road ERA in the AL and third-lowest in the majors. Tanaka (4-2) has gone at least six innings with one earned run or less in five straight road starts since May 5.

He had all the run support he needed by the time he tossed his first pitch. Beltran connected against Pat Dean (1-3) in the first, and Rob Refsnyder and Didi Gregorius each drove in a run in the inning to give Tanaka an early 4-0 cushion.

Blue Jays 13, Orioles 3: Canadian Michael Saunders set career highs with three homers and eight RBIs to lift visiting Toronto past Baltimore for its fourth straight victory.

Saunders connected with two on against Mike Wright (3-4) in the first inning, added another three-run drive off Wright in the fourth and went deep against Ubaldo Jimenez with a man on in the sixth.

Batting in the eighth against T.J. McFarland and with the chance to tie the major league record of four homers in a game, Saunders bounced into a bases-loaded double play.

That did little to ruin Saunders' finest game in the big leagues. He raised his home run total for the season to 15, second-most in his career behind the 19 he hit for Seattle in 2012. In eight games against Baltimore this season, Saunders is 18-for-33 with five home runs and 12 RBIs.

Josh Donaldson and Justin Smoak also homered for the surging Blue Jays. They have won seven of eight to move within a game of the first-place Orioles in the AL East.

Giants 5, Rays 1: Jeff Samardzija threw a four-hitter and San Francisco won its sixth consecutive game by beating Tampa Bay Pride Night before the big-

gest regular-season crowd at Tropicana Field in a decade.

The announced attendance of 40,135 was the first regular-season turnout over 40,000 at the Rays' ballpark since opening day in 2006 against Baltimore (40,199). Tampa Bay entered averaging 16,037 in home attendance this season, second-lowest in the majors.

The Rays dedicated this year's event to the victims of Sunday's mass shooting in Orlando.

Samardzija (8-4), who was 0-2 with a 7.36 ERA in his previous three starts, retired 22 of 23 before Brad Miller homered with two outs in the ninth.

Brandon Crawford and Gregor Blanco had two RBIs apiece and Brandon Belt homered for the NL West-leading Giants, a season-high 16 games over .500.

Chris Archer (4-9) took the loss.

Marlins 5, Rockies 1: Adam Conley and four relievers combined on a one-hitter as host Miami snapped Colorado's four-game winning streak.

Struggling Marlins slugger Giancarlo Stanton had a two-out, two-run single in the seventh for his first multiple-RBI game since May 6. Ichiro Suzuki had a pinch-hit single for his 2,980th career hit.

Mariners 8, Red Sox 4: Franklin Gutierrez homered in his first two at-bats and drove in a career-high six runs in visiting Seattle's victory over Boston.

Robinson Cano added a pair of RBIs, including his 19th homer with a leadoff shot in the seventh, to help Seattle win its second straight following a four-game losing streak.

Rangers 1, Cardinals 0: Rougned Odor homered and Cole Hamels pitched 7 2/3 innings in Texas' victory over host St. Louis.

Hamels (7-1) allowed three hits while striking out six and walking three. He lowered his road ERA to 1.64 this season and turned in his fourth consecutive quality start.

Michael Wacha (2-7) lost a career-high seventh straight decision.

Diamondbacks 10, Phillies 2: Peter O'Brien and Yasmany Tomas each hit two of their team's franchise-record six home runs to lead visiting Arizona past Philadelphia.

Paul Goldschmidt and Wellington Castillo also went deep for Arizona in the first game of a 10-game trip. Goldschmidt also singled and doubled while extending his hitting streak to 11 games.

O'Brien, who drove in four runs, has homered for all three of his hits this season. He was called up from Triple-A Reno on June 10 and is 3 for 20.

Every starter had a hit for Arizona, which finished with 16.

Braves 5, Mets 1: John Gant, the rookie righty with the weird windup, earned his first big league win by beating the team that traded him away last summer, pitching Atlanta past host New York.

Gant (1-1) threw two-hit ball for 6 2/3 innings, helping the Braves post their first three-game winning streak since mid-April.

Royals 10, Tigers 3: Salvador Perez homered to end Michael Fulmer's long scoreless innings streak and Yordano Ventura kept visiting Detroit's big bats off balance as Kansas City won big a day after being routed.

Ventura (6-4) scattered six hits while striking out five without a walk.

Reds 4, Astros 2 (11): Eugenio Suarez hit a tiebreaking RBI double in the 11th inning as visiting Cincinnati held on to beat Houston.

Athletics 3, Angels 2: Billy Burns singled with two outs in the bottom of the ninth to lift host Oakland past Los Angeles.

Indians 3, White Sox 2: Carlos Santana hit a leadoff homer in the ninth inning to lift Cleveland past visiting Chicago.

Dodgers 3, Brewers 2 (10): Justin Turner homered twice and delivered the game-ending RBI single in the 10th inning, lifting host Los Angeles over Milwaukee.

Turner hit a solo homer in the first and another in the eighth that tied it at 2. He won it with a bases-loaded single off Jeremy Jeffress (1-2) with one out in the 10th to score Will Venable from third.

Nationals 7, Padres 5: Ryan Zimmerman hit a two-run homer and Daniel Murphy homered and drove in three runs to help visiting Washington beat San Diego.