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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Chinese flotilla sails between islands

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A Chinese aircraft carrier sailed between two islands belonging to Japan's Okinawa prefecture Tuesday morning, according to Japanese officials.

The carrier Liaoning was part of a six-ship flotilla that passed between Okinawa's main and Miyako islands as it made its way from the East China Sea to open ocean, a spokesman for Japan's Joint Staff told Stars and Stripes on Tuesday. The rules of his job do not allow him to be quoted by name.

Japanese officials would not say what time the ships passed between the islands; however, broadcaster NHK said it happened sometime in the morning.

‘[The Japan Coast Guard and Air Self-Defense Force] will remain calm and handle the situation professionally.’

spokesman for Japan's Joint Staff

The Liaoning did not enter Japan's territorial waters but did traverse its contiguous zone, which extends 24 miles from the edge of its territorial waters, the spokesman said. Japanese officials are monitoring the situation.

“[The Japan Coast Guard and Air Self-Defense Force] will remain calm and handle the situation professionally,” the

spokesman added.

The Liaoning last passed between the islands in December 2016, NHK reported.

Japanese officials have been increasingly concerned about Chinese encroachment as Beijing modernizes its military and becomes more assertive in the region. The number of jets Japan scrambled to intercept Chinese aircraft approaching its airspace rose 27.6% to 638 times in fiscal year 2018, according to the nation's Ministry of Defense.

China has two aircraft carriers. The Liaoning is a refurbished Soviet vessel, and the “Type 001A,” the country's first domestically produced carrier, has been conducting sea trials in recent months, according to multiple media outlets.

A third carrier is in the works, The Washington Post reported in November 2018.

4th man pleads guilty in NEX liquor resale case

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

A fourth man involved in the illegal sale of millions of dollars' worth of alcohol from the Mitchel Field Navy Exchange in New York has admitted to his role in the money-making kickback scheme.

Edwin D. Fragoso, 45, of Freeport, N.Y., pleaded guilty Friday in New York's Eastern District federal court to one count of conspiracy.

He paid nearly \$100,000 in bribes to an NEX employee in exchange for tax-free booze and resold the liquor for profit, according to a Justice Department statement.

Fragoso, along with two other men, were found to have given more than \$250,000 in cash to NEX supervisory sales associate Eric J. Jex, who sold them large quantities of liquor at a discount.

Adam Agaev and David Manasherov, both of Brooklyn, were tried separately from Fragoso.

They pleaded guilty to conspiracy in January and are awaiting sentencing, according to the U.S. Justice Department. Jex pleaded guilty to one count of bribery in August 2017.

Fragoso is scheduled to be sentenced in December.

The overall scheme involved more than \$6 million in alcohol purchases and began around November 2015, lasting for just over a year and appearing to give the Mitchel Field NEX's alcohol sales a big boost. In 2016, the store was the third-largest volume seller of liquor out of 226 retail stores worldwide run by Navy Exchange Service Command, according to court papers. In 2017, the store dropped to 20th in liquor sales.

For eligible personnel, such as servicemembers and Defense Department civilians, alcohol was a good deal at the Garden City, N.Y., exchange. Liquor sold there was not subject to state taxes, and retail prices were typically lower than those at similar stores open to the public, court papers said.

Fragoso, Agaev and Manasherov were not authorized to make purchases at the exchange. The men were described in Jex's indictment as an individual who possessed a New York state liquor license, an emergency medical technician and an unlicensed liquor reseller.

Jex sold Fragoso alone about \$1.3 million of NEX liquor at a discount of about \$426,000, according to Fragoso's indictment.

The purchases — all made

with cash — were recorded by a video camera at the exchange. Fragoso and Jex were also recorded loading liquor into Fragoso's van. They also exchanged numerous phone calls and texts.

Fragoso's indictment describes the kind of liquor he bought on two occasions. In October 2016, Jex texted Fragoso the names of liquors and numerals: “Ciroc 4 Berry 6 Peach 12 Pine 7 Apple 30.”

Two months later, Jex sold Fragoso 100 cases of Hennessy cognac for \$40,190. Fragoso, in exchange, gave Jex \$1,850 in cash, according to indictment papers.

Jex worked at the Exchange for nearly a decade.

He admitted to accepting more than \$250,000 in the liquor scheme, typically receiving \$5 to \$20 per case of liquor, according to court documents.

USAF general fired from Pentagon post

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Air Force's highest ranking female fighter pilot was removed from her job leading the Pentagon office responsible for overseeing some of the military's closest-held secret programs, defense officials said Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Dawn Dunlop was removed from her position as the director of the Defense Department's Special Access Programs Central Office on May 31 by Ellen Lord, the Pentagon's acquisition chief, according to the officials. The office, known as SAPCO, is responsible for oversight of the Pentagon's special access programs, which are highly classified projects that require security and safeguards beyond the scope of typical secret information.

"The department can confirm that as of May 31, 2019, Air Force Maj. Gen. Dawn Dunlop is no longer the director for the

Department's Special Access Programs Central Office," Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Andrews, a Pentagon spokesman, said in a statement. "The department will not provide any additional comments."

Andrews did say Dunlop had been moved to serve as a special assistant to Stephen Wilson, the Air Force's vice chief of staff.

A Pentagon official, who was not authorized to comment publicly on the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity, said Dunlop was the subject of a Defense Department inspector general probe. The official did not say what spawned the investigation, and an email seeking comment from the IG office was not immediately returned Tuesday.

It was not clear what prompted Dunlop's removal from the position that she had held since August, nor was it clear if it was directly related to an IG investigation.

But Dunlop was accused of fostering a "toxic work environment" in the office,

screaming at senior military officials and calling Army and Air Force leaders "idiots," according to Air Force Times, which cited unnamed officials.

Dunlop is among the most accomplished female fighter pilots in the Air Force's history. She was the first woman to become a fighter test pilot and the first to fly the F-22 Raptor stealth fighter jet. When Dunlop took command of the 412th Test Wing at Edwards Air Force Base in California in 2010, she became the first female commander of a test wing.

She served time working as the Air Force's chief liaison to the Senate and as a White House fellow.

Recently, Dunlop was featured alongside other female Air Force aviators in recruiting videos shown alongside the film "Captain Marvel," released in March, that featured Brie Larson in the role of the titular superhero, whose alter ego is an Air Force F-16 pilot.

Navy wraps up CARAT drills with Thailand

BY CHRISTIAN LOPEZ
Stars and Stripes

The United States recently concluded its 25th year of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, or CARAT, drills with the Royal Thai Navy.

The 11-day exercise — which wrapped up Saturday with a ceremony aboard the USS Anzietam at Sattahip Naval Base, Thailand — was the latest leg of this year's series of shore-based exchanges and operational drills with several Southeast Asian nations.

The Navy cut short the first round of CARAT exercises, in Sri Lanka, following a series of bombings April 21, Easter Sunday, at churches, public buildings and hotels that killed as many as 250 people and were blamed on Islamic terrorists. The exercise is expected to continue into the summer with stops in Brunei and Bangladesh.

The U.S. in 2014 suspended its participation with Thailand

in CARAT and scaled down another bilateral exercise, Cobra Gold, after a Thai military coup that year upended a democratically elected government and turned control over to a junta, according to The New York Times. The U.S. resumed the exercises with Thai forces the following year.

This year, more than a dozen ships and aircraft from the two navies took part in a wide range of at-sea and ashore training held throughout the exercise.

The shore leg included several symposiums and personnel exchanges focused on law, medicine, aviation, explosive ordnance disposal and maritime domain awareness, according to the statement.

Marines from the Darwin task force in Australia and their Thai counterparts participated in jungle survival training, and the U.S. Coast Guard conducted hands-on visit, board, search and seizure drills, the statement added.

Former chief of staff to Trump joins Navy

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Reince Priebus, President Donald Trump's former chief of staff, has officially joined the Navy.

At a commissioning ceremony Monday morning, Vice President Mike Pence swore in Priebus as an ensign, an entry-level officer. Priebus and his family also met with Trump at the White House after the ceremony.

Among those present for the ceremony were Republican Sen. Ron Johnson, Priebus' fellow Wisconsinite, and former White House press secretary Sean Spicer, a Navy Reserve commander.

"Wonderful day — honored to be able to serve! #GoNavy!" Priebus, 47, said in a tweet. Reached by phone, he declined to comment further.

Priebus' commissioning follows a lengthy process in which former defense secretary Jim Mattis recommended him and a board of officers selected him

as a reserve officer, according to defense officials and a memo obtained by The Washington Post late last year.

In a statement submitted to the Navy, Priebus wrote that he had proudly watched his sister serve as a Navy doctor and remembered his father teaching at Naval Station Great Lakes in Illinois when he was growing up.

He added that he especially felt called to serve after an Oval Office meeting in which Trump met with the wife and children of Senior Chief Petty Officer William "Ryan" Owens, a Navy SEAL who was killed early in the administration in a Special Operations raid in Yemen.

A Navy review board reviewed 42 candidates last December and "professionally recommended" Priebus and four others to join the service through a competitive direct commission program for human resources officers, the memo said.

Airman chases career in pro wrestling

BY MATTHEW KEELER

Stars and Stripes

KUNSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — During the past year, Tech. Sgt. Gregory Gauntt has established an alter ego as one of the most despised characters in South Korea.

That's Ryan Oshun, the persona that Gauntt, 33, adopts when he steps into the ring as the Pro Wrestling Society heavyweight champion. The noncommissioned officer in charge of fuels knowledge for Kunsan's 8th Logistics Readiness Squadron calls Oshun "the guy you wouldn't want to ever bring home to your mother, but the guy you want to be around because it would be

super cool."

Before Gauntt started his yearlong stint in South Korea, he contacted Korea-based Pro Wrestling Society promoters and worked his way into their shows.

He hopes the momentum he's built establishing fans and enemies in Korea will continue when he returns to the States next month.

"I hope wrestling in Korea will boost my resume because I am now an international champion," he said. "Maybe the stock behind my name is more, and I have more credibility now that I have traveled outside the U.S."

Gauntt on June 2 performed in Goyang, a city just northwest

of Seoul, in a World Wrestling Association tag-team event with Masakado, his Japanese teammate. The pair lost their bout to the WWA World Tag Team Champions, Kim Jong Wang and Hong Sang Jin.

Gauntt said he knew he wanted to be a wrestler as a child watching the professionals on television. Hollywood Hulk Hogan was his favorite throughout the 1990s.

"The journey stemmed from being a kid and seeing larger-than-life characters on television, the definition of what I thought a man is," he said. "Being the biggest and the best, battling it out, even if it's on a stage, putting on a show that draws eyes and attention.

It's appealing to me."

Gauntt began training with River City Wrestling in San Antonio in July 2012 while stationed at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland as a military training instructor. Just two months later, he got his break at a routine training session when another wrestler was injured and unable to perform for an upcoming show.

A promoter from River City Wrestling then approached Gauntt and offered him the opportunity to introduce Ryan Oshun to audiences.

"Since then I have literally had, at minimum, one match every month, outside of my deployment to the Middle East," he said.

Iraq War veteran to receive Medal of Honor for 2004 actions

The Buffalo News

On Nov. 10, 2004, Army Staff Sgt. David Bellavia marked his 29th birthday in the dusty streets of Fallujah, Iraq.

By the end of the day, he had engaged in hand-to-hand combat with some of the enemy's toughest fighters. Five of them died. He prevailed.

Now, Bellavia will become the first living recipient of the Medal of Honor from the Iraq War.

The veterans' advocate, author, former congressional candidate and talk radio co-host from Albion, N.Y., will become the 3,469th American awarded the nation's highest military decoration.

Bellavia described the Fallujah encounter in his critically acclaimed book, "House to House — an Epic Memoir of War." It was published by Simon and Schuster in 2007 as the war in Iraq raged.

He recounted his men waging urban warfare and house-to-house searches as the enemy rained fire upon them. He told of killing four men that day, only to wrestle with a fifth in a vicious knife battle, culminating with Bellavia thrusting the weapon into the insurgent's neck.

"I was slamming him with my Kevlar helmet and my bulletproof vest plate. I kept telling him to shut up. His handgun went off, and I found my blade and hit his collarbone and neck," he recalled. "I put pressure on his carotid artery. In the book, I called this 'Satan's version of CPR.'"

He discovered that even the worst of war can produce the unexpected as the dying man used his last seconds to reach up and caress the side of Bellavia's face.

"Why did he touch me like that at the end?" he asked in 2007. "He was forgiving me."

The Associated Press reported that President Donald Trump will present the Medal of Honor to Bellavia on June 25.

As news broke late Friday while co-hosting his "Bauerle and Bellavia Show" on WBEN Radio, Bellavia reserved any comment until the official White House announcement. He told partner Tom Bauerle on the air that the valor associated with the medal, whether exhibited by him or others, stems from love of country, the military and fellow soldiers.

"That's the building block of anything you do in a combat zone," he said. "That love makes you do things you would not ordinarily do. I am super proud of that part of my life."

Bellavia, 43, told The Buffalo News last month he feels no overwhelming need to reenter politics but would not discount the possibility. It might also prove difficult for him to resist any effort by Trump and his allies to entice him into a race he has waged once before.

The son of a Lyndonville dentist and part of a devout Christian family, Bellavia was a theater major at the University at Buffalo before joining the Army in 1999.

Navy awards contract for presidential helicopters

Stars and Stripes

The White House will get its first new helicopters in decades.

The Navy awarded Sikorsky Aircraft Corp. a \$542 million contract to deliver six VH-92A helicopters by 2021 as the first phase in replacing the aging presidential fleet of 19 helicopters.

Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin subsidiary, will build 23 helicopters by 2023 to ferry the president, vice president and other heads of state, according to a statement Monday.

Each helicopter is referred to as Marine One while carrying the president. Dubbed "white tops," they are flown by pilots in Marine Helicopter Squadron One.

The Navy awarded Sikorsky an initial \$1.24 billion contract in 2014 for six test choppers. The company has built presidential helicopters since the Eisenhower administration.

N. Korea urges US to withdraw 'hostile policy'

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea called on the United States to “withdraw its hostile policy” on Tuesday as nuclear talks between the two adversaries remain deadlocked a year after the historic first summit between leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump.

It was the latest such statement published on state-run media as the North signals growing frustration over U.S. refusal to agree to a reciprocal approach that includes rewards such as sanctions relief for steps toward disarmament.

“The arrogant and unilateral U.S. policy will never work on the DPRK, which values sovereignty,” the Korean Central News Agency reported, using the initials for the North’s official name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

It warned the four-point summit statement signed by Trump and Kim after their June 12, 2018, meeting in Singapore was in danger of “being a blank sheet of paper because the U.S. is turning a blind eye to its implementation.”

“Now is the time for the U.S. to withdraw its hostile policy concerning the DPRK,” it

added.

The comments came as Trump plans to travel to Seoul later this month to meet with South Korean President Moon Jae-in to try to get the talks back on track.

Moon, who has staked his legacy on establishing peace with the North, expressed optimism on Monday.

“I believe that we will be able to resume dialogue between the two Koreas and between the U.S. and North Korea in the near future,” he said during a joint press conference with his Finnish counterpart during a trip to Helsinki.

Iceland’s rift over NATO sidelined in talks

BY JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

NATO’s top official in Iceland on Tuesday downplayed worries about a potential rift with the small Arctic Council nation, whose leader has expressed interest in quitting the alliance.

“In democracies, there are different views and different positions on many things,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters. “What I know is there are different views in Iceland when it comes to NATO.”

Stoltenberg, who arrived for talks on security in the High North, was speaking alongside Iceland Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir, a socialist who has said her country should withdraw from NATO.

For the U.S.-led alliance, Iceland is a key strategic ally even though it doesn’t have

a military of its own. Allies routinely conduct maritime surveillance from an Icelandic base, where NATO tracks Russian military movements in the north Atlantic and Arctic.

“Your strategic location in the Atlantic helps to bind North America and Europe together,” Stoltenberg said.

The Arctic has emerged as a high-profile security issue for the U.S. and NATO. The concerns stem from melting ice that will eventually open long-closed sea lanes, and a Russian military buildup in the region that could exploit the situation. China also is looking to gain a foothold in the Arctic in what U.S. European Command officials have called an “economic charm offensive.”

Adm. James Foggo, head of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, said last month that the Arctic “presents a new challenge for

freedom of the seas.”

Russian forces have reoccupied seven former Soviet bases in the Arctic Circle and built other new bases in the region, Foggo said.

“They have renewed their capabilities in the North Atlantic and are aggressively extending their reach in the Arctic,” Foggo said in a command podcast. “The improved capability of Russia to project power into this region, from the Northern Sea Route to the Greenland-Iceland-UK Gap, is something that we must pay particular attention to.”

In the case of Iceland, its strategic location has been important for NATO dating to the Cold War, when U.S. troops were based there. The country also played a large role in hosting allied forces in 2018 when NATO held one of its largest exercises since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Helo crashes on roof of NYC skyscraper; pilot killed

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A helicopter crashed on the roof of a rain-shrouded midtown Manhattan skyscraper Monday, killing the pilot and briefly triggering memories of 9/11, after an erratic trip across some of the nation’s most restricted airspace. Authorities said they did not suspect terrorism.

The crash near Times Square and Trump Tower shook the 750-foot AXA Equitable building, sparked a fire and forced office workers to flee on elevators and down stairs, witnesses and officials said.

The pilot was the only person aboard, and there were no other reports of injuries, authorities said.

It was not immediately clear what caused

the crash, or why the Agusta A109E was flying in a driving downpour with low cloud cover and in the tightly controlled airspace of midtown Manhattan. A flight restriction in effect since President Donald Trump took office bans aircraft from flying below 3,000 feet within a 1-mile radius of Trump Tower, which is less than a half-mile from the crash site.

“There’s something mysterious here,” Mayor Bill de Blasio told CNN, saying officials were scrutinizing video of a “very erratic” flight and authorities needed to find out more about the pilot at the time he decided to take off.

One lawmaker called for “non-essential” helicopter flights over Manhattan to be banned.

The pilot, identified by his employer as Tim McCormack, was a former fire chief in upstate Clinton, N.Y. With 15 years of experience flying helicopters and single-engine airplanes, he was certified as a flight instructor last year, according to Federal Aviation Administration records.

The helicopter went down about 11 minutes after taking off from a heliport along the East River, a little more than a mile away. Police Commissioner James O’Neill said it may have been returning to its home airport in Linden, N.J.

The director at Linden Municipal Airport, Paul Dudley, described McCormack, 58, as “a highly seasoned” and “very well regarded” pilot who was a regular at the airfield.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Couple raising 10 yaks on their farm

SD RAPID CITY — A Rapid City-area farmstead is raising animals more accustomed to the cold, high-altitude areas of Tibet and central Asia.

The Rapid City Journal reported that Julie and Jim Smoragiewicz are raising 10 yaks at their Pennington County business, Yak Ridge Cabins and Farmstead.

Julie Smoragiewicz said the yaks enjoy climbing the Black Hills, where they can cool down in creeks and under trees. The animals may get too hot in other areas of South Dakota.

TV show helps police solve old murder case

FL FORT MYERS — Florida authorities said they made an arrest in a 3-year-old Valentine's Day murder case.

Heyzel Obando's body was discovered in her apartment on Feb. 14 three years ago.

Fort Myers Police said they worked closely with the TV series "Cold Justice" and the state attorney's office to track down Earl Antonio Joiner, 33. He was arrested Saturday in Lake Wales and charged with second degree murder.

Black bear retrieved from tree in a yard

PA HARRISBURG — Authorities said a black bear found in midtown Harrisburg, about a mile from the state Capitol, was captured and will be relocated.

Emergency broadcasts indicated a few sightings Saturday before the young male climbed a tree in a yard.

Officer Jeff Kawich, of the

Pennsylvania Game Commission, said bears make their way into Harrisburg two to three times a year, most often in early summer. He said the 100-pound animal is a year or so old and probably left his mother only recently.

The bear was tranquilized. Officials plan to locate him about 100 miles north in the mountains,

Man stabbed with machete at NYC deli

NY NEW YORK — Police are searching for a man who plunged a machete into the shoulder of a Manhattan deli employee during an argument.

The 35-year-old victim was treated at a hospital after the attack Saturday morning at the Liberty Bagel & Deli on Ninth Avenue in an area locals call Hell's Kitchen.

Authorities said the attacker dropped the machete and fled.

The name of the victim was not immediately released. Police said his injury was not life-threatening.

Judge orders group to return gorilla to zoo

OH CINCINNATI — A federal judge has again ordered a California group to return a male silver-back gorilla to the Ohio zoo where he was born.

U.S. District Judge Richard Seeborg ruled Friday in San Francisco that northern California's Gorilla Foundation must transfer Ndume, 37, to the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden on Thursday.

Zoo officials sought to bring Ndume home after Koko, the gorilla famed for learning sign language, died last June and left Ndume by himself. He was loaned to the foundation in

1991 to be Koko's companion with the proviso he'd return to Cincinnati after her death.

The foundation argued as late as last week the transfer would harm Ndume. Zoo officials, animal rights groups and Seeborg disagreed.

9 injured when subway car derails in tunnel

MA BOSTON — A subway car derailed in Boston, sending nine people to the hospital.

Local emergency officials said none of the injuries was life-threatening.

Officials with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority said the accident occurred about 11 a.m. Saturday when a Green Line subway car derailed in a tunnel near Kenmore Square.

Emergency workers said they were told by witnesses that everything went dark and they were thrown around the train car. The cause of the derailment is under investigation.

Some grave markers matched to veterans

GA AUGUSTA — The Richmond County Coroner's Office has made progress in matching the military grave markers that were discovered at an old funeral home.

Coroner Mark Bowen said the majority are for veterans who have been buried locally.

The National Cemetery Administration, the Richmond County Vital Records Office and Richmond County Cemetery Services are also assisting in finding the graves of the veterans whose names are inscribed on the markers.

About 125 bronze and marble markers were found. They date to the late 1960s.

The Augusta Chronicle reported that a deputy discovered the markers in packages under old blankets and trash in the home's garage

Police: Woman tried to poison ex-husband

DE WILMINGTON — A Delaware woman accused of taking her daughter out of state despite a court order now also faces charges she tried to poison her ex-husband with a tainted milkshake.

The News Journal of Wilmington reported Jessica Ewing, 40, of Dover was charged Friday after police said she adulterated the milkshake with what she thought was a homemade dose of the poison ricin.

Court documents said Ewing told her daughter, 8, to urge her father to drink the concoction. Police said Ewing and Michael Funes were in a custody dispute.

Ewing was charged previously with interfering with child custody after collecting her daughter from her Wyoming school last month and visiting relatives in Pennsylvania.

Whoopie pies stolen at fairgrounds booth

ME SKOWHEGAN — Vandals trashed a fairgrounds booth in Maine, stealing 120 whoopie pies and drinking half a gallon of iced tea.

John Youney, a director of the Skowhegan Lions Club, told the Morning Sentinel that a refrigerator full of cookies was also emptied and that plastic gloves and silverware littered the floor.

Youney said there was about \$1,000 worth of damage or stolen goods.

From wire reports

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Warriors edge Raptors to stay alive

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Golden State Warriors aren't letting go of the NBA title just yet.

With Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson shooting and Draymond Green swatting, the champions found a way to win even after a gut-wrenching loss.

Curry scored 31 points, Thompson added 26 and they led a season-saving surge long after Kevin Durant was injured again to give the Warriors a 106-105 victory over the Toronto Raptors on Monday night in Game 5 of the NBA Finals.

Devastated by the loss of Durant, the All-Stars that the Warriors had left made sure there was celebration along with their sadness, pulling out what Green thought had to be the greatest win during their run to five straight NBA Finals.

"When you're down six with a couple minutes to go in an elimination for these guys to win a championship, we could have thrown in the towel. We could have folded, but we didn't," Green said. "I said it before: I've never seen this group fold. And that stands true still."

Curry and Thompson, nicknamed the Splash Brothers, combined for three straight

three-pointers in the closing minutes after Toronto had taken a six-point lead with under 3½ minutes remaining in front of a raucous, red-shirted crowd.

"Even going down six with three minutes left, their ball, we didn't panic," Thompson said. "We just do what we do."

The Warriors lost Durant barely a quarter after getting him back but cut Toronto's lead to 3-2 and sending the series back to Oracle Arena for Game 6 on Thursday.

Kawhi Leonard scored 26 points for the Raptors but couldn't get the final shot, which went to Kyle Lowry and was blocked by Green.

The two-time defending champion Warriors were minutes away from their title reign ending, having lost Durant and a 14-point lead during an emotionally exhausting game. They had controlled Leonard for three quarters, but he scored 10 straight Toronto points in the fourth and the Raptors were close to their first championship.

But even after everything the Warriors had lost, they still had two of the best perimeter shooters in the world on the floor. Thompson hit a three, and Curry followed with one to

tie it at 103. Golden State got it back to Thompson and the Raptors lost sight of him just long enough for the tiebreaking shot with 57 seconds to go.

Toronto cut it to one when Kyle Lowry was credited with a basket and the Raptors got a final chance when DeMarcus Cousins was called for an illegal screen. Leonard had the ball but the Warriors forced him to pass and it ended up in the corner to Lowry, but Green sprinted over to get a hand on his shot as the buzzer sounded.

"He got a piece of it, that's what great defenders do," Lowry said. "He got a piece of it and we'll continue to look at it and see how we can be better for the next game."

Cousins had 14 points for the Warriors and Green finished with 10 points, 10 rebounds and eight assists.

Golden State is the only team to lose a 3-1 lead in the NBA Finals, when Cleveland came back to win in 2016.

Now the Warriors have a chance to pull off the feat themselves, but it became more difficult after Durant limped off in the second quarter after he had missed the previous nine games with a strained right calf.

"We understand the moment and I think we can rally, considering how the second half went tonight," Curry said.

Durant, the two-time NBA Finals MVP, was attempting to dribble past Serge Ibaka early in the second quarter when he suddenly came to a stop, lost the ball and limped sideways before grabbing at his lower right calf as he fell to the court.

The Warriors were initially OK without Durant because Cousins — who returned from injury himself in this series — came off the bench to score their next seven points before feeding Green for a layup that gave them a 48-37 lead. It got as high as 13 on Curry's four-point play, and Golden State led 62-56 at halftime.

Lowry had 18 points and Marc Gasol scored 17 for the Raptors, who were trying to give Canada its first championship in one of the traditional major sports since the Blue Jays won the World Series in 1993.

"We had a chance to win a championship tonight and we didn't do it," guard Fred VanVleet said. "We didn't play well enough, we didn't execute enough down the stretch and that stings a little bit."

Golden State fears Durant tore his Achilles

Associated Press

TORONTO — Golden State forward Kevin Durant has an injured right Achilles, a massive blow for the perennial All-Star and two-time NBA Finals MVP who may be three weeks away from free agency and could also be facing a long rehabilitation process.

Warriors general manager Bob Myers was teary when he gave the news after Game 5 of the NBA Finals on Monday night. An MRI was to be performed Tuesday to determine the severity, but Durant's season is clearly over and his recovery will likely take several months if the Achilles is indeed torn.

"He's one of the most misunderstood people," Myers said. "He's a good teammate, he's a good person, it's not fair. I'm lucky to know him. I don't have all the in-

formation on what really the extent of what it all means until we get a MRI, but the people that worked with him and cleared him are good people, they're good people."

Myers said Durant's first injury of this postseason was a calf injury, as the Warriors have insisted throughout. Myers also said that he is willing to accept the blame for the decision to play Durant in Game 5.

Golden State won 106-105, cutting Toronto's lead in the NBA Finals to 3-2.

"I don't believe there's anybody to blame, but I understand in this world and if you have to, you can blame me," Myers said. "I run our basketball operations department. And to tell you something about Kevin Durant, Kevin Durant loves to play basketball, and the people that questioned whether he wanted to get back to this team were wrong."

Durant got hurt on a dribble on the right

wing, coming up lame on a crossover move and falling to the floor. He grabbed the back of his leg, appeared to grab below the calf and more toward the Achilles area, and needed help to limp to the bench area and more help to get back to the Warriors' locker room.

"It's a bizarre feeling that we all have right now," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "An incredible win and a horrible loss at the same time."

Durant had 11 points in 12 minutes, making all three of his three-point attempts. He started and played the first six minutes, then had the lower leg wrapped with a heating pad to keep it loose before he returned about three minutes later.

When the injury happened, a number of NBA players reacted on Twitter quickly to the sound of some Toronto fans cheering when Durant got hurt.

Roundup

Argentina earns first-ever WWC point

Associated Press

PARIS — At the final whistle of their Women's World Cup opener, Argentina's players dropped to their knees as if they'd won the entire tournament.

They didn't even win the game.

But for the first time ever, they didn't lose, either.

Argentina played to a 0-0 draw against Japan to earn its first ever point at the World Cup. Argentina lost its previous six World Cup matches in 2003 and 2007, and missed the 2011 and 2015 tournaments.

For a nation that loves the game and worships its globally successful men's team, the draw against Japan can be as good as a win. Argentina had been outscored 33-2 in six previous World Cup games.

"I think we can really inspire people a lot," said midfielder Estefania Banini. "We can also start a new process."

Argentina wants far more than points at the World Cup. The bigger goal is to touch more hearts and minds back home.

"For women's football in Argentina it is great that we are starting to flourish," Argentina coach Carlos Borrello said. "We are starting on our way and just starting to face up to these powerful forces in football."

Borrello said he hopes for a push for equality between the men's and women's games — and also across Argentinian society as a whole.

"We have started getting support now from the Argentinean football federation for the team. It's true that results help a lot, and this will definitely help and reinforce all the work," he said. "It will help us to continue on the great path. We have to also strengthen the grassroots of our game."

Things are changing in Argentina.

Previous concerns about a lack of uniforms and inadequate training conditions have been addressed, two years after players went on strike because stipends went unpaid. A movement for equality pushed the country's soccer association into giving professional

status to the national women's league. This coincided with the country's feminist movement taking to the streets with marches against violence and inequality.

Both national teams are in action this month — and maybe next month if they go far — with the men at the Copa America.

Before their respective departures, the two teams met.

Sharing a table were two No. 10's — Banini and five-time Golden Ball winner Lionel Messi, among the all-time greats of the game.

"We were together with Messi and the whole team, the men's and the women's teams," Borrello said. "We had a meal together before we left and were able to exchange together."

Netherlands 1, New Zealand 0: At Le Havre, France, Jill Roord came off the bench and scored in stoppage time to give the Netherlands a victory over New Zealand in the Group E opener for both teams.

The Netherlands, ranked No. 8 in the world, controlled possession throughout the game

but couldn't get by New Zealand goalkeeper Erin Nayler until Roord's breakthrough header.

The tough loss after a strong defensive effort means 19th-ranked New Zealand is still looking for its first-ever World Cup victory.

Canada 1, Cameroon 0: Kadeisha Buchanan scored the lone goal at the end of the first half and Canada held on to defeat Cameroon in the Women's World Cup on Monday night in Montpellier, France.

Buchanan charged into the box on a corner kick and her header bounced into the goal.

Christine Sinclair, who is four goals away from becoming the sport's all-time international top scorer, had a free kick blocked and cleared away in the 51st minute, and she had another good chance in the closing minutes.

Sinclair sits at 181 goals, trailing only former U.S. forward Abby Wambach, who had 184 goals in international competition to set the record among men and women.

Auburn, Arkansas give SEC four teams in CWS

Associated Press

The Southeastern Conference flexed its baseball muscles Monday, with Auburn and Arkansas posting blowout wins in the deciding games of their super regionals and giving their league a record-tying four teams in the College World Series.

Auburn scored 13 runs in the top of the first inning to start a 14-7 win over host North Carolina, sending the Tigers to the CWS in Omaha, Neb., for the first time since 1997.

Arkansas, the national runner-up last year, scored seven runs over the second and third innings on its way to a 14-1 home win over Mississippi.

The Razorbacks are heading to Omaha for the 10th time, and sixth since 2004 under coach Dave Van Horn.

The SEC's Vanderbilt and Mississippi State clinched bids Sunday. The conference also sent four teams to the CWS in 1997, 2004 and 2015; the Atlantic Coast Conference had four teams in Omaha in 2006.

This will be the first year since 2009 all eight teams are from different states, with no California schools making it for the second straight year and only the 11th time in the event's 73 years.

The CWS opens this weekend at TD Ameritrade Park with double-elimination play in two four-team brackets. Bracket

winner meet in the best-of-three finals beginning June 24.

First-round games Saturday match Michigan (46-20) against No. 8 national seed Texas Tech (44-18) and Florida State (41-21) vs. No. 5 Arkansas (46-18). Sunday's openers pit No. 7 Louisville (49-16) against No. 2 Vanderbilt (54-11) and No. 6 Mississippi State (51-13) vs. Auburn (38-26).

Auburn's 13-run first marked the second-most runs by a team in an inning in NCAA Tournament history. North Carolina starter Joey Lancellotti was pulled after walking the first four batters. Three relievers followed, and by the time it was over the Tigers had turned nine hits, five walks and an error

into their biggest inning of the season.

Auburn became the first team to defeat the Tar Heels in a super regional in Chapel Hill. North Carolina had advanced to Omaha in each of the six previous super regionals it hosted.

Judd Ward, Rankin Woley and Edouard Julien had three hits apiece, and the Tigers finished with a total of 18. Aaron Sabato homered twice and drove in three runs for the Tar Heels.

Arkansas' Heston Kjerstad and Casey Opitz each homered and finished with three hits, and Trevor Ezell also had three hits. Cody Scroggins pitched 4¹/₃ scoreless innings of relief and struck out eight.

D-backs, Phillies set record with 13 HRs

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Arizona Diamondbacks got to play Home Run Derby in Philly.

The Diamondbacks hit three straight home runs to open the game and finished with a team-record eight in a 13-8 win over the Philadelphia Phillies in a homer-happy game on Monday night.

Scott Kingery hit two of Philadelphia's five home runs for the combined MLB record of 13 homers in one game.

On most nights, five would be enough to win a game. But not this one in steamy Philly, where

the Diamondbacks turned their at-bats into extended batting practice. Jarrod Dyson, Ketel Marte and David Peralta hit the dinger, tater and long ball all in a row off Jerad Eickhoff in the first inning to get the record romp rolling.

"With the way we've been swinging the bats, you never know," Dyson said. "We're just trying to keep that going."

The Diamondbacks kept it going, going, gone. Eduardo Escobar became the first Diamondback to homer from different sides of the plate in consecutive innings. Ildemaro Vargas also homered twice,

Alex Avila went deep and the Diamondbacks made the Citizens Bank Park outfield seats the place to be for a souvenir.

Well, at least for the fans who wanted one — an angry Phillie fanatic hurled one homer back on the field.

Eickhoff (3-4) allowed two more two-run homers before he was chased in the fourth inning and the Diamondbacks up 7-3. The Diamondbacks hit two more homers for a team-record seven in a game and added another to set the new mark at eight.

Eickhoff allowed five hits in three-plus innings — all the

hits homers, and Arizona won its fifth straight game.

"Home runs happen. Solo home runs happen. What I get frustrated with is the free passes then the home runs," Eickhoff said. "The multi-run home runs, those are the ones that kill you. The solos, I could care less about."

Dyson hit the first pitch of the game to right field for his fourth homer of the season. Marte followed with his 16th home run on a drive to right. Peralta finished the long-ball barrage when he went deep to center for his ninth homer following a 30-minute rain delay.

MLB roundup

Donaldson, Musgrove tossed in Bucs' loss to Braves

Associated Press

ATLANTA — The Atlanta Braves stayed hot by hitting five home runs on a night a first-inning, stare-down contest created the biggest stir.

Ronald Acuna Jr. hit a grand slam, Ozzie Albies added two homers and the Braves beat Pittsburgh 13-7 on Monday night after Pirates starter Joe Musgrove was ejected in a first-inning fracas.

The Braves hit five homers, including two-run shots by Nick Markakis and Freddie Freeman. Markakis had four hits and drove in four runs.

Starling Marte hit two homers and drove in four runs for Pittsburgh.

Atlanta has won four straight, while the Pirates are on a four-game skid.

Musgrove hit Josh Donaldson with a first-inning pitch. As Donaldson began walking to first base, he exchanged glares with Musgrove, took a few steps toward the mound and then shoved catcher Elias Diaz, who intervened. The umpires huddled and announced ejections for Musgrove and Donaldson.

Pirates manager Clint Hurdle also was ejected by home plate umpire Brian Gorman

after arguing the decision to toss Musgrove.

Musgrove's pitch only grazed Donaldson's jersey, but players from both dugouts and bullpens charged onto the field following the confrontation as Musgrove took off his cap and removed his glove. No punches were thrown and the field was quickly cleared.

Donaldson said he wasn't "really all that upset at all about getting hit by the pitch. It barely clipped me." He said he responded to an aggressive reaction by Musgrove.

"I feel like he came down the mound afterward," Donaldson said. "I looked away to try to give him a chance to look away from me. He kept coming down the mound and looking at me and obviously he had a problem with something."

Musgrove said he "did nothing more than stand my ground."

Musgrove said Donaldson "stared at me and tried to intimidate me and I'm not going to let that happen. I looked back at him and he had something to say and he crossed the line and came at me so I took my hat and glove off and got ready to fight and that got me tossed. I don't

know what else I could do in that situation. ... I'm not going to run away and hide."

Rangers 4, Red Sox 3 (11): Danny Santana doubled to lead off the 11th inning for his fourth hit of the game and scored on Elvis Andrus' single, giving visiting Texas a victory on a night the city of Boston's concerns were focused on ex-sluggler David Ortiz.

Near the end of the game, Ortiz landed in his adopted city in an air ambulance from the Dominican Republic, where he was shot in a nightclub on Sunday night. Fans observed a moment of reflection before the game and chanted his nickname — "Papi!" — during it.

It was the Rangers who rallied from a 2-1 deficit in the ninth inning to take a 3-2 lead. Boston rallied to tie it in the bottom half, but Texas went ahead again in the 11th.

Cardinals 4, Marlins 1: Michael Wacha pitched six scoreless innings in his return to the rotation and visiting St. Louis broke a three-game losing streak.

Rays 6, Athletics 2: Charlie Morton remained unbeaten with host Tampa Bay, pitching seven shutout innings in a win

over Oakland.

Nationals 12, White Sox 1: Trea Turner homered in the second straight game, Anibal Sanchez pitched into the seventh and Washington beat host Chicago.

The game had a scary moment when a woman was struck by a foul ball off the bat of White Sox outfielder Eloy Jimenez. He hit a hard liner into the stands in the fourth inning just beyond Chicago's dugout on the third-base side. The woman, sitting several rows from the field, was bleeding around the head area, and was covered with a towel. The team said she was taken to a hospital for evaluation.

Rockies 6, Cubs 5: Ryan McMahon had a go-ahead RBI single in the eighth inning, and host Colorado rallied for the win.

Angels 5, Dodgers 3: Mike Trout hit a tying two-run homer in the seventh, and Shohei Ohtani slid home from third with the tiebreaking run in the eighth inning of the Angels' comeback victory.

The Angels rallied against the Dodgers' bullpen to win the Freeway Series opener at sold-out Angel Stadium.