

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

US says video shows Iran removing mine

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. military on Friday released a video it said shows Iran's Revolutionary Guard removing an unexploded limpet mine from one of the oil tankers targeted near the Strait of Hormuz, suggesting the Islamic Republic sought to remove evidence of its involvement from the scene. Iran denies being involved, accusing the U.S. instead of waging an "Iranophobic campaign" against it.

The U.S. Navy rushed to assist the stricken vessels in the Gulf of Oman, off the coast of Iran, including one that was set ablaze Thursday by an explosion.

The ships' operators offered no immediate explanation on who or what caused the damage against the Norwegian-

owned MT Front Altair and the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous. Each was loaded with petroleum products, and the Front Altair burned for hours, sending up a column of thick, black smoke.

While Iran has denied being involved in the attack, Tehran previously used mines against oil tankers in 1987 and 1988 in the "Tanker War," when the U.S. Navy escorted ships through the region.

The black-and-white footage, as well as still photographs released by the U.S. military's Central Command on Friday, appeared to show the limpet mine on the Kokuka Courageous.

A Revolutionary Guard patrol boat pulled alongside the ship and removed the mine, Central Command spokesman Capt. Bill Urban said.

"The U.S. and the international community stand ready to defend our interests, including the freedom of navigation," Urban said. "The United States has no interest in engaging in a new conflict in the Middle East. However, we will defend our interests."

Iran earlier denied involvement via a statement from its mission to the United Nations.

President Donald Trump countered that Iran was "a nation of terror." "Iran did do it," Trump said of the attack, in remarks Friday morning to "Fox & Friends." Trump also warned Iran not to close off the strait, saying if it does so, it won't be shut for long.

Meanwhile, in Tokyo, the owner of the Kokuka Courageous said its sailors saw "flying objects" before the attack, suggesting it wasn't damaged by mines. Company Presi-

dent Yutaka Katada offered no evidence for his claim, which contradicts the U.S. military account. Katada also said crew members saw an Iranian naval ship nearby but did not specify whether this was before or after the attacks.

The suspected attacks occurred at dawn Thursday about 25 miles off the southern coast of Iran. The Front Altair, loaded with the flammable hydrocarbon mixture naphtha from the United Arab Emirates, radioed for help as it caught fire. A short time later, the Kokuka Courageous, loaded with methanol from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, also called for help.

The U.S. Navy sent a destroyer, the USS Bainbridge, to assist, said Cmdr. Joshua Frey, a 5th Fleet spokesman. He described the ships as being hit in a "reported attack," without elaborating.

House defense bill shines spotlight on partisan divide

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — House Democrats steered the first defense bill they have controlled in almost a decade through its final committee test without incident early Thursday, but the fights that broke out along the way presage steep partisan hurdles for negotiations with the GOP-led Senate.

The House Armed Services Committee voted 33 to 24 to advance its \$733 billion plan to the full House — a marked departure from previous years, when lawmakers have squabbled over provisions but ultimately joined hands across party lines to endorse their final product.

Republicans voted against the measure after a 21-hour working session — which fea-

tured, but did not settle, a heated debate over the prospect of conflict with Iran. Early Thursday, after huddling outside the committee room to discuss their strategy, almost all GOP members present voted no. Only Reps. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y., and Don Bacon, R-Neb., sided with the Democrats to support the bill.

"I hope that this bill improves from everybody's standpoint as it moves through the process. And I'll leave it there," the committee's ranking member, Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said just before the final vote.

The parties split over several provisions related to funding construction at the southern border, investing in nuclear weapons and allowing for the

transfer of detainees from the U.S. military detention facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Republicans failed to increase the bill's authorization from \$733 billion to \$750 billion, the size of companion legislation approved last month by the Senate Armed Services Committee. They also attempted unsuccessfully to strip bans on using or moving federal funds for border wall construction.

Democrats blocked efforts to insert provisions seeking to expand investment in and deployment of nuclear weapons, including one amendment to allow low-yield nuclear weapons on submarines.

The Senate's bill does permit deployment of the low-yield nukes on submarines and au-

thorizes replenishing some of the money President Donald Trump siphoned from military construction projects to pay for the border wall.

Republicans sought unsuccessfully to bar Guantanamo detainees from being transferred into the United States and to add certain Central American countries to the list of locations where accused terrorists may not be relocated. But the legislation is silent on other foreign policy fights, such as the president's recent emergency declaration to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates over congressional objections, or Democrats' fears that Trump's escalating standoff with Iran may result in war.

Hospital ship begins 5-month mission

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort began on Friday a five-month medical assistance mission in 11 countries of the Americas affected by Venezuela's humanitarian crisis.

Capt. B.J. Diebold, the mission commander, said the goal of the \$34 million operation will be "addressing all our partner nation needs," so it will not focus exclusively on the Venezuelan crisis.

Almost 200 military medical professionals, 100 health providers from nongovernmental groups and 13 providers from five other countries will offer services.

The ship will provide six clinical days

during stops in Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago.

Capt. Kevin Buckley, commanding officer of the Military Treatment Facility, said the team expects to see at least 500 cases a day at each stop, though weather and transportation of the patients could affect the final figures.

Buckley said the health ministries in each of the countries are vetting the patients who will receive care. Most will involve low-risk surgeries such as cataract, laparoscopic cholecystectomy (to remove the gallbladder) and hernia repairs.

The ship will also provide care by dentists and optometrists.

Vice President Mike Pence announced the mission last month.

The USNS Comfort's tour in the region last fall provided medical assistance in Colombia and several other countries where most of the Venezuelan migrants have settled to escape their homeland's crisis.

More than 4 million Venezuelans have fled in recent years, and Trump administration officials have warned that an additional 2 million are expected to flee by the end of the year if the crisis continues in the once-prosperous nation.

Eglin winds down its Turkish F-35 training

Northwest Florida Daily News

EGLIN Air Force Base, Fla. — The 33rd Fighter Wing is winding down its F-35 Lightning II fighter jet maintenance training for Turkish students as Turkey, a longtime NATO ally, pursues the purchase of a Russian-made surface-to-air missile system.

According to U.S. defense officials, procuring the Russian S-400 missile system while also operating the F-35 would mean that Turkey could gain insights into how the missile system tracks the fifth-generation stealth fighter jet.

"The S-400 is incompatible with the F-35," Under Secretary of Defense Ellen M. Lord said in a recent news briefing on a letter from Acting Secretary of Defense Pat Shanahan to Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar. The letter notified Akar that if the Turkish government continues to work to acquire the S-400, U.S. training of Turkish personnel on piloting and maintaining the F-35 will stop by July 31.

While defense officials indicated the decision to halt F-35 training could be reversed if

Turkey halts its pursuit of the Russian missile system, Lord said in the news briefing that for the immediate future, "we need to begin unwinding Turkey's participation in the F-35 program."

While Eglin Air Force Base does train F-35 pilots, it does not train Turkish student pilots, said Lt. Savannah Stephens, public affairs officer for the 33rd Fighter Wing. All Turkish F-35 pilots are trained at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., where Brig. Gen. Todd Canterbury, commander of the 56th Fighter Wing, already has halted training of Turkish personnel.

At Eglin, maintenance training is limited to the jet's engine, and that training is done on mock-ups and on computers, according to Stephens.

"They're not actually touching an F-35," said Stephens, who added that there is no classified component to any of the work done by the Turkish maintenance students.

The current round of F-35 maintenance training at Eglin already was scheduled to end a few days before the July 31 deadline, Stephens said.

Veteran will be 1st woman to lead an infantry division

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Brig. Gen. Laura Yeager joined the Army with the same intentions as many — she needed money for college. She surprised herself with how much she loved the work, and now, 33 years later, she will be the first woman to command an Army infantry division.

"To me this is just my next assignment, but I understand it's a milestone," Yeager said Thursday during a phone interview from Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, Calif., where on June 29 she will take command of the California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division.

"I'm hoping the novelty of the situation will fall away and we can focus on doing the work," she said, noting she was also the first woman to hold her previous assignment as the commander of Joint Task Force North, U.S. Northern Command at Fort Bliss, Texas. In that instance, she said the noteworthiness of her leadership never really came up.

Despite Yeager's preference to take command again without fanfare about her gender, she

said she is taking the opportunity of the spotlight to share her story as a way to encourage men and women to join the military.

The daughter of a Vietnam War veteran, Yeager began her active-duty military service in May 1986.

In 2011, she deployed to Iraq as the deputy commander of the California Guard's 40th Combat Aviation Brigade.

"I was so fulfilled by the work we were doing. You train many years to do a job, and you finally get to do it. It's a very satisfying feeling," Yeager said, also noting the challenge on all servicemembers to spend a year away from home.

She later commanded the brigade.

"All of those assignments along the way prepared me to do this division command," Yeager said. "I just would like to highlight how much the military values diversity, inclusion and equality. My assignment to this position highlights that commitment."

Soldiers of the 112-year-old 40th Infantry Division have fought in World War I, World War II and the Korean War.

Trump bashed on foreign intrusion issue

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's assertion that he would be open to accepting a foreign power's help in his 2020 campaign ricocheted through Washington on Thursday, with Democrats condemning it as a call for further election interference and Republicans struggling to defend his comments.

Trump seemed to dismiss the threat posed by Russia's interference in the 2016 election, one that led to sweeping indictments by special counsel Robert Mueller, and his incendiary remarks come as congressional investigations into the meddling have quickened.

Asked by ABC News what he would do if Russia or another country offered him dirt on his election opponent, Trump said:

"I think I'd want to hear it." He added that he'd have no obligation to call the FBI. "There's nothing wrong with listening."

The Democratic denunciations were swift and overwhelming.

"It's a very sad thing that he doesn't know his right from wrong," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Thursday. "It's an invasion of our democracy. Everybody in the country should be totally appalled by what the president said."

It was an apparent walkback Friday, Trump said he would go to the FBI or the attorney general if a foreign power offered him dirt about an opponent. In an interview with "Fox & Friends," Trump said he would "of course" look at the information in order to determine whether or not it was "in-

correct." But he added that, "of course you give it to the FBI or report it to the attorney general or somebody like that."

"This man has so little moral compass that he doesn't understand that taking help from any foreign government during a political campaign is an assault on our democracy," said Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, top Democrat on the Senate's intelligence committee.

Democratic presidential contender Joe Biden tweeted: "President Trump is once again welcoming foreign interference in our elections. This isn't about politics. It is a threat to our national security. An American President should not seek their aid and abet those who seek to undermine democracy."

For some Democrats, it all sparked fresh calls for im-

peachment. Announcing his support for starting such an inquiry, Rep. Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., said, "We must stop this lawless president from tearing down our democracy."

On Thursday, the House Intelligence Committee subpoenaed former White House national security adviser Michael Flynn and former Trump campaign aide Rick Gates as part of its ongoing probe.

Congressional Republicans, usually loath to criticize Trump, struggled to strike a balance between condemning foreign interference and avoiding harsh words about the president. "If a foreign agent or a cutout for a foreign agent approaches any American politician, they should report that to the FBI," said Sen. Marco Rubio, of Florida.

Watchdog urges Trump to fire White House counselor

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Taking unprecedented action, a federal watchdog agency recommended Thursday that President Donald Trump fire one of his most ardent defenders, counselor Kellyanne Conway, for repeatedly violating a law that limits political activity by government workers.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel, which is unrelated to special counsel Robert Mueller's office, said in a letter to Trump that Conway has been a "repeat offender" of the Hatch Act by disparaging Democratic presidential candidates while speaking in her official capacity during television interviews and on social media.

In response, Trump said he won't fire Conway. He told "Fox & Friends" that he was briefed on the investigation Thursday and "it looks to me like they're trying to take away her right of free speech, and that's just not fair."

Federal law prohibits em-

ployees of the executive branch from using their official authority or influence to affect the result of an election.

The agency does not have the authority to fire Conway, who was appointed by Trump, so it would be up to the president to follow its recommendation and dismiss one of his most unwavering defenders. Conway is known for her fiery television appearances in support of the president and his policies. She helped him win election in 2016 as his campaign manager.

The recommendation to fire Conway is the first time the watchdog office has recommended the removal of a White House official over Hatch Act violations.

Special Counsel Henry Kerner's letter to Trump states: "Ms. Conway's violations, if left unpunished, send a message to all federal employees that they need not abide by the Hatch Act's restrictions. Her actions erode the principal foundation of our democratic system — the rule of law."

Sanders returning to Ark., leaving White House job

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — White House press secretary Sarah Sanders, whose tenure was marked by a breakdown in regular press briefings and questions about the administration's credibility, as well as her own, will leave her post at the end of the month, President Donald Trump announced.

Trump said Thursday he's encouraging her to run for governor when she returns home to Arkansas, where her father once held the job.

Sanders is one of Trump's closest and most trusted White House aides and one of the few remaining who worked on his campaign, taking on the job of advocating for and defending a president who had his own unconventional ideas about how to conduct the people's business.

At an unrelated White House event, Trump described Sanders as a "warrior" as he called her to the stage. Sanders, appearing emotional, said serving Trump has been "the honor

of a lifetime" and pledged to remain one of his "most outspoken and loyal supporters."

Sanders, who is married and has three young children, later told reporters she wanted to spend more time with her family, but she did not rule out running for public office.

She was the first working mother and just the third woman to be named White House press secretary.

Under her roughly two-year tenure as chief spokeswoman for the White House, daily televised briefings led by the press secretary became a relic of the past after Sanders repeatedly sparred with reporters who aggressively questioned her about administration policy, the investigation into possible coordination between Trump's campaign and Russia or any number of controversies involving the White House.

Behind the scenes, Sanders worked to develop relationships with reporters, earning the respect and trust of many of those on the beat.

NY ends religious exemption for vaccines

Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. — New York eliminated the religious exemption to vaccine requirements for schoolchildren Thursday, as the nation's worst measles outbreak in decades prompts states to reconsider giving parents ways to opt out of immunization rules.

The Democrat-led Senate and Assembly voted Thursday to repeal the exemption, which allows parents to cite religious beliefs to forego getting their child the vaccines required for school enrollment.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, signed the measure minutes after the final vote. The law takes effect immediately

but will give unvaccinated students up to 30 days after they enter a school to show they've had the first dose of each required immunization.

With New York's move, similar exemptions are still allowed in 45 states, though lawmakers in several of them have introduced their own legislation to eliminate the waiver.

The issue is hotly contested and debate around it has often been emotional, pitting cries that religious freedom is being curtailed against warnings that public health is being endangered.

The debate has only intensified with this year's measles outbreak, which federal officials recently said has sur-

passed 1,000 illnesses, the highest in 27 years.

"I'm not aware of anything in the Torah, the Bible, the Koran or anything else that suggests you should not get vaccinated," said Bronx Democrat Jeffrey Dinowitz, the bill's Assembly sponsor. "If you choose to not vaccinate your child, therefore potentially endangering other children ... then you're the one choosing not to send your children to school."

Hundreds of parents of unvaccinated children gathered at New York's Capitol for the vote to protest.

Stan Yung, a Long Island attorney and father, said his Russian Orthodox religious views and health concerns about vac-

cines will prevent him from vaccinating his three young children. His family, he said, may consider leaving the state.

"People came to this country to get away from exactly this kind of stuff," Yung said ahead of Thursday's votes.

Supporters also suggest some parents may be claiming the religious exemption for their children even though their opposition is actually based on scientifically discredited claims about the dangers of vaccines.

The bill would not change an existing state exemption given to children who cannot have vaccines for medical reasons, such as a weakened immune system.

Mississippi River levels drop; still chance of flooding

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — The Mississippi River is dropping below flood stage along many of Iowa's riverfront cities after nearly three months of record highs caused by melting snow and torrential rain.

The river dropped below flood stage at Guttenberg, Iowa, early Tuesday, and was more than half a foot under flood stage Thursday morning at one Dubuque gauge. The river was above flood stage at Dubuque for a record 85 days, breaking the old mark of 34 days set in 2011, according to the Na-

tional Weather Service.

The river remained around 2.5 feet above flood stage at Davenport, where floodwaters surged into downtown after a barrier failed April 30.

Levels of the Missouri River, which flows into the Mississippi near St. Louis, have dropped some but are expected to remain high for much of the summer.

Several Midwestern rivers have flooded periodically since March, causing billions of dollars of damage to farmland, homes and businesses.

While the Mississippi is dropping now,

"it could come right back up if we get a bunch of rain," said Jamie Gamerding, who owns a hotel, a fishing barge, a bait shop and rents out boats in Guttenberg. He erected concrete walls to protect his businesses.

The Missouri River dropped below flood stage Thursday in Omaha but remains well above in several southeast Nebraska and southwest Iowa spots.

More flooding is possible in places protected by levees that were damaged in March because few have been repaired.

First Democratic debate lineup set at 20 candidates

Associated Press

The Democratic National Committee has announced that 20 candidates have qualified for the party's first presidential debates later this month.

Montana Gov. Steve Bullock and U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton of Massachusetts were the only major candidates out of the two dozen Democratic hopefuls who failed to meet the polling or grassroots fundraising measures required to get a debate spot. Two lesser-known candidates, former Sen. Mike Gravel

of Alaska and Miramar, Fla., Mayor Wayne Messam, also missed the cutoff, announced Thursday.

U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet of Colorado and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, who recently had been on the bubble, both made the debate based on polling measures.

The campaign's opening debates, set for June 26-27 in Miami, will offer a prime opportunity for many White House hopefuls to reshape a race defined in recent weeks by former Vice President Joe

Biden's domination of national and many early state polls.

An NBC News drawing Friday will divide the large field between the first and second debate night. Party officials have promised to weight the drawing with the intention of ensuring that top tier and lagging candidates are spread roughly evenly over the two nights.

Those assignments will determine the debate strategies for many campaigns. Candidates will have to decide whether to go after front-runners such as

Biden, challenge others in the pack or stand out by remaining above the fray. They must also decide how much to focus on President Donald Trump.

Some candidates have criticized the debate-qualifying rules that the party chairman, Tom Perez, set this year. The polling and fundraising thresholds will remain the same for the July debates over two nights in Detroit.

The polling and fundraising marks will double for the third and fourth debates in September and October.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Feds: Suspect, 81, wanted back in prison

AZ PHOENIX — An man with a decadeslong criminal record for stealing from banks said he robbed a Tucson credit union after his release from prison because his monthly \$800 Social Security payment wasn't enough to live.

Robert Krebs, 81, told FBI agents that he didn't wear a disguise to the 2018 robbery because he "kind of wanted to get caught" and return to prison.

Krebs served more than 30 years for a 1981 bank robbery in Florida and was sentenced to three years for a 1966 conviction in Chicago for embezzling \$72,000 from a bank.

He did 17 years in Arizona for convictions dating back to 1980.

Endangered hornbill chick welcomed at zoo

FL MELBOURNE — A zoo is welcoming a wrinkled hornbill chick.

In a news release, Brevard Zoo officials said the baby bird that hatched April 12 emerged from its nest on June 8.

The chick is the fifth offspring of Morticia and Gomez, both of whom are about 26 years old.

The zoo's director of animal programs, Michelle Smurl, said the chick "offers a glimmer of hope" for the wrinkled hornbill species which is decreasing.

The wrinkled hornbill is native to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand and is considered endangered due to habitat loss.

Woman killed over parking space dispute

PA PHILADELPHIA — Authorities said

a dispute over a parking spot in Philadelphia ended with a woman being fatally stabbed.

The dispute occurred around 9:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Authorities said two women were arguing over the parking space when one stabbed the other twice in the chest. The victim, 27, died a short time later.

The alleged assailant fled the scene on foot but was captured a few blocks away.

Airport may welcome non-ticketed visitors

TX AUSTIN — Austin-Bergstrom International Airport officials are considering opening the airport's terminals to non-ticketed visitors who want to access the facility's food, beverage and retail offerings.

The Austin American-Statesman reported that the Airport Advisory Commission on Tuesday mulled over the idea of welcoming non-ticketed visitors as long as they pass through security.

Airport spokesman Bryce Dubee said officials are in the early stages of evaluating the proposal. He said passenger safety is the airport's priority.

City to end law that banned saggy pants

LA SHREVEPORT — The city of Shreveport, La., has moved to abolish a 2007 ordinance banning people from wearing pants below their waistline.

The Shreveport Times reported the City Council voted 6-1 Tuesday to abolish the law. Police data show it resulted in the arrests of a total of 699 black men and 12 white men.

The law has been questioned since Anthony Childs, 31, died in February after an officer

tried to stop him for sagging pants.

The ordinance said arrests and searches couldn't solely be based on violating the ordinance. Police Chief Ben Raymond said it's unclear if anybody was arrested for the violation alone.

Snake causes power outage for 3,900

WY SHERIDAN — A large bull snake caused a power outage in northern Wyoming that affected about 3,900 electric customers.

Montana-Dakota Utilities spokesman Mark Hanson said the power outage occurred about 12:15 p.m. Tuesday when the snake tripped a transformer.

Hanson said the outage included parts of the city of Sheridan and surrounding communities, including Dayton and Ranchester.

Most customers had power restored within a couple of hours.

Museum to display rare 13-star flags

PA PHILADELPHIA — Dozens of rare 13-star American flags never before exhibited will be on display at the Museum of the American Revolution.

Antique flag dealer and expert Jeff Bridgman has loaned the historic flags to the Philadelphia museum for display starting Friday, which was Flag Day.

The flags feature 32 arrangements of 13 stars representing the 13 original Colonies. There was no official pattern for the stars until 1912. Flag makers had previously arranged the stars however they wanted.

A highlight of the display is a nearly 6-foot flag that features

13 stars that roughly form the letters "U" and "S."

Fisherman reels in record-breaking fish

KS PRETTY PRAIRIE — A fisherman has reeled in a record-breaking, 66-pound bigmouth buffalo at a Kansas reservoir.

The Wichita Eagle reported that Trey Patterson, from Cheney, caught the 45.75 inch fish on June 8 while out with his father and brother-in-law on the east side of Refuge Point at the Cheney Reservoir.

When he first felt a bite on his line, Patterson said he thought he had a big wiper fish because that's what they had been fishing for and that type of fish is known to fight back. He said it took about 25 minutes to reel it in.

It weighed 4 pounds more than the previous record-holder caught in 2016 in Milford Reservoir.

Hotels may face penalty for 911 calls

GA ROSWELL — A Georgia city could begin penalizing hotels that burden police with an outsized number of calls for help.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported a hotel safety ordinance was proposed for Roswell on Tuesday by councilman Mike Palermo.

The newspaper said most of the calls involved drug use and prostitution. The proposed bill would punish these hotels by dividing 911 calls by the number of rooms and charging offenders accordingly.

It would require a 100-room hotel making 42 calls for police service in a year to hire an off-duty police officer nightly for \$90,000 a year.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Raptors win 1st championship

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Kawhi Leonard raised his arms high in triumph and celebrated Canada's first NBA championship.

"We the North!" is now "We the Champs!"

Leonard and the Toronto Raptors captured the country's first major title in 26 years with their most remarkable road win yet in the franchise's NBA Finals debut, outlasting the battered and depleted two-time defending champion Golden State Warriors 114-110 on Thursday night in a Game 6 for the ages.

"I wanted to make history here. That's what I did," a soaking wet Leonard said, ski goggles perched on his forehead and sporting a fresh black champions hat.

Stephen Curry missed a contested three-point shot in the waning moments before Golden State called a timeout it didn't have, giving Leonard a technical free throw with 0.9 seconds left to seal it. Leonard, the NBA Finals MVP for a second time, then got behind Andre Iguodala for a layup as the buzzer sounded, but it went to review and the basket was called off before Leonard's two free throws. That only delayed the celebration for a moment.

When it actually ended, the typically stoic Leonard could let it all out. A Canadian team — and we're not talking hockey here — stood on top of one of the traditional major sports leagues for the first time since the Toronto Blue Jays won

the 1993 World Series.

Serge Ibaka pulled his head up through the hoop by the Golden State bench as the crowd chanted "Warriors! Warriors!" after a sensational send-off at Oracle Arena.

Curry walked away slowly, hands on his head on a night teammate Klay Thompson suffered a torn ACL in his left knee and departed with 30 points.

Fred VanVleet rescued the Raptors down the stretch with his shooting from deep, scoring 22 points with five threes off the bench, while Leonard wound up with 22 points. Kyle Lowry scored the game's first eight points and finished with 26 in all to go with 10 assists and seven rebounds.

This thrilling back-and-forth game featured 18 lead changes, nine ties and neither team going ahead by more than nine points.

Curry scored 21 points but shot just 6-for-17 and went 3-for-11 on threes. Iguodala added 22 for his biggest game this postseason as the Warriors did everything until the very last moment to leave a lasting legacy at Oracle.

Curry and these Warriors never, ever count themselves out. Yet down 3-1 in their fifth straight NBA Finals, they didn't have the health it took to win the past two titles and three of the past four against LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

"This five-year run's been awesome but I definitely don't think it's over," Curry said.

Thompson tears ACL in Game 6 loss

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Klay Thompson sustained a torn ACL in his left knee during Game 6 of the NBA Finals, more heartbreaking injury news for the Golden State Warriors after Kevin Durant ruptured his right Achilles tendon and had surgery.

Thompson injured the knee late in the third quarter of Golden State's 114-110 loss to the Raptors on Thursday night as Toronto won Canada's first NBA title. Durant had surgery a day earlier after he was injured during Game 5, when he returned from more than a month out with a strained right calf.

"It's just tough in terms of a guy like Klay that left it all out there," Stephen Curry said after the game. "He was playing amazing tonight. And to see a freak play like that where he lands awkwardly. ... It's really not about what it means in terms of playing basketball. It's just I'm more concerned about him as an individual."

Thompson was fouled by Danny Green on a drive to the basket with 2:22 remaining in the third quarter. He was helped to the locker room area, then came back out to shoot the free throws. He checked out three seconds later, finishing with 30 points, and left the arena on crutches.

"He might be the toughest guy I've ever seen in my life," center Kevon Looney said. "I know he was in a lot of pain when he went down. I've never seen him scream or show emotion like that, so I knew he was hurt. He's a tough guy and came back and made the free throws."

The All-Star shooting guard had missed Golden State's 123-109 loss in Game 3 with a sore left hamstring.

Golden State missed out on a three-peat playing in its fifth straight NBA Finals, having won three of the previous four championships.

Leonard caps return with 2nd Finals MVP

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Kawhi Leonard's first season with the Toronto Raptors started with his now-infamous laugh.

It ended with him getting the last laugh.

The best player on the league's newly crowned best team is an NBA Finals MVP for the second time. Toronto finally sits atop the basketball universe, with Leonard averaging 28.5 points in a six-game finals victory over the Golden State Warriors to lead the Raptors to their first championship.

He arguably ended any debate about who the best two-way player in the sport is at this moment.

"This is what I play basketball for," Leonard said. "This is what I work out for."

The King of the North, as they've been calling Leonard in Toronto, was King of the Playoffs. He's the third player to win

Finals MVP with two franchises, joining only Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and LeBron James.

"I think he's the best two-way basketball player in the NBA," Raptors guard Kyle Lowry said. "He just goes. You know, I've seen some stuff from him this year that you just say, 'Wow.' You do. You say, 'Wow.' You appreciate the work that he's put in. He works extremely hard at his game and works extremely hard on his body. And he loves this basketball thing. Loves it."

Perhaps never more so than Thursday night.

After missing most of last season with a leg injury, after having his commitment questioned, after getting traded to Toronto, Leonard returned to basketball's mountaintop. He thrust both arms high into the air when it was over, letting out a scream of joy. He even allowed himself a tiny smile when

he hoisted the MVP trophy.

"He's just a competitor," Warriors guard Stephen Curry said. "We respect that, for sure. He's shown that again this entire playoff run."

Giannis Antetokounmpo will probably win the NBA's MVP award in a couple of weeks. James Harden and Paul George are the other finalists. And while all three of those players had marvelous regular seasons, the postseason was Leonard's personal showcase.

He scored 732 points in the playoffs. Only Michael Jordan (759) and LeBron James (748) ever scored more in a single postseason. Leonard finished with 14 games of 30 points or more in these playoffs. The only players with more in a single postseason are Jordan (16 in 1992), Hakeem Olajuwon (16 in 1995) and Kobe Bryant (15 in 2009).

Rose ties course record for US Open

Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Justin Rose was watching on TV when Rickie Fowler missed a putt that would've tied a U.S. Open record.

Six hours later, Rose got his own chance for the mark and made it count. But he and everyone else who tore up Pebble Beach on Thursday left the course knowing it couldn't be this easy all week.

On a soft, gentle and cloudy afternoon on the Monterey Peninsula, Rose played alongside Tiger Woods, then shot 6-under 65 to match a record set by Woods himself, back in 2000, for the best U.S. Open score at Pebble.

"You can't help but look over your shoulder, and damn, this is Pebble Beach," Rose said after finishing with three birdies to tie the record. "Shot 65 and

you're in the U.S. Open. Whatever transpires the rest of the week, it was a cool moment."

Virtually nobody, however, figures this will last.

The USGA, under pressure to make the course playable while still delivering the toughest test in golf, didn't set things up to be all that hard for the opening round, keeping its options open for a weekend with forecasts much like Thursday: calm winds, clouds and highs in the low-60s.

"All this golf course needs is just a little tweak here and there, and it can play a lot more difficult," Rory McIlroy said after a 3-under 68. "So while the conditions are this benign and the golf course is still sort of soft and slow, you need to take advantage of it, and thankfully I did today."

So did Fowler, Xander Schauffele, Louis Oosthuizen

and Aaron Wise, all in a group at 5 under.

Woods struggled all day with full shots but one-putted 11 greens to finish at 1 under and stay in the hunt.

"Very pleased to shoot under par today," Woods said.

Brooks Koepka, trying to become only the second player to win three straight U.S. Opens, shot a 2-under 69, punctuated by a par after hitting his tee shot onto the cart path on No. 18, getting the ball 5 feet away for a birdie putt, but watching it slide beneath the hole.

"I try to find some positive, even when something negative happens," Koepka said. "Eighteen. How lucky was that?"

Phil Mickelson dug himself a hole, hitting the ball well enough to hit 13 greens in regulation, but needing 32 putts on the way to a 72. He missed one from less than 2 feet on the

third hole — "I flinched," he explained — and walked away feeling good about his game but not so good about his score.

"I think this is the best I've ever seen, and I'm sure it will get progressively more difficult," Mickelson said. "But this was a chance to get a few under par, and I just didn't quite do it."

Before Rose got to the course for an afternoon round, Scott Piercy spent ample time at the top of the leaderboard. In the second group of the day, he opened with three birdies and an eagle over the first six holes — all but getting on a bullhorn to tell those still on the driving range, or in their hotel rooms, that there were good scores to be had.

The players got the message. Good chance the folks who set up the course did, too.

Women's World Cup roundup

Aussies rally from 2-0 hole to beat Brazil on own goal

Associated Press

MONTPELLIER, France — An own goal gave Australia a come-from-behind 3-2 victory over Brazil at the Women's World Cup, even after Marta added a record 16th career tournament goal.

Marta, who sat out Brazil's opening game with a left thigh injury, became the first player to score in five different World Cups when she converted a penalty kick in the 27th minute of Thursday's game.

Cristiane scored a header to put the Brazilians up 2-0. Caitlin Foord scored before the break to pull Australia within one.

Chloe Logarzo's shot from distance in the 58th minute tied it and then Australia went ahead on the own goal, an error by Monica that snapped the stalemate in the 66th minute. Sam Kerr appeared to be offside but the goal was awarded

after video review, and the Brazilians fumed.

Australia, just the second team to win a World Cup match after going down two goals, needed a good game after dropping its opener 2-1 to Italy. Brazil won its tournament opener against Jamaica 3-0 on Cristiane's hat trick.

It was the first loss in the group stage for the Brazilians since 1995, snapping a 16-match unbeaten streak.

Brazil's Formiga, the oldest player in the tournament at 41, collected her second yellow card during the match. She will have to sit out the final group match against Italy.

American Abby Wambach and Germany's Birgit Prinz rank behind Marta on the World Cup goals list with 14 each.

Japan 2, Scotland 1: At Rennes, France, Mana Iwabuchi had an early goal and then Japan held off a late charge from Scotland for a 2-1 vic-

tory on Friday at the Women's World Cup.

Iwabuchi, who was on the Japanese team that won the World Cup in 2011, scored in the 23rd minute to give Japan its first goal of the tournament. Yuika Sugawara converted a penalty in the 37th minute to pad the lead going into the break.

Lana Clelland's left-footed shot went into the top right corner of the net in the 87th minute as Scotland furiously worked to break through Japan's defense.

Japan played to a scoreless draw against Argentina in its opener and needed the confidence-boosting win with Wednesday's final group match against England looming.

Scotland has now dropped both of its matches so far in France, after opening with a 2-1 loss to England. The team will play Argentina in its group-stage final.

Italy 5, Jamaica 0: At Reims,

France, Cristiana Girelli scored a hat trick to put Italy into the second round of the Women's World Cup with a rout of Jamaica.

It was Italy's second hat trick at the World Cup, as Girelli joined Carolina Morace, who did it at the inaugural 1991 tournament. Girelli's three goals were the third hat trick so far this World Cup.

Italy upset Australia 2-1 in its opening Group C match with a goal in stoppage time. It positioned the squad to advance out of the group stage with a victory over Jamaica.

The night before the match, Jamaican sprint great Usain Bolt used Skype to call into a team gathering of the Reggae Girlz and encouraged them to "to go out there and do your best. You don't worry about what other people are thinking."

Jamaica lost 3-0 to Brazil in its opening match.

Four homers propel Dodgers past Cubs

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Cody Bellinger's recent 0-for-13 slump appears to have been a mere blip in a memorable season so far.

Bellinger hit a pair of home runs, Max Muncy and David Freese each added a two-run shot and the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Chicago Cubs 7-3 Thursday night in the opener of a four-game series.

The leading vote-getter in All-Star balloting, Bellinger is batting .358 with 22 homers and 57 RBIs.

The slugger ended his skid at the plate in a loss at the Angels earlier this week. Now he's back home, where Bellinger has 14 homers and has hit safely in 28 of 32 games.

"A lot of work in the cage

and tried to get back to where I was," he said. "We're good at bouncing back and forgetting about the past, treat every day like it's a new day."

Bellinger belted a two-run homer in the fourth inning. He added a solo shot in the seventh and drew chants of "MVP! MVP!"

"Just don't think of him as a hitter — he's a great athlete," Cubs manager Joe Maddon said. "He plays all over the place, he plays every position well, he can run."

The NL West-leading Dodgers rallied from a 3-0 deficit after Kyle Schwarber and Kris Bryant hit leadoff homers against Clayton Kershaw in the early innings.

The Cubs arrived in Los Angeles having just ended a five-

game road skid, but they've lost eight of 10 away from home. The loss dropped them a game behind the NL Central-leading Milwaukee Brewers, who were idle.

It wasn't a great night for either team's left-handed ace.

Jon Lester, a three-time World Series champion, gave up three homers. Kershaw, a three-time NL Cy Young Award winner, allowed two.

Kershaw (6-1) yielded three runs and seven hits in six innings. He fanned eight and walked two.

"It's not great, but you can live with that," Kershaw said.

Julio Urias earned his third save with three scoreless innings of relief.

Lester (5-5) gave up six runs and nine hits in five innings. He

struck out seven and walked one.

"They've got great hitters," he said. "Bellinger's probably one of the better hitters I've seen, as far as his approach and not chasing, playing the game and doing all that."

Lester got hit in the left foot by a comebacker from Freese in the fourth and said it was sore after the game.

Schwarber's homer came on the first pitch of the game and Willson Contreras added an RBI single in the first.

Bryant hit his 14th homer in the third.

Lester retired 10 of his first 11 batters before getting hit hard in the fifth. With one out, he allowed five consecutive hits that gave the Dodgers a 4-3 lead.

MLB roundup

Ohtani becomes first Japanese player to hit for cycle

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Shohei Ohtani became the first Japanese-born player to hit for the cycle, helping the Los Angeles Angels beat the Tampa Bay Rays 5-3 Thursday night after a delay caused by a power outage.

Ohtani hit a three-run homer in the first inning and completed the feat with a single in the seventh. He is the eighth Angels player to hit for the cycle and the first since Mike Trout on May 21, 2013.

Albert Pujols also homered for the Angels, becoming the sixth player ever with 200 home runs in each league. He hit 445 in 11 seasons with St. Louis and has 200 in eight years with the Angels, including 12 this season.

Ohtani led off the third with a double and tripled in the fifth before Pujols' home run. A two-out single in the seventh completed the cycle in just four plate appearances, and fans at Tropicana Field gave him a

standing ovation.

Braves 6, Pirates 5: Josh Donaldson drove in the tie-breaking run in his team's five-run fifth inning to win his rematch with Joe Musgrove (4-7), and host Atlanta completed a four-game sweep.

The Braves have won seven straight to pass Philadelphia for the NL East lead. The Phillies and Braves opened a three-game series on Friday night.

Red Sox 7, Rangers 6: Xander Bogaerts hit a solo homer in the seventh inning, his team's fifth long ball of the game, and host Boston rallied from a five-run deficit to beat Texas.

Five players homered for Boston, which outlasted Texas to earn a split of the four-game series. The finale lasted 4 hours, 6 minutes.

Diamondbacks 5, Nationals 0: Zack Greinke took a no-hitter into the seventh inning and visiting Arizona beat Washington.

Greinke (8-2) pitched 7 1/3 innings, leaving after a 63-minute rain delay. The right-hand-

er struck out three without a walk.

Royals 7, Tigers 3: At Omaha, Neb., Nicky Lopez hit his first major league homer in the stadium where he played college ball, Homer Bailey (5-6) allowed two hits in six shut-out innings and Kansas City beat Detroit in the first big league regular-season game played in Nebraska.

The game at TD Ameritrade Park coincided with the buildup to the College World Series, which begins Saturday. All eight CWS teams were among the sellout crowd of 25,454 and participated in a pregame ceremony with the major league teams.

White Sox 5, Yankees 4: Leury Garcia hit a tiebreaking solo homer off Adam Ottavino (2-2) in the seventh inning, and host Chicago rallied to beat New York.

Twins 10, Mariners 5: Nelson Cruz homered and had three RBIs, and utility infielder Ehire Adrianza's hustle keyed a six-run sixth for host

Minnesota.

Cruz homered in the third and added a two-run single in the sixth when Adrianza helped key the rally. Max Kepler led off with a walk, and Adrianza singled Kepler to third. Mariners right-hander Brandon Brennan (2-6), on in relief, threw wildly past first trying to pick off Adrianza.

Rockies 9, Padres 6: Charlie Blackmon homered twice to back a 10-strikeout start from Jon Gray (6-5), and host Colorado beat San Diego despite two homers from Manny Machado.

Blackmon added a two-run triple and finished with four RBIs. Trevor Story also homered for the Rockies, who have won 11 of 12 at Coors Field.

Blue Jays 12, Orioles 3: Lourdes Gurriel Jr. homered to ignite a seven-run sixth inning, Cavan Biggio went deep twice and visiting Toronto had 17 hits while beating Baltimore.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and Danny Jansen had three hits and two RBIs apiece for the Blue Jays.