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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

USS Reagan patrols disputed waters

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA, Japan — The aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan sailed through the South China Sea this week, marking the third transit by a carrier of the contentious waters this year.

The carrier and two Navy cruisers arrived in Manila on Tuesday. The transit follows patrols by the USS Carl Vinson in February and the USS Theodore Roosevelt in April.

China and the U.S. have clashed periodically over naval operations in the area. China, at odds with its neighbors over competing territorial claims, has been building military bases on reclaimed land and harassing ships in disputed waters.

Last month, one of the cruisers accompanying the Reagan — the USS Antietam — and the San Diego-based USS Higgins drew the ire of Beijing when they came within 12 nautical miles of Chinese-claimed islets during a freedom-of-naviga-

tion patrol in the South China Sea.

The U.S. uninvited the Chinese Navy from Rim of the Pacific exercises this year after the Pentagon officials said they had “strong evidence” Beijing deployed anti-ship and surface-to-air missiles and electronic jammers to contested areas in the South China Sea.

The Reagan and Antietam sailors, along with personnel from the USS Chancellorsville, will be volunteering at local hospitals and schools or going on Morale, Welfare and Recreation hiking, diving and snorkeling tours while they’re in the Philippines’ capital, according to a Navy news release.

“Manila is one of the favorite port visits for sailors in the Pacific thanks to the beauty and welcoming people of the Philippines,” Rear Adm. Marc Dalton, commander of Task Force 70, said in the news release.

The Reagan, Antietam and Chancellorsville have been patrolling the Indo-Pacific region since leaving their home at Yoko-

suka in May.

The warships recently finished Malabar 2018 with India and Japan near Guam. During the nine-day exercise in the Philippine Sea, the ships hosted liaison officers from the other countries and practiced air defense, surface and anti-submarine warfare, communications, search and rescue, underway replenishment and medical evacuation, the Navy said.

From June 16 through Saturday, the Reagan also hosted Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force personnel who worked with U.S. sailors on interoperability and conducted an anti-submarine warfare exercise, the Navy said in its statement.

“This continued presence in the Indo-Pacific at sea and in visits to ports like [Manila], promotes security and stability that has driven the peace and prosperity that benefits all regional countries,” Dalton said in the news release.

The warships will continue their patrols after the Manila port visit.

NATO unveils air power strategy

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Advances in air defense and electronic warfare systems by adversaries will threaten allied dominance in the years ahead, according to a new NATO air power strategy billed as the first of its kind since the U.S.-led alliance was founded in 1949.

The Joint Air Power Strategy also cautions that the emergence of densely populated “megacities” in the years ahead will make targeting enemies increasingly difficult.

“NATO’s strategy holds that allied air forces must be able to fight in all terrains and environments, including heavily defended and congested airspace,” the alliance said in a statement Tuesday. “While current NATO air operations will continue, the document provides a blueprint for the development of airpower doctrines and new capabilities.”

The 11-page document, which outlines a range of dangers, argues threats are more varied and formidable than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

While it doesn’t explicitly mention Russia, the strategy points out that allies must contend with “near peer” adversaries for the first time since the end of the Soviet Union.

In recent years, Russia has invested heavily in sophisticated air defenses designed to challenge NATO.

“As a result, the future operating environment may be one in which air superiority can neither be assured at the onset of operations nor, once obtained, be an enduring condition,” the strategy states.

The strategy also describes an operating environment in which cyberattacks and enemy access to sophisticated technology pose a threat to networks that allies depend on to operate.

“The protection of the network will become as important as the protection of the platform,” the strategy says.

The mix of threats — state and nonstate, conventional and cyber — adds up to an environment that “will likely have long-term consequences for peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region,” according to the strategy document.

Complaint filed against Navy over use of Bible

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An organization that lobbies against promoting religion within the Armed Forces has filed an inspector general complaint against the U.S. Navy over a Bible that was included in a POW/MIA “Missing Man” table display at the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

The complaint seeks removal of the book from the display, elimination of language about the Bible and the phrase “one nation under God” from an accompanying explanatory placard, an investigation into how the book came to be displayed and who authorized it and “appropriate disciplinary measures administered to those responsible.”

It was filed Tuesday by the New York-based law office of Donald Rehkopf Jr.

From staff reports

N. Korea on agenda for US-China talks

Associated Press

BEIJING — U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and his Chinese counterpart struck a positive note as they sat down Wednesday to tackle the thorny issue of how to get North Korea to fulfill a pledge to abandon its nuclear program.

Mattis said he and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe opened discussions in Beijing with a “very open and honest dialogue.”

Wei said the visit is important to increase strategic trust and enhance the cooperation between them.

In a later meeting, Chinese President Xi Jinping — who also heads the commission

overseeing the People’s Liberation Army — called relations between the militaries a “model component of our overall bilateral relations.”

Mattis, a retired Marine Corps general, said the U.S. assigns the same degree of importance to the relationship.

“So I’m here to keep our relationship on a great trajectory, going in the right direction,” he said.

None of the leaders mentioned specific issues in their opening statements in front of reporters, but North Korean denuclearization was expected to top the agenda.

President Donald Trump’s announce-

ment of a suspension of major annual military exercises with South Korea fulfilled a longtime Chinese wish.

China is the North’s main source of aid, trade and diplomatic support and backs Pyongyang’s call for a “phased and synchronous” approach to denuclearization, as opposed to Washington’s demand for an instant, total and irreversible end to the North’s nuclear programs.

The visit also comes amid a brewing trade war between the world’s two largest economies and sharp U.S. criticism over China’s militarization of its island holdings in the South China Sea.

Report: N. Korea improves nuclear complex

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea is making improvements to its main nuclear complex “at a rapid pace,” a report said, even as the communist state engages in diplomatic efforts over its weapons programs.

The findings come after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s agreement to the “complete denuclearization” of the peninsula during his June 12 summit with President Donald Trump.

The report by 38 North, a website devoted to analysis of North Korea, which was posted Tuesday, stressed that the ongoing efforts at the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center “should not be seen as having any relationship” to North Ko-

rea’s denuclearization pledge.

But the continued activity underscored concerns that the North has not agreed to any concrete measures or timelines in negotiations so far.

“The North’s nuclear cadre can be expected to proceed with business as usual until specific orders are issued from Pyongyang,” said the analysis by experts Frank Pabian, Joseph Bermudez Jr. and Jack Liu.

Commercial satellite images taken June 21 showed that modifications to the cooling system of Yongbyon’s 5-megawatt plutonium production reactor that began in March appear complete, according to 38 North.

It said the water discharge from an outfall pipe was less than previously observed, making it difficult to determine the

reactor’s operational status.

The June 21 images also show at least two new buildings and continued construction on support facilities throughout operational areas at the complex, especially at an experimental light water reactor, or ELWR, 38 North said.

“The necessary infrastructure for reactor operations at the ELWR appears externally complete, but there is no visible evidence yet to suggest that operations have begun,” it said.

The light water reactor is designed to provide electricity for civilian purposes but could also produce fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The report also said a radiochemical laboratory, used to separate plutonium from spent fuel, seems active, with trucks parked

nearby and coal bins at an associated thermal plant appearing somewhat depleted, suggesting continued operations.

Tensions have ebbed amid the uptick in diplomatic efforts to persuade the North to abandon its nuclear weapons. But the country demonstrated strong advances in its program by test-firing three intercontinental ballistic missiles and conducting its sixth and most powerful nuclear test last year.

Kim Jong Un has suspending the testing program — the last missile test was on Nov. 28 — and the North blew up its nuclear testing facility at Punggye-ri on the east coast. But experts have expressed skepticism about the significance of those moves since Kim also has declared his country a nuclear state.

Army shows it has sea ability with nautical exercise

BY JASON BEHNKE

Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — Nautical Horizon 2018 concluded with a display of the Army’s ability to quickly move and deploy its forces and equipment when pulling up to a pier isn’t an option.

Soldiers readied combat vehicles and supplies stored permanently in Kuwait, loaded

them onto a massive floating platform and transferred the equipment to the Ready Reserve Force ship MV Cape Ray on Sunday as part of the final movements of the seven-week exercise.

The U.S. Army Central operation aims to ensure that if trouble breaks out in the Middle East and there are no airstrips or easily accessible

supply lines going into a conflict zone, the service can still land a large force on a foreign shore efficiently.

The exercise also showcased the Army’s little-recognized maritime force. It doesn’t have the Marine Corps’ amphibious assault vehicles or the Navy’s largesse, but it’s still designed to land troops and armor on beaches.

Army ships undertook 6,100 missions during Operation Desert Storm in 1991, according to a Federation of American Scientists report.

About 300 National Guardsmen, reservists and active-duty soldiers and nine Army watercraft were involved in Sunday’s exercise, which was conducted in Kuwait and the Persian Gulf.

Primaries show parties on divergent paths

Associated Press

An ambitious senior Democrat in the House lost his job Tuesday in a stunning primary upset. Mitt Romney moved closer to an office in Washington, just not the oval one. That's still occupied by President Donald Trump, who declared victory as voters across seven states continued pushing the two major parties on divergent paths in a turbulent era.

Here are some key takeaways from the latest round of voting ahead of the November midterms:

A New York stunner, big Maryland victory. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's ouster of Rep. Joe Crowley was more evidence that the Democratic Party's left wing is going to be a force to contend with for years to come.

ANALYSIS

The 28-year-old community organizer has never held political office and ran a shoestring campaign. But she managed to defeat a top Democratic House leader who had eyes on the speaker's gavel from his safe New York City seat Tuesday.

Ocasio-Cortez's win is a sign that Democrats are hungry for generational change and some are open to unabashedly liberal policies. Ocasio-Cortez backed single-payer health insurance, a federal jobs guarantee and abolishing ICE as the nation's immigration policing agency. She cast Crowley, a 56-year-old white male with plenty of Wall Street campaign cash, as elitist and disconnected from his diverse constituents.

Her message won't necessarily play everywhere. The Queens district is far more liberal than the moderate areas Democrats are hoping to flip in November. But it's likely to embolden the left as the Democratic

Party tries to strike the right balance between harnessing the energy of progressive activists while putting up candidates with broad enough appeal.

Other New York Democrats, including Rep. Yvette Clarke, faced close calls.

In Maryland, former NAACP chief Ben Jealous' nomination for Maryland governor wasn't an upset, but gave progressives another momentous win. With backing from liberal icon Bernie Sanders, Jealous outpaced Prince George's County executive Rushern Baker.

Democratic establishment holds elsewhere. Tuesday was huge for the progressive movement, but it still doesn't reverse what Democratic primary voters have been doing for weeks: choosing nominees, particularly for the House, who come from the party's mainstream and often enjoy party backing.

That trend mostly continued Tuesday, including in GOP-held districts that will determine which party controls the House.

Upstate New Yorkers coalesced around state lawmaker Anthony Brindisi, the Washington establishment choice, to try to unseat vulnerable Republican Rep. Claudia Tenney. Suburban Denver Democrats took the same course, giving former Army Ranger Jason Crow the nod to take on Rep. Mike Coffman in a district that is a battleground every two years. Trump lost there by 9 percentage points in 2016.

In a neighboring liberal Colorado district, Rep. Diana DeGette withstood a primary challenge from the left.

White House has a good night. Trump went all in for South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster, returning the favor of McMaster's early 2016 support with an election eve rally that presaged McMaster's com-

fortable but competitive primary runoff win over political newcomer John Warren.

It was vintage Trump. McMaster is a three-decade mainstay in South Carolina, the kind of political creature Trump lambastes in Washington. But McMaster, then the lieutenant governor, was the first statewide elected official anywhere to back Trump over myriad GOP presidential rivals.

Two other candidates backed by Trump also won Tuesday. Romney became the GOP nominee and likely November victor for a Senate seat from Utah. New York Rep. Daniel Donovan dispatched former Rep. Michael Grimm, who sought to regain his old seat after completing a federal prison stint for felony tax evasion.

But Trump's endorsement is still complicated. The results further solidify Trump's hold on the Republican Party, but it doesn't necessarily clarify what that means.

In choosing McMaster, South Carolina Republicans who love Trump opted for a near-career politician over a self-made businessman who styled his outsider bid after the president's path to the White House. In New York, Donovan won despite having voted against the GOP tax cuts that rank as Trump's biggest domestic policy achievement thus far.

And Romney, though he's toned down his criticism of Trump considerably from when he called him a "con artist" in 2016, has maintained that he won't be a silent rubber stamp for a president who still gives him pause.

So it's still an open question as to whether it's more important simply to have Trump's endorsement or to share his profile and show voters an authentic alliance.

House Republicans grill FBI agent accused of bias

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An FBI agent who worked on investigations into Democrat Hillary Clinton and President Donald Trump's campaign testified behind closed doors to a House committee on Wednesday as GOP lawmakers stepped up efforts to highlight what they say is bias at the Justice Department.

Peter Strzok exchanged anti-Trump texts with a colleague, FBI attorney Lisa Page, as both worked on the Clinton investigation and briefly on special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into ties between Trump's campaign and Russia. House Republicans have seized on the texts as part of multiple

investigations into the Justice Department, the FBI and decisions that both made during the 2016 presidential election.

In one of the texts, from August 2016, Strzok wrote, "We'll stop it," in reference to a potential Trump election win.

The barrage of GOP criticism against the Justice Department comes just a few months before the midterm elections and amid intense sparring between the parties over Mueller's investigation. Democrats have accused Republicans of trying to undermine Mueller's investigation for political gain.

Trump criticized the closed-door interview earlier with Strzok this week, saying that it should be "shown to the public on

live television, not a closed door hearing that nobody will see."

House Judiciary Chairman Robert Goodlatte, R-Va., has said there will also be a public hearing with Strzok.

A seasoned counterintelligence agent, Strzok had a leading role on the investigation into whether Clinton illegally mishandled classified information through her use of a private email server while secretary of state.

He later joined Mueller's team investigating Russian election interference, but was reassigned last summer after the discovery of anti-Trump text messages he had traded with the FBI lawyer. Page had already left Mueller's team.

Justice Department: Congress must act on immigration issue

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department on Wednesday said a judge's order to reunite families separated at the border "makes it even more imperative" that Congress pass legislation that would enable it "to simultaneously enforce the law and keep families together."

Otherwise, the administration says, "lawlessness at the border will continue."

The administration was responding to a federal judge's order Tuesday that U.S. border authorities must reunite separated families within 30 days. If the children are younger than 5, they must be reunited with families within 14 days of the order.

The order poses logistical problems for the administration and its "zero tolerance" policy on illegal border crossings. That policy resulted in more than 2,000 children separated from their families in recent weeks, according to the government, and placed in government-con-

tracted shelters while the adults are detained.

U.S. District Judge Dana Sabraw in San Diego, an appointee of President George W. Bush, issued a nationwide injunction on future family separations unless the parent is deemed unfit or doesn't want to be with the child. The judge's order also requires the government to provide phone contact between parents and their children within 10 days.

President Donald Trump had already signed an order ending family separations and said families would be detained together. But Sabraw's order forces the administration to adhere to a timeline and quickly address families affected by the hard-line policy embraced this past spring.

Health and Human Services, which takes charge of the children, referred questions to the Justice Department.

"Last night's court decision makes it even more imperative that Congress finally act to give

federal law enforcement the ability to simultaneously enforce the law and keep families together," the Justice Department wrote in a statement.

Both chambers of Congress are working on legislation aimed at ending separation of migrant families, but there's not been agreement on including a specific timetable in the legislation.

It's unclear how legislation might enable Attorney General Jeff Sessions to continue the zero tolerance policy without separating families or placing children in jail-like settings. The Obama administration at one point tried housing families in special detention centers while immigration judges reviewed their cases.

But a federal judge ruled the arrangement violated a long-standing agreement barring kids from jail-like settings, even with their parents. The government then began releasing families into the U.S. pending notification of their next court date

Malta allows immigrant ship to dock

Associated Press

VALLETTA, Malta — An aid ship stuck at sea for six days will be allowed to dock in Malta and the more than 200 migrants onboard will be distributed among eight European Union states, Malta's prime minister announced Wednesday, ending Europe's second impasse in recent weeks over the fate of people saved at sea amid rising political resistance to their welcome.

Joseph Muscat said that once in port, the Lifeline Mission ship would be impounded and the crew placed under investigation for allegedly operating illegally — including violating rescue protocols and operating without the correct registration. The migrants, who were rescued off Libya's coast, would be vetted to determine if they are eligible for political asylum or if they are economic migrants to be sent back to their countries of origin.

Muscat said Malta had no legal obligation since the rescue happened in Libyan waters, but said it was willing to act "before the situation escalates to a humanitarian crisis."

The eight countries to accept vetted migrants from the ship are France, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Malta. It was unclear how many each would take.

While Muscat emphasized that the Lifeline case was unique because of the alleged violations of the crew, the refusal by Italy and Malta to open their ports to the ship — and the haggling among EU states over how to distribute the migrants — showed a hardening of positions as EU leaders head into a summit where migration policies are expected to be debated.

Earlier this month, Italy and Malta both refused port to a French humanitarian ship, forcing some 630 migrants to travel an additional 900 miles to Spain.

Pittsburgh cop charged in shooting

Associated Press

EAST PITTSBURGH, Pa. — A white police officer was charged Wednesday with criminal homicide in the fatal shooting of an unarmed black teenager who fled a traffic stop, and investigators say the officer gave inconsistent statements about whether he saw a gun in the teen's hand.

The charge against East Pittsburgh Officer Michael Rosfeld is outlined in a criminal complaint that said the officer first told investigators that Antwon Rose Jr., 17, turned his hand toward him when he ran from the car and he "saw something dark he perceived as a gun."

During a second recap of the shooting, Rosfeld told investigators he did not see a gun and he was not sure if the teen's arm was pointed at him when he fired.

Rosfeld, 30, turned himself in Wednesday morning and was arraigned and released on \$250,000 bond. Rosfeld, who was sworn in just hours before the shooting but had been working at the police department for a couple of weeks, is scheduled to appear in court July 6.

The district attorney's office did not immediately return a call for comment, but released a statement saying the office argued against granting bail to Rosfeld because the charge carries a sentence of life in prison.

Attorneys representing Rose's family did not immediately return a request for comment on the charge. A funeral for Rose was held Monday.

Rosfeld pulled over the car Rose was a passenger in the night of June 19, about 15 minutes after reports of a drive-by shooting in

nearby North Braddock.

A 22-year-old man was shot in the abdomen in the drive-by and was treated at a hospital and released.

A witness described a car from that shooting that matched the one Rose was a passenger in. A bystander from a nearby home captured video of a portion of the stop and the shooting.

In the video, as Rosfeld is shown taking the driver of the car into custody the passenger doors can be seen opening and Rose and the other teen running from the car. The officer fires three shots.

Two guns were found in the car and an empty gun magazine was found in Rose's pocket, but investigators said Rose did not have a weapon when he was shot.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Squirrel on video takes doughnut from police

AK ANCHORAGE — Police in Anchorage were on the lookout for a squirrel that made off from their parking lot with a doughnut.

In a video posted on the department's Facebook page Sunday, the squirrel is seen with what appears to be a glazed doughnut clenched in its teeth as it runs through the lot.

The department called it "a straight-up felony" and added "it's rude."

New Zealand man shot entering teen's home

VA GOOCHLAND — A New Zealand man who traveled to the U.S. home of a 14-year-old girl he had communicated with online was shot by the girl's mother, a sheriff said Monday.

Troy George Skinner, 25, was shot Friday after he allegedly smashed a glass door and tried to enter the home in Goochland, said Goochland County Sheriff James Agnew. Agnew said Skinner bought a knife and duct tape after arriving in the U.S.

The sheriff said the girl's mother saw a man trying to enter her home, warned him several times she had a gun, then fired after he broke the glass on the second door he tried to open. Skinner was struck in the neck and remains hospitalized, police said.

Police: Man severed neighbor's fingertips

MN ST. CLOUD — A St. Cloud man is accused of severing two fingertips of a man who came to his front door last week.

Clarence Junior Hilliard Jr.,

67, appeared in Stearns County court Monday on two felony counts of assault with a dangerous weapon.

According to the criminal complaint, a neighbor told police he went to Hilliard's apartment Friday to give him cigarettes. The man told police he kept knocking after Hilliard told him to go away. The complaint says Hilliard opened the door, swung something at the man and cut off two of his fingertips.

The St. Cloud Times reported police found several weapons inside Hilliard's apartment, including a machete apparently with blood on it.

Activist arrested after chicken truck crash

WA BATTLE GROUND — An animal rights activist was arrested after taking hold of a chicken that was among the thousands being hauled by a truck that crashed.

The Columbian reported that the tractor-trailer landed on its side while trying to make a U-turn Monday afternoon near Battle Ground.

That caused more than 5,000 chickens in small cages that were headed for a Foster Farms processing plant to spill onto the road. It's unclear how many chickens died.

As traffic was blocked for hours for clean-up, about 30 animal rights activists showed up to the scene to protest. One woman was arrested because she picked up a chicken and refused to give it back, though she wasn't booked.

Zoo finds escaped parrot scared by blimp

NE OMAHA — A macaw that flew away from Omaha's zoo after apparently being spooked by the Goodyear

blimp was found in a nearby neighborhood.

The Omaha World-Herald reported the macaw, named Cayenne, was out during the zoo's Birds of Flight show Sunday morning when it was startled by the blimp drifting past. The bird flew out of an amphitheater and past the zoo's boundaries.

Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium staff sought the public's help, and on Monday morning a nearby resident tipped them off about the bird's whereabouts.

Snakes are found in pool noodles

AZ BUCKEYE — A fire department in metro Phoenix warned users of pool noodles to be on the lookout for snakes hiding inside the flotation devices.

The Buckeye Fire Department said it issued its warning after learning about a rattlesnake popping out of a pool noodle in a pool. The agency said the snake didn't attack anyone.

The fire department said there have been other reports of snakes hiding in pool noodles left outdoors near bushes and block walls.

Child finds gun, fires shot inside Ikea store

IN FISHERS — Police said a child fired a shot from a loaded handgun after finding it in a sofa at an Ikea store in suburban Indianapolis.

Fishers police said no one was injured from the gunshot.

Police Sgt. Tom Weger said the handgun's owner wasn't aware the weapon dropped from his pants when he sat on the sofa. The child later found the gun in the sofa cushions.

Weger said no arrests were immediately made.

Private island is going on the auction block

WV SMITHERS — A private island in West Virginia is going on the auction block next month.

News outlets reported the 17-acre Eastern Wheeler Island in the Kanawha River in Fayette County will be sold July 19 at Montgomery City Hall.

Demarcus Smith has owned the island since 1985. He bought it to restore a former World War II airstrip but had to abandon the work.

Civil War vet gets military headstone

SD ALEXANDRIA — A Civil War veteran has been honored with a military headstone on his grave in South Dakota more than a century after his death.

The Daily Republic reported that the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War held a remembrance ceremony for Cpl. Timothy Peters in Alexandria. Peters served as a corporal from 1861 to 1865 in a Wisconsin company. He died in 1906 and was buried without an official military headstone.

Boy bitten, 3 others are pursued by fox

NH MEREDITH — Police said a 3-year-old New Hampshire boy was bitten several times by a fox that also went after three others.

WMUR-TV reported the fox was fatally shot and was being tested for rabies.

The boy's mother in Meredith said he was bitten on his arm, hands, and foot on Saturday. An officer later said a fox had attacked him, and it ran after two other officers before it was shot.

From wire reports

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South Korea ousts Germany

Associated Press

KAZAN, Russia — Germany is out of the World Cup, the fourth defending champion in the last five tournaments to be eliminated in the group stage.

The four-time champions lost to South Korea 2-0 Wednesday, allowing a pair of injury-time goals while knowing a 1-0 victory would have been enough to advance because of the result in the other group match.

Germany ended up last in Group F while Sweden and Mexico advanced to the round of 16. South Korea was also eliminated despite the victory.

“It’s very, very hard to put it into words,” Germany defender Mats Hummels said. “We believed until the end today, even when it was 0-1, I think we kept trying to turn it all around.”

It was the first time Germany has been eliminated in the first round since 1938.

Kim Young-gwon scored the first goal in the third minute of injury time. Originally called out for offside, the goal was then given after video review.

Son Heung-min made it 2-0 in the sixth minute of stoppage

time after Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer came up the field to help his teammates outside the South Korea box. Son tapped the ball into an empty net after a long pass from Ju Se-jong.

Besides Germany this year, France in 2002, Italy in 2010 and Spain in 2014 were the previous defending champions to get eliminated in the group stage.

“We deserved to be eliminated,” Germany coach Joachim Loew said. “For us, this is a huge disappointment. But we have young players who are talented and have the potential to go forward. It happened to other nations before. We need to draw the right conclusions.”

All four teams in the group had a chance to advance in games that were being played simultaneously, but Sweden’s 3-0 lead over Mexico put Germany in prime position to move on as well -- if the Germans could score against the South Koreans.

That was the problem, for Germany.

Loew changed his line-up to mix youth with experience, calling back Hummels, Sami

Khedira and Mesut Ozil while also fielding Niklas Suele and new Bayern signing Leon Goretzka. Suele made his first World Cup appearance as a replacement for Jerome Boateng.

Germany made a nervous start, playing slower than it usually does to avoid being vulnerable on the break. But the strategy did not bring much success in the first half.

The Germans kept peppering the South Korea box with harmless crosses and it was their opponents that came close to scoring from a set piece in the 19th minute after Neuer failed to control a free kick from Jung Woo-young. The Germany keeper bobbled the ball and needed to swipe the rebound away from the attackers after a spectacular dive.

Germany had its first clear chance just after the interval when right back Joshua Kimmich was set-up on the edge of the box and crossed the ball for the unmarked Goretzka, whose header aimed at the far corner was denied by goalkeeper Jo Hyeon-woo with a one-handed diving save.

Sweden shuts out Mexico

Associated Press

YEKATERINBURG, Russia — Sweden dominated Mexico 3-0 to move on to the World Cup knockout round, and thanks to South Korea, Mexico also advances.

Ludwig Augustinsson volleyed a left-footed shot past goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa from close range five minutes into the second half, and captain Andreas Granqvist converted a penalty kick to help Sweden take control Wednesday and win Group F.

Despite the loss, Mexico also advances as runner-up in the group thanks to South Korea’s surprising 2-0 over defending champion Germany. Mexico has been to the round of 16 for seven straight World Cups. Sweden had not been to the knockout stage since 2006.

Mexico’s Edson Alvarez had an own goal in the 74th minute to put the game out of reach at 3-0.

As Sweden’s lead grew, Mexican fans paid more attention to the other game, rooting against Germany, which could have passed Mexico with a victory depending on tiebreakers.

El Tri’s faithful could be seen frantically checking their phones for scoring updates in Germany’s game soon after Sweden’s second goal. After South Korea’s first goal, they let up a loud cheer and tossed drinks in the air as their chances of advancing improved.

Great organization and some fortunate timing played out in the second half for Sweden, which successfully recovered from an emotional, last-minute loss to Germany in its second game.

Augustinsson scored when the ball luckily landed in his path following a mistimed shot from Viktor Claesson that popped up straight to his teammate.

For Granqvist it was his second goal from the spot in the tournament, after he also scored on a penalty kick against South Korea.

Messi helps Argentina avoid elimination

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — From his thigh to his foot to the back of the net, Lionel Messi finally scored a goal at this year’s World Cup.

The exquisite strike from the Argentina great sparked the first of several celebrations from an animated Diego Maradona, who screamed, shouted and made obscene gestures — and raised concerns for his health.

Argentina staved off elimination with a 2-1 victory over Nigeria on Tuesday, getting a late goal from Marcos Rojo. Maradona showed both middle fingers to the crowd after the 86th-minute winner.

A short time later, videos posted on social media showed Maradona needing help out of the stands and into an adjoining luxury box at the stadium. He appeared to have his eyes closed and a later photo showed a pair of paramedics attending to him.

There was no immediate information on his health, but about two hours later he was photographed smiling at an airport. Another photo posted on Twitter appeared to show him sitting on a plane.

Messi’s goal — his 65th for Argentina — was surely enough to impress even Maradona.

From a long pass over the defense by Ever Banega, Messi caressed the ball with his left thigh, took another touch with his left foot, and then delivered a smooth right-footed finish into the corner.

Messi fell to his knees and pointed his fingers upward in celebration. At the same time, Maradona crossed his arms with his hands on his shoulders and looked to the sky.

“I knew that God is with us,” Messi said, “and he wouldn’t let us get eliminated.”

Croatia 2, Iceland 1: Fielding a side filled with reserves, Croatia ended Iceland’s first ever World Cup run in Rostov-on-Don, Russia.

Milan Badelj crashed a volley against the bar, and moments later scored for Croatia in the 53rd minute, sprinting into the area to fire a bouncing shot past goalkeeper Hannes Halldorsson.

Croatia playmaker Luka Modric led the already qualified Croats for 65 minutes before being taken off, as his team remained in low-gear for most of the match to contain the Icelanders, who had needed a win to hope for a place in the last 16.

O'Ree, Brodeur head hockey HoF class

Associated Press

Willie O'Ree didn't know he had broken the NHL's color barrier when he made his debut in 1958. Martin Brodeur couldn't see the three Stanley Cup titles and jaw-dropping career ahead when he played his first game in goal for the New Jersey Devils in 1992 and, a year later, Gary Bettman didn't know he would end up growing the league by leaps and bounds over the next 25 years as its commissioner.

All three will go into the Hockey Hall of Fame together as the headliners of a trailblazing class of 2018 that also includes diminutive forward Martin St. Louis, four-time gold-medal-winning Canadian women's national team star Jayna Hefford and Russian Alexander Yakushev.

O'Ree was the first black player in the NHL, Bettman has overseen the league's expansion into a multibillion-dol-

lar industry and Brodeur piled up the most wins and shutouts of any goaltender in NHL history.

Bettman has been commissioner since 1993, during which time the NHL has expanded its presence across North America and increased from 24 to 31 teams. In that time, the league has gone from a \$437 million business to one with almost \$5 billion in revenue. It's been an occasionally bruising ride, with three work stoppages, including one that canceled the entire 2004-05 season and led to the salary cap. But Bettman has been nothing if not a strong leader, and all-time great Wayne Gretzky said the efforts to help each club compete have made the game stronger.

"His leadership and love for hockey is very evident," Gretzky said. "Hockey has become more entertaining year after year, thanks in part to his passion for the game."

Brodeur lifted the Stanley Cup three times with the Devils between 1995 and 2003. He leads all goalies with 691 wins and 125 shutouts in 1,266 regular-season games with the Devils and St. Louis Blues, and he won the Vezina Trophy four times. He won 113 playoff games and had a 2.02 post-season goals-against average. Brodeur also scored two regular-season goals and another in the playoffs — more than any other goalie.

While Brodeur and St. Louis were first-ballot selections, O'Ree had been waiting decades for this honor since making history at the Montreal Forum on Jan. 18, 1958, with the Boston Bruins. He was 32.

A native of Fredericton, New Brunswick, in Eastern Canada, O'Ree finished with four goals and 10 assists in 45 NHL games during the 1957-58 and 1960-61 seasons despite being 95 percent blind in his right eye. O'Ree was the first black play-

er in the NHL but he will be the third inducted into the Hall of Fame, joining Edmonton Oilers goalie Grant Fuhr and Canadian women's national team captain Angela James.

St. Louis was a 5-foot-8 winger who put up 1,033 points in 1,134 regular-season games over 17 seasons, winning the Cup with Tampa Bay in 2004 and an Olympic gold medal with Canada in 2014.

Hefford won four Olympic gold medals and seven world championships, putting up 30 points in 26 Olympic games. She said the honor was more emotional than some of her medals because she could share it with so many family members, friends and teammates.

Yakushev became known to North American hockey fans during the 1972 Summit Series between Canada and the Soviet Union, with 11 points in eight games. He also won Olympic gold medals in 1972 and 1976.

Arkansas tops Oregon State in CWS finals opener

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Arkansas didn't hit much against Luke Heimlich and Christian Chamberlain in Game 1 of the College World Series finals. In fact, the Razorbacks struck out 16 times.

Somehow, some way, they sit on the cusp of their first national championship in baseball after beating Oregon State 4-1 Tuesday night.

They capitalized against a faltering Heimlich in a four-run fifth inning, got a strong start from Blaine Knight with shutdown relief pitching and mixed in a few big defensive plays. That enabled the Razorbacks to win on a night when they mustered just five hits.

"I feel fortunate to win the game," Razorbacks coach Dave Van Horn said. "Baseball is a little different game sometimes, and you have eight innings where you don't do much

and you put together one inning. You pitch good enough and play defense, you can win. That's kind of what went on tonight."

The finals opener, delayed a day because of rain, seemed to have a little bit of everything — a fly ball lost in the sun that went for a ground-rule double, a runner interference call against Oregon State and an overturned foul call on a ball hit down the right-field line.

Nothing turned the game more than the sudden collapse of Heimlich.

"He started to lose it," OSU coach Pat Casey said. "He didn't throw the ball where he needed to. He'd been real good all year long, and certainly really struggled in that inning."

After failing to get out of the third inning in both of his previous CWS starts, the Beavers' ace was in full command while striking out five and limiting the Razorbacks (48-19) to one

hit through four innings.

In the fifth, though, the senior left-hander issued a walk and hit two batters.

"He lost command of his fastball a little bit and was out of the zone, so as hitters we're all just trying to be patient, see him in the zone, and he ended up also missing his spots a few times," Arkansas outfielder Heston Kjerstad said. "That equaled a few more runs for us."

Arkansas starter Blaine Knight (14-0) went back to the mound with a 4-1 lead, pitched another inning and left having allowed seven hits with six strikeouts. Barrett Loseke and Matt Cronin combined to pitch three scoreless innings of relief.

Michael Gretler's base hit in the second put Oregon State (53-12-1) up 1-0. The Beavers looked ready to add to the lead when Kjerstad lost Trevor Larnach's fly in the sun and it

bounced over the fence for a ground-rule double.

Adley Rutschman was on first and Larnach on third when Tyler Malone grounded to first and Jared Gates threw to second to start a double-play attempt. Rutschman ducked as he approached the bag — rather than sliding or peeling off away from the play — and was called for interfering with shortstop Jax Biggers. It was ruled a double play, Larnach was ordered back to third base, and Knight struck out Gretler to end the inning.

"It appeared Rutsch was doing everything he could to get out of the way," Casey said. "The ball left the guy's hand. They weren't near one another, so I don't agree with the call. We had that run taken off the board right there, so that makes it tough."

The play seemed to swing the momentum Arkansas' way.

MLB roundup

Carpenter, Cards chase Kluber in rout

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Matt Carpenter helped the St. Louis Cardinals beat two-time Cy Young Award winner Corey Kluber in a way no one has before, then he stuck around to make some history of his own.

Carpenter homered twice, matched a career best with five hits and helped chase Kluber in the shortest start of the right-hander's career in the Cardinals' 11-2 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday night.

Carpenter, who also scored a career-best five runs, is the 19th player ever with five hits, including two home runs, and five runs in a game. He's the first Cardinals player to do it.

"I don't know, that leaves me kind of speechless," said Carpenter, who also drove in three. "It's pretty cool. Wow, there's been some really good players come through here. You would have figured somebody would have put together a night better than that."

Kluber (11-4) allowed six runs in 1²/₃ innings and has lost two of his past three decisions. He gave up six hits, including homers to Carpenter and Jose Martinez, and walked one on 48 pitches.

Prior to Tuesday, Kluber's shortest start had been two innings against the Tampa Bay Rays in 2013. His previous low this year was a five-inning game on June 15 against Minnesota when he took his third loss of the season.

"He's human," manager Terry Francona said. "Don't think guys go 35 starts without having a bump in the road."

It was a far cry from his only other appearance against the Cardinals. He struck out a career-best 18 in a 2-0 victory on May 13, 2015.

Carlos Martinez (4-4) settled down after a rough first inning for his first victory since May 2. He had lost three straight decisions over his previous five starts. He went six innings, al-

lowing two runs, six hits and a walk while striking out eight.

St. Louis has won four straight after struggling through a 2-8 stretch. Cleveland entered the series on a seven-game winning streak before dropping the first two of this three-game set.

The Indians used three singles and a walk to take a 2-0 lead in the first but had only three more singles against Martinez and none after the starter was pulled.

Carpenter answered the Indians' fast start with his 14th home run.

Yankees 6, Phillies 0: Luis Severino became the majors' first 12-game winner, Aaron Hicks and Didi Gregorius homered and New York beat host Philadelphia.

Severino (12-2) struck out nine in seven dominant innings, lowering his ERA to 2.10. The ace has allowed three runs or less in 16 of 17 starts.

Rays 1, Nationals 0: Nathan Eovaldi took a no-hitter into the sixth inning before an unusual combination of relievers in the ninth completed a three-hitter as host Tampa Bay beat Max Scherzer and Washington.

Eovaldi (2-3) lost his no-hit bid when Bryce Harper hit an opposite-field double off the left-field wall with two outs in the sixth.

Scherzer (10-4) gave up one run, four hits, three walks and struck out four in seven innings.

Red Sox 9, Angels 1: Mookie Betts homered on John Lamb's first pitch of the game, and J.D. Martinez hit his major league-leading 24th home run to back David Price's six strong innings in Boston's rout of Los Angeles.

Cubs 9, Dodgers 4: Javier Baez hit two home runs, including a grand slam, Jon Lester won his sixth consecutive start and visiting Chicago ended a five-game losing streak.

Baez homered in consecutive innings, giving him 16 on the season, and finished with four hits.

Brewers 5, Royals 1: Freddy Peralta pitched one-hit ball over seven scoreless innings, Jesus Aguilar hit one of his team's three homers and host Milwaukee beat Kansas City.

Peralta (3-0) allowed a lead-off double in the third to Adalberto Mondesi and also allowed a walk in the second. The 22-year-old rookie was perfect otherwise, striking out 10 in his fourth major league start.

Padres 3, Rangers 2: Wil Myers and Hunter Renfroe hit run-scoring doubles in their team's three-run eighth inning, helping visiting San Diego rally past Texas.

Shin-Soo Choo singled with two outs in the ninth to extend his major league-leading streak of reaching base to 39 games before Brad Hand got Nomar Mazara to fly out with two runners on for his 22nd save.

Athletics 9, Tigers 7: Jed Lowrie drove in the tiebreaking run in the top of the ninth inning for a second straight game, and visiting Oakland rallied from six runs down to hand Detroit its seventh straight loss.

Detroit led 6-0 after three innings, but Oakland came back to tie it at 7-all in the seventh. Lowrie singled home Matt Joyce in the ninth for his fourth hit of the night.

Astros 7, Blue Jays 0: Charlie Morton struck out 13 in seven stellar innings, Jake Marisnick hit a three-run homer in the eighth after preserving the shutout with a big defensive play in the sixth.

Morton (10-1) scattered four hits and walked two for his third straight win to become host Houston's first 10-game winner.

Mariners 3, Orioles 2: Kyle Seager homered and hit a pivotal two-run single in the eighth inning to back a fine pitching performance by James Paxton and help Seattle beat host Baltimore.

Paxton (7-2) struck out 10 over seven innings, allowing two runs and six hits.

Mets 4, Pirates 3: Wilmer Flores singled home the winning run in the 10th inning and host New York stopped its seven-game losing streak, beating Pittsburgh hours after general manager Sandy Alderson stepped down because his cancer has returned.

Michael Conforto hit a tying homer and Flores had three RBIs for the Mets (32-45).

Reds 5, Braves 3: Matt Harvey pitched six-hit ball into the seventh inning, earning back-to-back wins for the first time this season and leading Cincinnati to a victory over host Atlanta.

Jesse Winker had three hits and two RBIs for last-place Cincinnati, which has won eight of nine. Scooter Gennett had two hits, including a run-scoring single in the ninth, and scored three times.

Diamondbacks 5, Marlins 3: John Ryan Murphy drove in three runs to help Arizona to a victory over host Miami.

Zack Godley (9-5) pitched five innings and allowed two runs and six hits for the Diamondbacks.

Giants 3, Rockies 2: Gorkys Hernandez drew a go-ahead, bases-loaded walk in the eighth inning after his earlier solo home run, and host San Francisco beat Colorado.

Tom Murphy doubled to start the ninth for the Rockies on a hit that sliding Hernandez couldn't secure in center field, and the ball kicked back toward the infield.

San Francisco left third base uncovered, but despite base coach Stu Cole wildly gesturing, Murphy never looked up and stopped at second.

DJ LeMahieu wound up grounding into a game-ending double play that was confirmed on replay.

White Sox 8, Twins 4: Yolmer Sanchez matched a career high with four RBIs, Avisail Garcia hit his first homer since returning from the disabled list last week and host Chicago came back to beat Minnesota.