

STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, June 5, 2017

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Saudis, 3 others sever ties with Qatar

BY JON GAMBRELL

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Saudi Arabia and three other Arab countries severed ties to Qatar on Monday and moved to cut off land, sea and air routes to the energy-rich nation that is home to a major U.S. military base, accusing it of supporting regional terror groups.

Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates made no demands of Qatar as their decision plunged the international travel hub into chaos and ignited the biggest diplomatic crisis in the Gulf since the 1991 war against Iraq.

Qatar, which will host the 2022 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament and is home to some 10,000 American troops, criticized the move as a “violation of its sovereignty.” It long has denied supporting militant

groups and described the crisis as being fueled by “absolute fabrications” stemming from a recent hack of its state-run news agency.

Saudi Arabia closed its land border with Qatar, through which the tiny Gulf nation imports most of its food, sparking a run on supermarkets. The four countries began withdrawing their diplomatic staff from Qatar as regional airlines announced they’d suspend service to its capital, Doha.

The move came just weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump visited Saudi Arabia and vowed to improve ties with both Riyadh and Cairo to combat regional terror groups and contain Iran. U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the move was rooted in longstanding differences and urged the parties to resolve them.

Qatar is home to the sprawling al-Udeid Air Base, which is home to the forward head-

quarters of the U.S. military’s Central Command. Maj. Adrian J.T. Rankine-Galloway told The Associated Press that the U.S. military had “no plans to change our posture in Qatar.”

“We encourage all our partners in the region to reduce tensions and work towards common solutions that enable regional security,” he said in a statement.

In Sydney, Tillerson said he didn’t believe the diplomatic crisis would affect the war against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

“I think what we’re witnessing is a growing list of disbelief in the countries for some time, and they’ve bubbled up to take action in order to have those differences addressed,” he said. “We certainly would encourage the parties to sit down together and address these differences.”

Saudi Arabia said it took the decision to cut diplomatic ties

due to Qatar’s “embrace of various terrorist and sectarian groups aimed at destabilizing the region” including the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qaida, Islamic State and groups supported by Iran in the kingdom’s restive Eastern Province.

The countries all ordered their citizens out of Qatar and gave Qataris abroad 14 days to return home to their peninsular nation.

All the nations also said they planned to cut air and sea traffic. Doha-based satellite news network Al-Jazeera reported trucks carrying food had begun to line up on the Saudi side of the border, apparently stranded.

Qatar’s Foreign Affairs Ministry said there was “no legitimate justification” for the countries’ decision, though it vowed its citizens wouldn’t be affected by it.

Mattis, Tillerson reassure Australia after Paris pullout

Associated Press

SYDNEY — In their first joint appearance abroad, America’s top diplomat and its defense chief offered public reassurances to a long-standing ally at odds with President Donald Trump’s abandonment of the Paris climate agreement.

With Defense Secretary Jim Mattis at his side, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson told a news conference Monday that Trump is interested in “perhaps a new construct of an agreement,” signaling that Trump believes the climate change issue “is still important and that he wants to stay engaged on the issue.”

“He’s not walking away from it,” Tillerson said. “He’s simply walking away from what he

felt was an agreement that did not serve the American people well.”

Julie Bishop, Australia’s foreign minister, deflected any suggestion of a loss of confidence in U.S. leadership, saying, “We have a similar world view. We have shared values and shared interests” in other areas.

Tillerson also took a swipe at China, criticizing what he called its militarization of disputed islets and reefs in the South China Sea and suggesting that Beijing has failed to persuade North Korea to end its nuclear weapons program.

A reporter asked Tillerson to reconcile the administration’s emphasis on strengthening alliances in Asia and elsewhere

with what some perceive as isolationism in Trump’s rejection of multilateral trade agreements, criticism of NATO and abandonment of the Paris climate deal.

“That’s why we’re here,” Tillerson said. “That’s why we traveled here. That’s why we engaged with our counterparts.” He added: “So I hope the fact that we’re here demonstrates that it certainly is not this administration’s view or intention to somehow put at arm’s length the important partners and allies in the world.”

Even as the U.S. and Australian officials were meeting behind closed doors, news broke of a political rift among key U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf. Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia

and the United Arab Emirates all announced they would withdraw their diplomatic staff from Qatar over that country’s support for Islamist groups and its relations with Iran. Qatar is home to a U.S. military base that is central to the coordination of its air campaigns in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

Tillerson said he did not believe this would affect the fight against Islamic extremism.

Mattis was even more emphatic on the point.

“I am confident there will be no implications coming out of this diplomatic situation at all,” Mattis said.

In earlier remarks at the start of their talks, Mattis pledged unity with Australia in fighting Islamic extremists.

VA chooses commercial overhaul of records system

BY NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs will turn to the private sector to overhaul its electronic health records and is side-stepping the federal contracting process to do so, VA Secretary David Shulkin announced Monday.

The VA will use the same system as the Defense Department and contract with Kansas City, Mo.-based Cerner Corp., Shulkin said.

"I said recently to Congress that I was committed to getting VA out of the software business, that I didn't see remaining in that business as benefiting veterans," he said. "And, because of that, we're making a decision to move towards a commercial, off-the-shelf product."

The decision to purchase a new commercial system rather than fix the VA's in-house system, called VistA, was long-awaited. In February, the Government Accountability Office condemned the VA's ongoing spending to patch the 40-year-old VistA, which is expected to reach \$2.5 billion in 2017 alone. The office described VistA as "old, inefficient and difficult to maintain," and encouraged the VA to buy an off-the-shelf health records system.

Since 2000, lawmakers have advocated for a system capable

of sharing patient data seamlessly with the Defense Department. Soon after former President Barack Obama took office in 2009, he charged the VA and the Defense Department with creating an integrated system. The plan was abandoned in 2013 because of cost concerns, after the agencies had already spent about \$1 billion.

Shulkin said previous efforts were hampered by separate chains of command and implementation schedules, as well as complex governance.

"For decades, the federal government has struggled to accomplish something that should be very, very simple: seamlessly transitioning a veteran's medical records from the Defense Department to the VA," President Donald Trump said Monday at the White House.

"In recent years, it has taken not just days or weeks, but many months for the records to follow the veteran. This has caused massive problems for our veterans, and I'm very proud to say we are finally taking steps to solve this once and for all."

Shulkin said he has gone through two transitions of electronic health records systems, in previous positions as a health care executive. He described the process as "tough" and "important to do right."

Ex-Guardsman gets 3 years for stolen valor

BY DIANNA CAHN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — After lying about a rocket in Iraq, post-traumatic stress disorder and a brain injury, after bilking 16 agencies out of more than \$600,000, and after copping to two counts of fraud last year, former National Guard soldier Darryl Lee Wright is going to prison, a Washington state U.S. attorney's office said.

In a case of stolen valor described by a U.S. District Court judge as "nefarious," the former captain in the Idaho National Guard was sentenced in U.S. District Court in Tacoma, Wash., last week to three years in prison and three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$646,300 in restitution.

The Army also stripped Wright of a Purple Heart and a Combat Action Badge, according to the statement from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington state.

"This was a complex and nefarious scam implemented over a long period of time," U.S. District Judge Benjamin Settle said.

Wright, 48, pleaded guilty in February 2016, admitting he defrauded the Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Wash-

ington State Employment and other agencies with claims he had been badly injured during his deployment in Iraq, the statement said.

Wright said he was wounded by a rocket strike in Kirkuk in 2005. In reality, the rocket landed several hundred yards away and no one was hurt.

He began submitting phony statements to the Army and the VA in 2006, expanding his scheme over the years with false and conflicting claims to other government agencies, the statement said. Investigators estimated that his frauds cost the government \$737,539.

Numerous agencies collaborated to unravel the complex case, revealing that Wright defrauded the Veterans Benefits Administration of \$261,719, claiming he'd been disabled by the rocket attack. He then bilked the VA support program out of \$83,967, claiming he was so disabled he needed a full-time caregiver.

Meanwhile, he was traveling, playing basketball, caring for his child, working a full-time job for the Commerce Department and serving as chairman of the planning commission of Snoqualmie, the city east of Seattle where he lives.

Information from The Associated Press was used in this report.

Alaska-based unit wraps up South Korea training

BY MARCUS FICHTL
Stars and Stripes

POCHEON, South Korea — Six hundred U.S. troops wrapped up a monthlong training rotation to South Korea on Monday with something in short supply this time of year at their home station in Alaska — darkness.

Soldiers from the Fort Wainwright, Alaska-based 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment "Bobcats" spent May living and training at the 3,390-acre Rodriguez Live

Fire Range north of Seoul.

"We're here to build our lethality," battalion commander Lt. Col. R. Blake Lackey said Wednesday.

That includes being able to operate day and night, the latter being difficult in the Alaskan summer, he said.

"This time of year, we'll be training at 1:30 in the morning, and it's still daylight," said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Moore, 34, a recon team leader with the battalion.

"When it's dark in Alaska, it's winter and it's pretty harsh," the West Palm Beach,

Fla., native added. "So it's really difficult to get after some of the more basic and fundamental [requirements]."

The South Korea rotation has taken the unit "to a higher level of readiness we didn't think was possible," Lackey said.

The battalion trained with its 8th Army and South Korean counterparts during a time of high tension on the peninsula that included multiple North Korean missile tests and the deployment of U.S. aircraft carriers to the region.

Trump rips Justice Dept.'s court strategy on travel ban

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump lashed out at his own Justice Department on Monday for seeking the Supreme Court's backing for a "watered-down, politically correct version" of the travel ban he signed in March instead of a broader directive that also was blocked by the courts.

In a series of early morning tweets, Trump urged the Justice Department to ask for an "expedited hearing" at the high court and to seek a "much tougher version" of the order temporarily blocking entry to the U.S. of people from a half-dozen majority Muslim countries. He called the courts, which have blocked both versions of the travel ban, "slow and political."

It's unclear whether the

president has conveyed his requests to the Justice Department, which he oversees, in a forum other than Twitter. The White House did not immediately respond to requests for that information.

The Justice Department declined to comment.

The president has renewed his push for the travel ban in the wake of the vehicle-and-knife attack in London that left seven people dead and dozens injured. Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Trump also stressed that his proposal was a "travel ban," a description his aides have disputed in the past. He said on Twitter that others "can call it whatever they want, but I am calling it what we need and what it is, a TRAVEL BAN!"

The president spent much of the weekend responding to the attack on Twitter. In one instance, he leveled an inaccurate criticism of London Mayor Sadiq Khan, saying the mayor was telling people there was "no reason to be alarmed" about the attack. The mayor instead had been telling London residents not to be concerned by a stepped-up police presence in the city following the attack.

"No reason to be alarmed," Khan said, describing a more visible presence as "one of things the police and all of us need to do to make sure we are as safe as we possibly can be."

Later, the mayor's spokesman said he was too busy to respond to Trump's "ill-informed" tweet.

S. Korean official suspended over report

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — A senior South Korean defense official was suspended Monday for deliberately failing to report to new liberal President Moon Jae-in the arrival of several more launchers for a contentious U.S. missile defense system, Moon's office said.

Moon's conservative predecessor, Park Geun-hye, had allowed the United States to deploy the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system to deal with North Korean nuclear threats. A THAAD battery normally operated with six launchers, and two of them were publicly installed in a southeastern South Korean town in late April, shortly before Moon took office on May 10.

Last week, Moon's office said it found that four more launchers have since arrived in South Korea but that defense officials didn't mention them in policy briefings they gave in late May.

Moon's investigation order has prompted media speculation about its motives. During the election campaign, he said he would review a system that has enraged not only Pyongyang but also Beijing, Seoul's largest trading partner.

Moon's office said Monday that an investigation found Deputy Minister for Defense Policy Wee Seung Ho ordered ministry officials not to write clearly about the four launchers in policy reports.

Wee told investigators he did so because the South Korean and U.S. militaries decided not to publicize the four launchers' arrivals, presidential official Yoon Young-chan told a televised news conference.

It's unclear if Moon will go ahead with his campaign pledge to re-examine the THAAD deployment because a request for the withdrawal of the system's components could severely undermine ties with Washington, Seoul's most important ally, analysts say.

Officials detain more in search for London attack accomplices

Associated Press

LONDON — British counterterrorism investigators searched two homes Monday and detained "a number" of people in the investigation into a van and knife attack in the heart of London that left seven people dead.

Dozens were injured, many of them critically, in the attack that started Saturday night on the London Bridge, when three attackers swerved the vehicle into pedestrians then, armed with knives, rampaged through Borough Market, slashing and stabbing anyone they could find.

The three men, who wore fake suicide vests, were shot to death by police. Islamic State has claimed responsibility.

London's police chief has said the attackers have been identified, but the names haven't been released. At least 12 people were arrested Sunday, including five men and seven women ranging in age from 19 to 60. One has since been released without being charged.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said she wouldn't release further details in what she described as a fast-moving investigation.

ISIS has claimed responsibility for three attacks in Britain since March, and Dick described the recent wave of violence as "unprecedented in my working life."

Prime Minister Theresa May warned that the country faced a new threat from copycat attacks. She said Britain must do "more, much more" to combat what she called the perverted ideology of radical Islam.

The country's major political parties temporarily suspended campaigning with only days to go before Thursday's general election. May said the vote would take place as scheduled because "violence can never be allowed to disrupt the democratic process."

The political tempo picked up again Monday with May deeming opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn unfit to handle security and Brexit. Corbyn called for May to resign because of her role in cutting police staffing when she was home secretary.

Most of the London Underground stations reopened Monday in the neighborhood where the attack took place, allowing life to resume after more than 24 hours of lockdown.

14 arrested during protests in Portland

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Police arrested 14 people as thousands of demonstrators and counterprotesters converged in downtown Portland, more than a week after two men were fatally stabbed trying to stop a man from shouting anti-Muslim slurs at teenagers on a light-rail train.

A pro-President Donald Trump free speech rally drew several hundred to a plaza near City Hall on Sunday.

That rally was met across the street by hundreds of counterprotesters organized by immigrant rights, religious and labor groups. They said they wanted to make a stand against hate and racism.

By late afternoon, police closed nearby Chapman

Square, where a separate group of protesters — many wearing masks and black clothing and identified as anti-fascists — also demonstrated. Police used flash-bang grenades and pepper balls to disperse that crowd after saying protesters were hurling bricks and other objects at officers.

The people gathered at the free speech rally organized by the conservative group Patriot Prayer and counterprotesters at City Hall were not involved in those clashes, police said.

Portland police said Sunday evening that several dozen knives, bricks, sticks and other weapons were seized.

The Patriot Prayer event was billed as a Trump Free Speech Rally in “one of the most liberal areas of the West Coast.” Rally

organizer Joey Gibson held a moment of silence for the two men who were stabbed to death and pleaded with the crowd to refrain from violence. He later told them that the goal is to wake up the liberty movement. “It’s OK to be a conservative in Portland,” he said.

Last week, Mayor Ted Wheeler unsuccessfully tried to have the permit for the free speech rally revoked, saying it could further inflame tensions following the May 26 stabbings.

The suspect in the light-rail stabbings, Jeremy Joseph Christian, 35, attended a similar rally in late April wearing an American flag around his neck and carrying a baseball bat. Police confiscated the bat, and he was then caught on camera clashing with

counterprotesters.

In a video posted on Facebook, Gibson condemned Christian and acknowledged that some rallies have attracted “legitimate Nazis.” He described Christian as “all crazy” and “not a good guy.”

Authorities say that on May 26, Christian killed two men and injured another on the train when they tried to help after he verbally abused two young women.

The concerns over the rally come amid a wider debate in the U.S. about the First Amendment, often in liberal cities like Portland and Berkeley, Calif., and on college campuses, where violent protests between far-right and far-left protesters have derailed appearances by contentious figures.

Cosby’s family man image on the line at sex assault trial

Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. — More than a decade after Bill Cosby, 79, invited a college basketball manager to his home to discuss her career, the comedian goes on trial on Monday in a sexual assault case that is sure to define his legacy.

Cosby’s image as a family man, on screen and off, helped fuel his 50-year career in entertainment. He created TV characters, most notably Dr. Cliff Huxtable, with crossover appeal among blacks and whites, young and old, rich and poor. His TV shows, films and comedy tours earned him an estimated \$400 million.

Then a deposition unsealed in 2015 revealed an unsavory private life marked by a long history of sexual liaisons with young women. Dozens said he had drugged and assaulted them.

The trial involves one of those complaints, that of former Temple University basketball staffer Andrea Constand, 44, of the Toronto area. She will take the stand in suburban Philadelphia this week and tell her story in public for the first time.

Holding a wooden cane, Cosby got to the courthouse at about 8:40 a.m. Monday amid a heavy media presence. He chatted amiably with actress Keshia Knight Pulliam, who played his youngest daughter on “The Cosby Show,” and they walked together past dozens of cameras and into the courthouse.

Celebrity attorney Gloria Allred, who showed up for the first day of the trial, told reporters she’s

hopeful “there will be justice in this case.”

Allred represents several of Cosby’s accusers, including a woman who worked for the comedian’s agent at the William Morris agency. She will be the only other accuser allowed to testify.

Montgomery County Judge Steven T. O’Neill hopes to keep the media frenzy from influencing the case. Cameras aren’t allowed into Pennsylvania courtrooms, but scores of photographers will be lined up outside the courthouse. Like the Simpson case, the jury will be sequestered.

Constand filed a police complaint in 2005 over the night a year earlier when, she says, Cosby drugged and molested her at his estate.

Cosby had beaten back rumors about his conduct before, at least once by giving an exclusive interview to a tabloid to squelch a woman’s story.

Cosby and his agents offered Constand money for school when her mother, Gianna, called to confront him in January 2006.

“She said, ‘Your apology is enough,’” Cosby later said in a deposition. “‘There’s nothing you can do.’”

Constand’s complaint was referred to Montgomery County, Pa., where the district attorney found the case to be too weak to prosecute. Constand instead sued Cosby for sexual battery.

Thirteen women signed on to support her lawsuit, saying Cosby also had molested them. But Cosby avoided a trial — after giving four days of deposition testimony — by negotiating a confidential settlement with Constand in 2006.

Man opens fire at former job, kills five, then himself

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — A disgruntled former employee opened fire in a Florida awning manufacturer on Monday, killing five workers there and then killing himself, officials said.

Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings said the shooter — who had been fired in April and had been previously accused of assaulting a co-worker — was not believed to be connected to any sort of terrorist organization.

The unidentified shooter was not charged when he was accused of battering the co-worker in June 2014, the sheriff said. The alleged victim in that incident was not among the victims Monday, Demings said.

Police were called at about 8 a.m. by a woman who ran from the awning business, saying the gunman had told her to leave. She used the phone of a tile business across the street to call 911, said Yamaris Gomez, the tile store’s owner.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Man enters empty plane, leaves bag

MD LINTHICUM — A man drove through a perimeter fence at Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, and police say he got onto an unoccupied airplane before authorities detained him.

Media outlets report the car got into a secure area at Signature Flight Support at the airport May 27. The Baltimore Sun reported that Maryland Transportation Authority Police spokesman Lt. Kevin Ayd confirmed last week that the 42-year-old Laurel man entered the smaller-model aircraft at Pier D near the terminal and left a bag on board, then left and re-entered the aircraft before police arrived.

Ayd said the aircraft and the backpack were checked, and there was nothing “alarming.” The man hasn’t been charged and is undergoing a medical evaluation. The FBI has ruled out terrorism in this incident.

School system sorry for hijab permission slips

VA WOODBRIDGE — Prince William County school officials are apologizing after two Muslim students say their school required them to carry signed notes from their mothers giving them permission to wear hijabs.

Hajah Bah and Fatmata Mansaray, who are first cousins, told WJLA-TV that they were required to carry the notes at Freedom High School in Woodbridge.

Mike Mulgrew, the Associate Superintendent for Prince William County Schools, said he has apologized to the family. He said staff members should not have required the students to have notes to wear hijabs. The school system issued a state-

ment saying it is “committed to using this incident as an opportunity to ensure that respect for diversity, religious freedom and self-expression are practiced and evident every day at every school.”

Bill would ban Native American mascots

MA BOSTON — A bill that would ban the use of Native American mascots in public schools in Massachusetts is heading to a public hearing.

The bill defines a Native American mascot as a “name, symbol or image that depicts or refers to an American Indian tribe, individual, custom or tradition that is used by a public school as a mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead or team name.” It gives specific examples, including “Indians,” “Indianettes,” “Chieftains” and “Braves.”

The bill will be heard at a hearing Tuesday.

Officials: Toddler nearly dies from eating pot

RI PROVIDENCE — Authorities in Rhode Island say a toddler nearly died from eating edible marijuana.

The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families on Friday announced the 2-year-old girl had almost died Thursday and had been admitted to the pediatric intensive care unit at Hasbro Children’s Hospital.

Providence police Detective Maj. David Lapatin told The Providence Journal that the girl’s grandfather was sick and had a doctor’s note for medical marijuana. He said police are treating it as an accident.

Police Commander Thomas Verdi said there was no assault or sign of abuse and that the girl was treated at the hospital

and released to her parents.

The Department of Children, Youth and Families said it is investigating.

Dining hall recipe wins national award

CT STORRS — The University of Connecticut can brag that it serves award-winning food in its dining halls.

A recipe for a steak and egg burrito, created by UConn’s Dining Services, has been awarded a gold medal in the category of best local food recipe by the National Association of College & University Food Services. The burrito includes sauteed fruit and vegetables on top of white rice, sliced beef and an over-easy egg drizzled with Korean gochujang dressing.

It’s the third straight year UConn’s dining service has won a gold medal.

Cheese named state’s official dairy product

WI MINERAL POINT — It’s easily the cheesiest new law in Wisconsin.

Gov. Scott Walker on Thursday signed a bill making cheese Wisconsin’s official dairy product.

Walker surrounded himself with fourth-graders from Mineral Point Elementary School who were “udderly” dedicated to getting the recognition for cheese in “America’s Dairyland.” Students who lobbied for the new law wore T-shirts that showed a piece of yellow cheese inside the borders of Wisconsin for the signing of the bill. Someone in a cow costume — what else? — also was on hand.

The 3.1 billion pounds of cheese produced at nearly 150 cheese plants in Wisconsin is more than that produced in any other state. No wonder the dairy cow is already the state’s offi-

cial domesticated animal and milk is its official beverage.

Police department gets its own smartphone app

NM ALBUQUERQUE — The Albuquerque Police Department now has a smartphone app, one that department officials hope will help it better connect with the community.

The department said the “ABQ Police” app’s many features include displays of maps of crime scenes and alerts on missing children, traffic advisories and police activity. Other uses for the app include reporting nonemergency crimes, submitting tips to Crime Stoppers, filing traffic accident reports and learning about subjects such as wanted suspects.

Graduation ceremony held on stalled subway

NY NEW YORK — Instead of walking up the aisle to pick up his diploma, a nursing student held his own graduation ceremony with fellow riders on a stalled subway train.

Jerich Alcantara told CBS New York he was traveling to Hunter College in Manhattan for the ceremony on the morning of May 30 when his subway got stuck deep under Queens. Alcantara, who was wearing his cap and gown, said he was upset at first. Minutes turned to hours. Then, on the rescue train, his friend played a graduation song and the whole subway car got in on the act. Cellphone video of the subway ceremony shows Alcantara’s friend handing him a mock diploma and shaking his hand as passengers wished him well.

Alcantara finally arrived at the real commencement just as it was ending.

From wire reports

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Warriors put on show in Kerr's return

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Stephen Curry dribbled every which way and ran a circle around LeBron James, then drove left through the paint and beat him to the rim for a right-handed layup over the star's outstretched arm in a move reminiscent of his recent MVP magic.

Steve Kerr got a front-row seat again for the show, delighted to be back on the bench witnessing those signature moments he has seen so many times before. Kerr watched his Golden State Warriors grab a 2-0 lead in the NBA Finals by downing the Cleveland Cavaliers 132-113 Sunday night in another rout, returning to the sideline with a warm welcome from the sellout crowd after a six-week absence.

Their leader and reigning NBA Coach of the Year assuming his usual courtside seat, Curry said he received a special request from Kerr: "to play with passion and play with joy."

"That's what everyone wants to see, some of the best players in the world go against each other," Klay Thompson said. "Steph made a great move, got by him and finished. That's what he does."

Curry and Kevin Durant tag-teamed the

Warriors within two victories of another championship. Curry recorded his first career postseason triple-double with 32 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds, while Durant contributed 33 points, 13 rebounds, six assists and five blocks and is suddenly on the cusp of his first ring.

"It seemed like it's personal for both of them," Draymond Green said. "And you are talking two of the greatest players that we got in this world locked in the way they are, that's why we're up 2-0."

Golden State improved to 14-0 this postseason and is trying to become the first group to go unbeaten all the way to a title.

James was equally spectacular with his own triple-double of 29 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds, but yet again didn't get nearly enough help to keep up with the Warriors' depth. Kevin Love had 27 points and Kyrie Irving 19.

James tied Magic Johnson for most NBA Finals triple-doubles with eight, and this marked the first time in NBA history more than one player had a triple-double in the same Finals game.

"I thought for the most part with the game plan that we had we tried to execute it as close as possible," James said.

"Much more physical today than we were in Game 1. And we forced them to 20 turnovers and they still beat us pretty good, so we've got to be much better, too."

Thompson emerged from a postseason-long shooting funk to score 22 points with four three-pointers while playing more stellar defense and pulling down seven rebounds for the Warriors, who shot 18-for-43 from deep.

The best-of-seven series now shifts to Cleveland for two games, with Game 3 Wednesday.

Kerr returned to the bench to a rousing ovation, waving to the fans while back on the sideline for the first time since Game 2 of the first round against Portland on April 19 because of pain issues stemming from complications after 2015 back surgery.

Now, Golden State is headed to Northeast Ohio needing just two more — yet don't count on anybody considering this series close to done. The Warriors squandered a 3-1 lead to the Cavs a year ago to miss a repeat.

"Well, it's been a great run but none of that matters unless we can finish the job with this series," Kerr said. "Trust me, we know. It was 2-0 last year, we lost."

Johnson extends record with 11th Dover win

Associated Press

DOVER, Del. — Hooked on NASCAR as a kid, there was something about Cale Yarborough that made a fan out of Jimmie Johnson. Johnson was glued to the set as he sat on a dirty old couch at home in El Cajon, Calif. He loved Yarborough's fearlessness and the way the Hall of Fame driver kind of reminded Johnson of his grandfather.

Johnson even stopped at a Hardee's on a road trip because he believed the fast-food joint and Yarborough's sponsor was the race shop. There was one more part of Yarborough that Johnson admired:

"His winning," Johnson said.

Oh, Yarborough won — 83 times.

The same number in the record book as that California kid who grew up to become even better than his idol.

Johnson sped off on the final restart Sunday and earned another slice of NASCAR history,

winning, in overtime, at Dover International Speedway for the 11th time and moving into a tie for sixth on the career victories list.

He then tipped his cap — more like, his tribute helmet — toward Yarborough.

"Cale, you're the man," Johnson said.

Johnson again made an impact at his favorite track — and he worked hard to take this checkered flag. He was forced to start from the rear of the field because of a gear change, then zipped past Kyle Larson in overtime on the restart.

"You put that route in front of me and I'll chase it down," Johnson said.

Johnson and Yarborough are tied for sixth on the career wins list.

Johnson may have had a sense history was ahead in the No. 48 Chevrolet. He wore a helmet painted in tribute to Yarborough. He tweeted this week-

end, "Growing up in El Cajon I never imagined I would have a chance to tie Cale in wins."

Johnson, the seven-time NASCAR champion, has racked up a Hall of Fame resume all with team owner Rick Hendrick and crew chief Chad Knaus. He plopped his helmet on top of the Chevy in victory lane and swapped it out for a throwback No. 28 Hardee's Chevrolet Yarborough hat.

"I remember going to a race in Oklahoma with my parents, my brother, we're driving across the country and we pull into a Hardee's," Johnson said. "I had no idea it was a burger stand. I really thought when I walked in the door that I was going to Cale Yarborough's race shop. I was very disappointed. I had a burger and left and understood the world of sponsorship."

Johnson and the 78-year-old Yarborough are the only drivers in NASCAR history to win three consecutive championships.

Johnson, who won for the third time this season, is on a drive for a record eighth. With more wins like this one, Johnson just may pass Dale Earnhardt and Richard Petty and get No. 8. He drove the entire 10-race Chase last season with a tribute helmet to Earnhardt and Petty.

"Drivers have always used helmets as their voice," Johnson said.

His says loud and clear he has a deep respect for NASCAR's greats.

Larson was second, followed by Martin Truex Jr., Ryan Newman and Chase Elliott. Truex won the first two stages on the 10-year anniversary of his first career Cup victory, also at Dover.

Larson had his second win of the season in his grasp until he spun the tires on the restart.

"Jimmie's the best of our time," Larson said. "Probably the best of all time."

Davidson stuns No. 2 UNC

Associated Press

Best known as the school where Stephen Curry played his college basketball, Davidson is quickly making a name for itself in baseball.

The Wildcats from the 2,000-student private school 20 minutes from Charlotte, N.C., became the sixth No. 4 regional seed to advance to a super regional.

They did it by beating No. 2 national seed North Carolina 2-1 on Sunday night — their second win over the Tar Heels in three days.

And they did it in their first tournament appearance.

Davidson's run through the Chapel Hill Regional didn't come without some drama in the ninth inning. There was a play at the plate, with catcher Jake Sidwell diving to tag Brandon Riley after Riley missed the plate with his hand as he slid past. And then first baseman Brian Fortier was pulled far to his right to field Michael Busch's groundball, and his flip to pitcher Durin O'Linger was a bit high. But O'Linger held on in a close play for the final out.

"The way the game ended, with the play at the late and the bang-bang play at first, that's going to be talked about forever," Wildcats coach Dick Cooke said. "It's just very unusual. It's going to be a conversation piece down the road with people who have interest in Davidson and North Carolina and those who don't."

The victory validated the words O'Linger said after the Wildcats (35-24) won three games in two days to claim the Atlantic 10 Tournament title. The Wildcats were seeded sixth in that tournament.

"Everyone knows we're gonna go win the regional," O'Linger told the Charlotte Observer. "I feel bad for whatever No. 1

seed has to play us."

Davidson will play a best-of-three super regional starting Friday or Saturday against the winner of the Houston Regional.

Hogs, Missouri St. play late

Arkansas began play in the Fayetteville Regional on Sunday afternoon needing two wins to force a winner-take-all final against Missouri State on Monday night.

By the time the top-seeded Razorbacks finished off those two wins, they had turned what was supposed to be an evening at Baum Stadium into a nearly overnight affair — ending an epic 11-10 win over the Bears at 3:10 a.m. local time Monday morning.

The contest took six hours to play, including a 1-hour, 25-minute rain delay. The two teams restarted the game — in the third inning — at 12:35 a.m. And more than 1,000 of the original paid crowd of 9,038 fans in Baum Stadium were still on hand when Arkansas pitcher Evan Lee struck out Missouri State's Justin Paulsen in the rain to end the game.

Other regional winners

No. 1 national seed Oregon State, No. 4 LSU, No. 7 Louisville and Wake Forest joined Davidson and Cal State Fullerton as regional winners.

Nick Madrigal went 4-for-4 and Michael Gretler homered and drove in three runs as Oregon State went 3-0 in its regional with an 8-1 win over Yale.

Eric Walker scattered seven hits and struck out eight in LSU's 5-0 win over Rice.

Louisville came from behind twice to beat Xavier 8-7.

No. 1 regional seed Wake Forest beat West Virginia 12-8, with Stuart Fairchild hitting a grand slam for the first of his two homers.

Murray into quarterfinals

Associated Press

PARIS — Getting better and better, Andy Murray worked his way into the quarterfinals of the French Open for the fourth straight year by beating Karen Khachanov 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 on Monday.

The top-ranked Murray became the 15th man to reach 650 tour-level match wins.

"I think today was probably the best I have played overall. Each match I feel like I played better," said Murray, who lost in last year's final. "I have hit the ball cleaner and started to hit the right shots at the right moments. [I have] come a long way the last ten days or so."

Murray had never before played the unseeded Russian. The 53rd-ranked Khachanov made 38 unforced errors, compared to only 14 for Murray.

Murray will next play eighth-seeded Kei Nishikori, who recovered to beat Fernando Verdasco 0-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-0.

"Kei is dangerous off both wings," Murray said. "Moves well."

Earlier, third-seeded Simona Halep and fifth-seeded Elina Svitolina advanced and will face each other in the quarterfinals.

In four previous matches on clay, Halep had never been able to beat Carla Suarez Navarro. But the Romanian took care of that problem on Monday, routing Suarez Navarro 6-1, 6-1 on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"I was expecting a very tough game," said Halep, the 2014 French Open runner-up. "I managed to push her back."

Svitolina rallied to beat Croatian qualifier Petra Martic 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

The 290th-ranked Martic was leading 5-2 and 30-0 on Svitolina's serve in the deciding set. The Ukrainian managed to hold serve, however, which allowed Martic to serve for the match at 5-3.

But Svitolina, who needed treatment on her back at the start of the third set, broke and soon won on her second match point, when Martic hit a backhand into the net.

"It was amazing tennis from Petra today and she was really striking the ball well," Svitolina said. "I was really happy to come back in the second set. Thanks to the crowd for cheering me on. They gave me the energy to fight."

Stan Wawrinka reached the French Open quarterfinals for the fourth time after beating Gael Monfils 7-5, 7-6 (7), 6-2.

The 2015 champion sealed victory on his third match point with a backhand down the line that the Frenchman could not return.

Sooners, Gators face off in WCWS

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Women's College World Series dream matchup is set.

Shay Knighten singled in two runs in the fifth inning to help defending champion Oklahoma beat Oregon 4-2 on Sunday in the semifinals.

Paige Parker (26-5) earned the win and Paige Lowary got the save against Oregon.

The Sooners (59-9) will play top-seeded Florida (58-8) on Monday night to start the best-of-three championship series. The teams have combined to win the past four national titles, but are meeting for the first time in the championship series.

For Florida, Delaney Gourley was nearly perfect, striking out 10 while throwing a

two-hitter to beat Washington 5-2 and giving the Gators a chance for their third national championship in four years.

The Ducks would have needed to beat Oklahoma twice on Sunday, and for a while, it looked like they might at least force a second game. Danica Mercado's two-run homer in the top of the fifth put the Ducks (54-8) up 2-0.

Oregon's Megan Kleist (21-4) took a shut-out into the fifth against Oklahoma before unraveling.

Oklahoma got its rally started when Lea Wodach reached on an error on her bunt.

Now, Oklahoma, the No. 10 seed, has the chance to defend its title. The Sooners view themselves as underdogs.

Springer lifts Astros to 10th straight win

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — George Springer and the Houston Astros have matched their Texas rival with the longest winning streak in the major leagues this season at 10 games.

Not much else is close between the runaway leaders in the AL West and the two-time defending division champion Rangers.

Springer hit two of Houston's four home runs, and the Astros completed their first sweep of Texas in almost three years with a 7-2 victory Sunday.

"This team continues to show up every single day with a great will to win and we take the aggressive approach and have done a lot of damage," manager A.J. Hinch said.

The Astros scored in all four innings pitched by Martin Perez (2-6) to tie a club record with their 10th straight road win, dropping the Rangers to 3-11 since their 10-game streak.

Texas (26-31) is in fourth place, 15 games behind the Astros, who have the major leagues' best record at 41-16 — and six

wins in seven games against the Rangers.

"To think about where you are in the standings would be a monumental mistake in my opinion because we can't make it up all in one day," Texas manager Jeff Banister said. "You ask the question a number of times and it seems like just rhetoric and it's not. It's a narrative of what we need to do."

Brad Peacock (3-0) won a major league start for the first time since Sept. 2, 2014, pitching past the fifth inning for the first time in his third start following 12 relief appearances. He struck out nine in six innings, allowing two runs.

Luke Gregerson finished the game in a downpour with scoreless ninth, including a strikeout that gave Houston pitchers 13. The Rangers fanned 31 times over the final two games.

"We were speeding up as fast as we could because we knew it was coming," Hinch said.

Springer, who had three hits, connected on his sixth leadoff homer this season, matching Tampa Bay's Corey Dickerson for the major league lead, and added a solo shot in the fourth. He has a team-leading

16 homers.

Carlos Correa went deep starting the third, with a fan reaching over the railing with a glove for a nifty grab of the 440-foot drive to a back wall in the visitor's bullpen in left-center field. Yuli Gurriel had another solo homer in the fifth and a sacrifice fly in the third.

A day after striking out four times with runners on base in a one-run loss, Texas' Rougned Odor hit a solo homer when the Rangers were trailing 7-0 in the fifth.

Nice grabs: Besides the catch on Correa's long homer, there were several other impressive fan grabs. And then there was one where a fan who actually had a glove made the catch without it, and got knocked to the ground. He was wearing his glove again moments later.

Home woes: Perez surpassed his loss total at home from all of last season with his fourth Globe Life Park defeat, allowing three homers among seven hits and six runs — five earned — while matching his shortest outing of the year at 3²/₃ innings.

Happ goes deep twice, Cubs sweep Cards

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Ian Happ's first home run wound up in the street, and his second drew a curtain call from the screaming crowd.

Not a bad night for the prized rookie, and it turned out well for the Cubs, too.

Happ hit two homers, pinch hitter Jon Jay drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh with a single and Chicago beat the St. Louis Cardinals 7-6 on Sunday to complete a three-game sweep.

Happ broke out of a 4-for-32 slump by staking Chicago to a 6-4 lead with his solo drive in the third and a three-run shot in the fourth against Michael Wacha. The first homer hugged the right-field line, bouncing onto Sheffield Avenue, and the second whipped fans into a frenzy. Happ came back out of the dugout and tipped his helmet to the screaming crowd.

"Awesome, awesome moment," he said. "These fans are unbelievable."

Jay broke a 6-6 tie with his

two-out single off Matt Bowman (1-2) in the seventh. Anthony Rizzo had three hits and scored the go-ahead run, and the Cubs (28-27) moved back over .500 with their 10th home win in 12 games. They also swept three from the Cardinals at Wrigley Field for the first time since 2006, and they did it after an 0-6 trip against the Los Angeles Dodgers and San Diego.

Tigers 7, White Sox 4: Justin Upton hit a game-ending, three-run homer as host Detroit overcame Justin Verlander's groin injury to beat Chicago for a sweep of their weekend series.

Nationals 11, Athletics 10: Ryan Zimmerman hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the eighth inning, lifting the visiting Nationals.

Blue Jays 3, Yankees 2: Justin Smoak hit a tying two-run homer off Luis Severino in the sixth inning while Josh Donaldson homered against Tyler Clippard (0-3) in the eighth as host Toronto gained a four-game split despite going 0-for-24 in the series with runners in

scoring position

Marlins 6, Diamondbacks 5: A.J. Ellis hit a tiebreaking single on the 14th pitch of an at-bat against Archie Bradley in the seventh.

Rockies 3, Padres 1: Jeff Hoffman cruised through seven innings for visiting Colorado while Trevor Story had two hits and two RBIs.

Braves 13, Reds 8: Ender Inciarte tied his career high with five hits and drove in a career-high five runs for visiting Atlanta.

Pirates 11, Mets 1: David Freese drove in three runs, including an RBI single for visiting Pittsburgh.

Red Sox 7, Orioles 3: Chris Sale (7-2) struck out nine in six innings to win his sixth straight decision as visiting Boston split the four-game series.

Phillies 9, Giants 7: Maikel Franco hit a tiebreaking solo homer in the eighth off Derek Law (3-1) and Freddy Galvis homered from both sides of the plate. Odubel Herrera also went deep as host Philadelphia

earned its first series victory in six weeks.

Brewers 3, Dodgers 0: Zach Davies (6-3) pitched three-hit ball into the seventh inning while Eric Thames hit his 15th homer as host Milwaukee averted a three-game series sweep.

Indians 8, Royals 0: Roberto Perez and Daniel Robertson hit two-run doubles off Eric Skoglund (0-1) in the second inning before a 1-hour, 50-minute rain delay in the bottom half for visiting Cleveland.

Twins 3, Angels 2: A video review overturned Ben Revere's stolen base and changed the call to a caught stealing for the final out with the replay determining he overslid second as shortstop Ehire Adrianza tagged him on his left foot and visiting Minnesota won.

Mariners 7, Rays 1: Ariel Miranda (6-2) pitched a four-hitter, struck out a career-high nine and walked one in his first big league complete game as host Seattle finished a series sweep.