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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Trump calls for talks after Gulf attacks

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump held out hope that implicit U.S. threats to use force will yield talks with Iran as the Pentagon considers beefing up defenses in the Persian Gulf area.

A day after explosions blew holes into two oil tankers just outside Iran's territorial waters, rattling international oil markets, the administration seemed caught between pressure to punish Iran and reassure Washington's Gulf Arab allies without drawing the U.S. closer to war.

"Iran did it," Trump said Friday on Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends." He didn't offer evidence, but the U.S. military released video it said showed Iran's Revolutionary Guard removing an unexploded mine from one of the oil tankers targeted near the Strait of Hormuz, suggesting Tehran

wanted to cover its tracks.

By pointing the finger at Iran, Trump was keeping a public spotlight on an adversary he accuses of terrorism but also has invited to negotiate. The approach is similar to his diplomacy with North Korea, which has quieted talk of war but not yet achieved his goal of nuclear disarmament. Iran has shown little sign of backing down, creating uncertainty about how far the Trump administration can go with its campaign of increasing pressure through sanctions.

Iran denied any involvement in the attacks and accused Washington of waging an "Iranophobic campaign" of economic warfare.

A U.S. Navy team on Friday was aboard one of the tankers, the Japanese-owned Kokuka Courageous, collecting forensic evidence, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss

a sensitive operation.

Apparently alluding to the U.S. video, Trump said Iran's culpability had been "exposed." He did not say what he intended to do about it but suggested "very tough" U.S. sanctions, including efforts to strangle Iranian oil revenues, would have the desired effect.

"They've been told in very strong terms we want to get them back to the table," Trump said. Just a day earlier, the president took the opposite view, tweeting that it was "too soon to even think about making a deal" with Iran's leaders. "They are not ready, and neither are we!"

The U.S. ended waivers that allowed some countries to continue buying Iranian oil, a move that is starving Iran of oil income and that coincided with what U.S. officials called a surge in intelligence pointing to Iranian preparations for attacks against U.S. forces and

interests in the Gulf region.

In response to those intelligence warnings, the U.S. on May 5 announced it was accelerating the deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier battle group to the Gulf region. It also sent four nuclear-capable B-52 bombers to Qatar and has beefed up its defenses in the region by deploying more Patriot air defense systems.

Officials said Pentagon deliberations about possibly sending more military resources to the region, including more Patriot missile batteries, could be accelerated by Thursday's dramatic attack on the oil tankers.

At the Pentagon, acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan said Iran is not just a U.S. problem. He said the U.S. goal is to "build international consensus to this international problem" and to ensure that U.S. military commanders in the region get the resources and support they need.

Iran's 2 naval forces both growing in size and scope

The Washington Post

Iran's naval forces have a split personality. There is the regular navy with conscripts and career officers with a chain of command to the defense minister and others in government.

And then there are the more elite seagoing divisions run by the Revolutionary Guard, whose commanders answer directly to the nation's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The same two-tier structure applies to Iran's land forces. But Iran's warships and support vessels — often under watch by U.S. and allies — offer some of the clearest displays of the country's divided military.

The two-sided nature of the naval forces also adds a layer of complexity to the U.S. claim that "Iran did do it" after two tankers were damaged last week in the Gulf of Oman.

Both naval forces operate relatively independently and with separate leadership — making it harder to discern who gave the orders and why if Iranian involvement is confirmed.

The U.S. Central Command on Thursday released a grainy video that a spokesman, Capt. Bill Urban, said showed a Revolutionary Guard "Gashti Class patrol boat" removing an unexploded mine from one of the damaged tankers.

Military experts and political analysts have followed de-

velopments in Iran's two navies for years. Both have grown in size and scope.

The Revolutionary Guard navy is mostly designed as a rapid-reaction force and for Marine-style amphibious landings. Its fleet ranges from torpedo boats to fast-moving patrol vessels and Zodiacs. The Guard's main area of operation is in the Persian Gulf, with a specific mandate to protect Iran's islands and oil installations.

The Iranian navy generally operates larger and more varied warships, including destroyers, mine sweepers, frigates and submarines. Its mission spans from coastal patrols to blue-water flotillas in international waters as far as the Pacific and

Mediterranean. The United States and allies have accused Iran's navy of carrying weapons to Houthi rebels fighting in Yemen — claims denied by Tehran.

Revolutionary Guard forces are under the direct control of Khamenei and his inner circle, who also oversee other key parts of the government, including the intelligence services.

The regular navy is also nominally under the supreme leader, who has the final word in all important military decisions. But the navy's regular operations fall under the defense ministry and the elected leadership led by Iran's president and parliament.

Militants fire mortars at US-Iraq air base

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Militants in Iraq fired three mortar shells early Saturday into an air base just north of Baghdad where American trainers are present, causing no casualties, the Iraqi military said.

The military statement said the attack on Balad air base caused small fires in bushes on the base, which were extinguished immediately.

An Iraqi army general said the attack occurred shortly after midnight Friday. The senior officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, said American trainers are stationed at Balad air base.

The attack comes amid rising tensions in the Middle East between the United States and Iran, which ratcheted up on Thursday after suspected attacks on two oil tankers near the strategic Strait of Hormuz. Iran has denied involvement.

Last month, a rocket exploded less than a mile away from the sprawling U.S. Embassy in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone, also causing no casualties.

On Friday night, a rocket struck a home in Baghdad's Jadriyah neighborhood causing material damage, the Iraqi military said. The military did not say if the rocket had fallen short before reaching the

Green Zone, which is located on the other side of the Tigris river.

Like neighboring Iran, Iraq is a Shiite-majority country, and has been trying to maintain a fine line between allies Tehran and Washington. There have been concerns that Baghdad could once again get caught in the middle, just as it is on the path to recovery. The country hosts more than 5,000 U.S. troops, and is home to powerful Iranian-backed militias, some of whom want those U.S. forces to leave.

The current regional crisis is rooted in the U.S. withdrawal last year from the 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world

powers. Washington subsequently re-imposed sanctions on Iran, sending its economy into freefall and cutting deeply into its oil exports.

American forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011 but returned in 2014 at the invitation of Iraq to help battle the Islamic State group after it seized vast areas in the north and west of the country, including Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul. A U.S.-led coalition provided crucial air support as Iraqi forces regrouped and drove IS out in a costly three-year campaign. Iranian-backed militias fought alongside U.S.-backed Iraqi troops against IS, gaining outsized influence and power.

Migrants complain of poor conditions at holding centers

Associated Press

EL PASO, Texas — The Trump administration is facing growing complaints from migrants about severe overcrowding, meager food and other hardships at border holding centers, with some people at an encampment in El Paso being forced to sleep on the bare ground during dust storms.

The Border Network for Human Rights issued a report Friday based on dozens of testimonials of immigrants over the past month and a half, providing a snapshot of cramped conditions and prolonged stays in detention amid a record surge of migrant families coming into the U.S. from Central America.

The report comes a day after an advocate described finding a teenage mother cradling a premature baby inside a Border Patrol processing center in Texas. The advocate said the baby should have been in a hospital, not a facility where adults are kept in large fenced-in sections that critics describe as cages.

"The state of human rights in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands is grave and is only getting worse," the immigrant rights group said in its report. "People are dying because of what is happening."

Five immigrant children have died since late last year after being detained by the Border Patrol, including a flu-stricken teenager who was found dead in a facility migrants refer to as the "icebox" because of the temperatures inside.

Customs and Border Protection responded to the complaints by saying: "Allegations are not facts. If there is an issue, it is best to contact CBP directly. In many cases, the matter can be resolved immediately."

The Trump administration has blamed the worsening crisis on inaction by Congress.

Many of the complaints center on El Paso, where the inspector general found severe overcrowding inside a processing center. A cell designed for a dozen people was crammed with 76, and migrants had to stand on the toilets.

Sanders speculation shakes up Arkansas governor race

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Long before she became the spokeswoman for the Trump administration, Sarah Sanders was a well-known figure in Arkansas who appeared in campaign ads for her dad and learned about the state's rough-and-tumble politics by working on his campaign and others.

Now, speculation that Sanders may run for governor in her home state shakes up a race that's three years away but was already expected to be a crowded and expensive fight among Republicans.

President Donald Trump announced Thursday that Sanders was leaving as White House press secretary and encouraged her to run for Arkansas governor, a job her dad held for 10½ years. Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson was re-elected in November, and the seat will open up in 2022 when he's barred by term limits from running again.

Sanders hasn't ruled out running for office when she returns to Arkansas. Aside from

her experience working for a president who remains popular in Arkansas, she'd have name recognition and experience that goes back to former Gov. Mike Huckabee's first run for office nearly three decades ago, GOP leaders say.

"Certainly, she's grown up in [the state's politics]. Not only has she grown up in it, she's experienced it at every level," said U.S. Sen. John Boozman, whose 2010 campaign Sanders managed.

Her dad no longer lives in Arkansas, but Sanders could still tap into the same network of supporters who helped elevate him to the governor's mansion and backed his unsuccessful White House bids if she runs for the state's top office, political observers say.

No one has announced a bid for governor in Arkansas. The other potential candidates include some of the state's top GOP officials, including Lt. Gov. Tim Griffin, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge and state Senate President Jim Hendren.

Debate lineup: Warren night 1, Biden and Sanders on night 2

Associated Press

NEW YORK — NBC set the lineup for its two-night debate of 2020 presidential contenders later this month, with a top-heavy second session that will pit former Vice President Joe Biden onstage against 2016 Democratic runner-up, Bernie Sanders, the youthful Mayor Pete Buttigieg and California Sen. Kamala Harris.

The first night, June 26 in Miami, is headlined by Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Cory Booker of New Jersey, along with former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke.

Representatives of 20 campaigns gathered in a conference room at NBC headquarters Friday to watch slips of paper with candidates' names picked out of two boxes. There were separate boxes with the names of candidates polling at above or below 2% — an attempt to make sure

most of the lesser-known candidates were not grouped together and given the stigma of a minor-league debate.

Still, when four of the six top-polling candidates landed on June 27, including the clear front-runner in Biden, that night was quickly seen as the one with the biggest stakes.

Being paired with Biden, 76, and Sanders, 77, gives Buttigieg an opportunity to emphasize the "next generation" theme that the South Bend, Ind., mayor has been touting. At 37, Buttigieg is the youngest of the leading contenders.

The six female contenders will be evenly divided between the two nights. The two African American candidates, Booker and Harris, will also be on separate nights. Ideologically, two favorites of the party's liberal wing, Sanders and Warren, won't be going head-to-head, either.

Among the rest of the field, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee could find benefits in drawing the first night with fewer front-runners to emphasize his climate change-oriented effort. Former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, who has been among the most aggressive critics of Sanders' democratic socialism, will have a chance to make those points to him face-to-face.

NBC will face its own test, to see if it makes compelling programming out of crowded, fractious stages on the opening nights of debate season. The debate will be shown both nights in prime time, 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., on the broadcast network, as well as on MSNBC and Telemundo, and it will be streamed on various platforms. NBC personalities Lester Holt, Savannah Guthrie, Chuck Todd, Rachel Maddow and Jose Diaz-Balart will all be featured.

Minnesota lawyer gets 14 years in porn scheme

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A federal judge on Friday sentenced a Minneapolis lawyer to 14 years in prison for running a porn-related scheme.

Paul Hansmeier was convicted of running the multi-million-dollar fraud scheme from 2011 to 2014. Prosecutors allege Hansmeier extracted settlements from hundreds of people who feared being exposed as pornography consumers.

U.S. District Judge Joan Ericksen told Hansmeier it was "almost incalculable how much your abuse of trust has harmed the administration of justice," the Star Tribune reported.

Ericksen complimented Hansmeier for being "smarter than all get out," then criticized him for taking advantage of the courts in his scheme to spread pornography on the internet so he could cajole people who downloaded it into paying settlements to avoid facing lawsuits.

Prosecutors said when Hansmeier was challenged by judges around the country, he blamed other lawyers who were hired to file lawsuits on his behalf, lied to the courts about his own involvement and ordered evidence to be destroyed.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Benjamin Langner noted that the case was being watched by people around the country. He asked for a term of 12.5 years, in part to act as a deterrent to others.

"The way he abused the court to line his pockets is outrageous," Langner said. "And when he got caught, his conduct got worse."

Hansmeier's co-defendant, former Chicago lawyer John Steele, pleaded guilty earlier. Steele cooperated in the case and awaits sentencing in July.

Planned Parenthood plans clinic in Ala.

Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Planned Parenthood is building the stage for another possible fight over abortion in Alabama: a large women's clinic that's under construction despite the state's passage of a near-total ban on abortions.

Located beside an interstate highway in downtown Birmingham, the 10,000-square-foot structure is now nothing but a steel frame and roof. Workers under the constant watch of security guards appear to be installing electrical wiring, plus heating and cooling units.

The new facility could be complete around November, which is the same time the new state law will take effect unless blocked by courts. Abortion critics vow to oppose the opening, but a spokeswoman for the

women's health organization said neither the new law nor opponents were a factor in the project.

Construction began in January and is continuing despite the Republican-controlled Legislature's passage of a law that would outlaw abortion in the state unless the mother's life is in peril. Lawmakers rejected exemptions for cases of rape and incest.

Groups including Planned Parenthood have sued to block the law, which supporters hope will become the vehicle that a conservative-leaning U.S. Supreme Court uses to gut the 1972 Roe vs. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationwide.

But no court hearing is set, so abortion opponents say they hope the opening will be blocked by some combination of the new law, public pressure,

and a state agency.

Regardless of the law, abortion opponents aim to convince the Alabama Department of Public Health to deny a license for the facility, and they've tried to convince construction contractors to refuse work on the building through phone calls and emails, said Rev. Terry Gensemer of Metro Birmingham Life Forum.

"It was surprising when we found out that they were going to build this," said Gensemer. "My question is after the bill passage, why are they continuing to be so aggressive when the possibility exists that they won't be able to be in business?"

Alabama has a long history of passing laws to restrict abortion, and Luttrell said there was "absolutely no slowdown due to the legislative session" or the new law.

Trump wants cuts to fed advisory panels

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is trying to take an ax to federal advisory committees, ordering that their numbers be slashed.

Trump signed an executive order Friday that directs every federal agency to evaluate the need for all of its advisory committees created under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Also, it gives agency heads until September to terminate at least one-third of current committees created by agency heads.

Federal advisory committees are typically made up of private citizens who offer advice and assistance to the executive branch.

The White House did not immediately provide any justification for the order. But it appears to assume that many of the committees are redundant or have been convened to address issues that are now obsolete.

It says that committees will be eliminated if their “stated objectives” have been accomplished, if the “subject matter or work of the committee has become obsolete,” if their “primary functions have been assumed by another entity” and if the agency determines “the cost of operation is excessive in relation to the benefits to the federal government.”

A governmentwide review of FACA committees has not been done since the early 1990s, according to the White House.

The order does not apply to merit review panels, like those that reward grants to the National Institutes of Health or provide scientific expertise to agencies about product safety. Agencies may request waivers from the Office of Management and Budget, and those with fewer than three eligible committees will be exempt.

The U.S. General Services Administration, which helps oversee FACA implementation, says there are approximately 1,000 federal advisory committees and 50 federal agencies with FACA programs in effect at any given time.

The order seeks to cap the total number of committees at 350 and will bar agencies from establishing new committees without waivers until the number drops.

Hong Kong leader delays extradition bill

Associated Press

HONG KONG — Moving to restore calm, apparently with Beijing’s backing, Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam said Saturday she was putting on hold an extradition bill that sparked the city’s biggest public protests in years.

Activists, unimpressed, demanded she withdraw the legislation and urged Hong Kong residents to turn out Sunday for another mass protest against the proposal, which would enable authorities to send some suspects to stand trial in courts in mainland China.

“Hong Kong people have been lied to so many times,” said Bonny Leung, a leader of the Civil Human Rights Front, one of the groups that has helped drive the demonstrations.

Members of the group said Lam should resign and apologize for the police use of potentially lethal force during clashes Wednesday that turned violent.

In a news briefing earlier, Lam sidestepped questions over whether she should quit. She insisted she was not withdrawing the proposed amendment to the extradition law and defended the police.

But Lam said she was suspending the bill indefinitely. It was time, she said, “for responsible government to restore as quickly as possible this calmness in society.”

Many in the former British colony worry the proposed bill would further erode cherished legal protections and freedoms.

Appearing cheerful but occasionally frustrated over repeated questions over whether she would resign, Lam said the government would study the matter further, for the “greatest interest of Hong Kong.”

“After repeated internal de-

liberations over the last two days, I now announce that the government has decided to suspend the legislative amendment exercise,” Lam said.

“I want to stress that the government is adopting an open mind,” she said. “We have no intention to set a deadline for this work.”

Lam apologized for what she said were failures in her government’s work to convince and reassure the public, but said she has not withdrawn the bill.

“Give us another chance,” she said.

Awash in marijuana, Oregon seeks to curb production

Associated Press

SALEM, Ore. — Oregon is awash in pot, glutted with so much legal weed that if growing were to stop today, it could take more than six years by one estimate to smoke or eat it all.

Now, the state is planning to curb production.

Five years after voters legalized recreational marijuana, lawmakers have given the Oregon Liquor Control Commission more leeway to deny new pot-growing licenses based on supply and demand.

The bill passed in Oregon’s House late Thursday in a 39-18 vote after it was ap-

proved earlier in the Senate. It is aimed not just at reducing the huge surplus but also at preventing diversion of unsold legal marijuana into the black market and forestalling a crackdown by federal prosecutors.

“The harsh reality is we have too much product on the market,” said Democratic Gov. Kate Brown, who intends to sign the bill.

Supply is running twice as high as demand, meaning that the surplus from last year’s harvest alone could amount to roughly 2.3 million pounds of marijuana, by the liquor commission’s figures. That’s the equivalent of over 1 billion joints.

Oregon has one of the highest such im-

balances among the 10 states that have legalized recreational marijuana since 2012, in part because it had a big head start in the weed business.

With its moist climate and rich soil, Oregon has a long history of pot growing. When it became legal, many outlaw growers went legitimate, and others jumped into the business, too.

They are now all cultivating weed in a multitude of fields, greenhouses and converted factories, with 1,123 active producer licenses issued by the OLCC over the past three years. The legislation could be a lifeline to some cannabis businesses that are being squeezed by market forces.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Semitrailer carrying bees overturns

MT BOZEMAN — A semitrailer hauling beehives overturned on a Montana road, spilling diesel fuel and honey on the roadway.

The Hyalite Fire Department said the truck took a tight turn and tipped over in a ditch west of Bozeman.

Officials said the driver and passenger were not injured.

The truck was traveling from California to drop off the bees in North Dakota. It is unclear how many bees were on the truck and how many escaped.

Veterinarian convicted of animal cruelty

FL BARTOW — A Florida veterinarian was convicted of animal cruelty and abandonment charges for what prosecutors said was abuse of her miniature horses.

The Lakeland Ledger reported that Gail Nichols, 68, faces up to five years in prison after a jury convicted her. Evidence showed the horses were malnourished, infested with parasites and had hooves so overgrown the animals had difficulty walking.

Authorities seized 28 miniature horses, two full-sized horses, eight dogs and two birds after Nichols and her husband were arrested in 2017 at their Polk County property.

Bagged lunch sparks inmate fight in cell

PA INDIANA — A dispute over a banana and a cookie apparently sparked a fight between two inmates in a holding cell at a Pennsylvania courthouse.

Authorities said Ryshawn Crawford, 18, and a 35-year-

old man were at the Indiana County courthouse for unrelated matters when Crawford said he wanted the other man's bagged lunch. The inmate gave Crawford the sandwich but refused to surrender the other two items.

Crawford then allegedly attacked the other man.

Man allegedly steals car with boy inside

AZ PHOENIX — Authorities said a man is facing numerous charges after allegedly stealing a car with a boy, 5, inside at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

Phoenix police said Scott Eric Duran, 28, was booked into jail on suspicion of kidnapping, robbery, auto theft, endangerment, prohibited weapons possession and unlawful flight.

A patrol unit located the stolen car on Sky Harbor Boulevard and when it came to a stop in front of Terminal 2, Duran was arrested.

Bear attacks man after dog chases cub

CA SIERRA MADRE — Authorities said a mother bear slashed and bit a man in a Los Angeles suburb after the man's dog tried to attack the bear's cub and the bear went after the dog.

Sierra Madre Police Chief Jim Hunt told KTLA that the events unfolded in a backyard of the suburb in foothills next to the Angeles National Forest.

The homeowner kicked the bear to protect the dog and the bear attacked the man. The man and his dog are expected to be OK.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife officers tranquilized the bears and took them away.

Man rescued after attacked by bear

AK ANCHORAGE — A hunter who was attacked and injured by a bear near Galena was flown to a hospital by the Alaska Air National Guard.

The Rescue Coordination Center dispatched a helicopter and fixed-wing HC-130 aircraft that carried a Guardian Angel rescue team.

Alaska Rescue Coordination Center deputy director Maj. Andrew Williams said the team parachuted from the HC-130 and hiked to the injured person.

Firefighter arrested in bike ramming video

NY NEW YORK — A New York City firefighter was arrested in connection with a video that allegedly shows him trying to run over a bicyclist while off-duty.

Police said Brauley Delarosa, 27, was arrested on charges of reckless endangerment and aggravated unlicensed operation.

The video shows the bicyclist up against the car's front end as it pushes him back several feet.

In an interview with The Gothamist, Delarosa denied any wrongdoing. He said the cyclist hit his car with his bike and he was trying to get out of the way so traffic could continue on.

Officer dragged while trying to turn off car

MS AMORY — Authorities said a Mississippi police officer was dragged a short distance by a driver who took off from a driveway.

News outlets reported the Amory officer was responding to a complaint about the car parked on private property.

WTVA-TV reported the driver, Matthew Crump, sped away and dragged officer Matt Flippo as he tried to turn off the car's ignition. Other officers chased the car and arrested Crump.

Mom, teen recreate photo 13 years later

FL MIAMI — When a frightened 5-year-old Ashley Noel walked into her first day of kindergarten at a Florida elementary school in 2006, a local photographer snapped a photo of her tearfully saying goodbye to her mom. The photo wound up on the front page of the Miami Herald.

Thirteen years later, Noel graduated from high school and her mother decided to recreate the photo. It's the same pose of the back of Sarah Noel's head as she proudly embraces her 18-year-old daughter whose ribbons and braids are now replaced by a blue graduation cap and tassel.

Man convicted, ID'd through Snapchat

NV LAS VEGAS — A man was convicted of murder in a drug-related robbery killing in Las Vegas after initially being identified as a suspect because a friend of the victim thought to preserve a Snapchat message.

Jurors convicted Montrell Russum, 25, of murder, robbery and conspiracy in the 2018 killing of Martell Williams, 25.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that Williams was found dead by Brandon Boisclair, who said he immediately wondered with whom Williams had last been in contact.

Bosclair said he saved a Snapchat message on Williams' phone, and detectives then used the message to identify Russum.

From wire reports

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What's up next for Warriors after loss?

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Steve Kerr still considers Golden State an ideal fit for Kevin Durant.

Whether Durant sees it that way going into free agency next month, Kerr isn't about to guess. Especially now that the two-time NBA Finals MVP is headed for what could be a yearlong recovery from surgery for a ruptured right Achilles tendon.

"Well, the injury kind of throws everything for a loop, so I have no idea what Kevin's going to do," Kerr said Friday. "I know that we all want him back, and we think this is a great situation for him and vice versa. So, hopefully we get him back and keep this thing going with the understanding that he's a free agent and we want what's best for him, and he's free to make any choice he wants. Hopefully he's back, and we will all give him any advice, any counsel that he needs. And ultimately he's going to make his own decision. He's earned that."

A day after losing Game 6 of the Finals to the champion Toronto Raptors, Kerr and general manager Bob Myers braced

for an uncertain summer while still trying to cope with the heartbreak of seeing Durant go down in Game 5. Then Klay Thompson tore the ACL in his left knee during the third quarter of Thursday night's 114-110 loss in the final game at Oracle Arena. Durant was injured in Game 5 on Monday night in Toronto, then underwent surgery Wednesday in New York.

"This year more than any other tested the fabric of our team," Myers said. "It's hard to not value a championship as much as I value short of winning a championship, and in some ways more than winning a championship, this year I might have been the proudest of our resolve. I don't know if that's evident. I hear that from people in the Bay Area, the support we've gotten, the things people say about kind of conducting ourselves as champions. That stuff matters. Winning matters, too, obviously. It all matters. Try to continue to hang onto that culture."

In February, Durant became frustrated over all the fuss and speculation about where he might play next season, and said "I'm trying to play basketball." He signed a two-year contract last summer that in-

cludes a player option for the 2019-20, so Durant can become a free agent to pursue a maximum five-year deal. The Warriors are expected to try to sign both Durant and Thompson to those max contracts.

Asked how optimistic he is about bringing back Durant, an emotionally exhausted Myers said, simply, "I don't know" while noting of free agency "it's never what you think."

"He's a guy who's been, like I said, what more can we ask for from him?" Myers said. "He's been everything to us, the guy has been everything that we could have ever dreamed. He's been an awesome member of this organization. There's so much he does in the community that probably doesn't get as many headlines, things he's done in D.C., his foundation, how he kind of lives his life. We're lucky to have been around him. Hopefully we'll keep doing that."

All season, the Warriors were determined to cherish this ride together knowing the roster could look far different once training camp rolls around in September — along with the venue as Golden State moves across the bay to the new Chase Center in San Francisco.

Golden State's players also insist they have never taken for granted the special five-year run featuring three championships and five consecutive Finals berths.

"In the history of this NBA you could highlight every team that was supposed to win or had the best team and all the different story lines. And 82 games and a full playoff run, a lot can happen," Stephen Curry said. "It's just a matter of how much you fight and just leave it all out there on the floor. I think the way that we have talked and described this journey and whatnot, I don't think there's ever been a situation where we have taken anything for granted. And that's something I can look back and just hold."

"We all can hold our head high that we gave it everything we got. ... Two guys who go down and the game's kind of taken away from them in those moments, it's not a good feeling at all. And it's kind of a helpless feeling in terms of two freak plays that send these guys back to the locker room. So it's tough, but it's part of basketball, it's part of the game. Again, I just hope their recoveries are strong and they come back better than they were before."

Woodland tops another record-setting day at US Open

Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Gary Woodland figured the toughest part of his test in the U.S. Open was over Friday at Pebble Beach.

From a thick patch of rough between the bunker and the edge of the ocean on the eighth hole, he pitched up to 15 feet and made a slick putt with severe break for par to keep a clean card and a one-shot lead. Then, he pounded his drive on the 526-yard ninth hole down the middle of the fairway — right into a divot.

Nothing could spoil this day. Woodland gouged it out with a 7-iron with enough strength to get the ball to the front of the

green, and he could only smile when the 50-foot putt dropped for birdie and yet another record at Pebble Beach, not to mention a two-shot lead going into the weekend.

"That was just a bonus," Woodland said. "Hit a beautiful drive. I was in the divot, a pretty deep divot. We were a little indecisive what we were going to do. We tried to take a little less club and hit it hard and play out to the safe to the right, and it was nice to knock it in."

His 6-under 65 matched the U.S. Open record at Pebble Beach for the second time in two days, a testament to a course that was only slightly

firmer, but still soft enough under a heavy marine layer with so much condensation it felt like a list mist.

Woodland was at 9-under 133, beating by one shot the 36-hole record at Pebble Beach that Tiger Woods set in his record romp in 2000.

The difference: Woods had a six-shot lead in 2000. Woodland's margin was only two shots over Justin Rose, who had a 70. Louis Oosthuizen didn't make a par on the back nine until the final hole in his wild round of 70 and was three shots behind.

The weekend remains a mystery.

Rory McIlroy, who kept it together right when it looked as

though his round was getting away from him, felt the course was a little faster and could really speed up on the weekend. He was among 10 players separated by five shots halfway through a U.S. Open that so far has run smoothly.

That list includes two-time defending champion Brooks Koepka, who made two late birdies for another 69 and was five shots behind.

"I feel great. I'm excited. I've got a chance. That's all you can ask for," Koepka said. "I just need to make a few putts. Sometimes the hole just needs to open up. If I can get off to a good start tomorrow, have that feeling where the hole's opening up, it could be a fun round."

Briefly**McDonald wins, Sonnen quits in return to MSG***Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Bellator welterweight champion Rory MacDonald shook off his crisis of conscience and defeated Neiman Gracie by unanimous decision on Friday night in the main event of the MMA promotion's return to Madison Square Garden.

MacDonald (21-5-1) had second thoughts about continuing in MMA after a draw in his last fight in April, saying "I don't have that killer (instinct) inside," and it was harder to "pull the trigger."

MacDonald, who moves on the face Douglas Lima in the Welterweight Grand Prix final for \$1 million, said coming into the 170-pound fight that he found clarity to continue through his faith and did not consider retirement. The 29-year-old MacDonald didn't dish much punishment over five rounds but hardly absorbed any either from Gracie (9-1) and won 49-46 and two judges scored it 48-47.

Former UFC light heavyweight champion Lyoto Machida made quick work of Chael Sonnen to win a light heavyweight bout in the co-main event.

The 41-year-old Machida (13 wins by KO or submission) set himself up for a potential bout with light heavyweight champion Ryan Bader.

Sonnen, another former UFC star, left his gloves in the cage and said he would retire from the sport.

"I had a hell of a lot of fun," Sonnen said to a cheering crowd. "I'm walking out. I appreciate the memories."

Rizin bantamweight champion Kyoji Horiguchi became a two-promotion champion when he defeated Darrion Caldwell for Bellator's 135-pound world title.

Juan Archuleta connected with a hard right that KO'd Eduardo Dantas in the second round and left the Brazilian out

cold.

On the undercard, Larkyn Dasch's Bellator debut was a bust. The Hooters waitress — she signed her contract in uniform during a break in her shift at a location in Michigan — lost a unanimous decision to Valerie Loureda.

Spectators injured by cart at Pebble Beach

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Five people were injured Friday at the U.S. Open when one of several boxes being loaded onto a golf cart fell onto the accelerator and sent the cart into spectators.

The California Highway Patrol says a vendor parked the cart near the 16th hole at Pebble Beach and was walking away when a box fell onto the gas pedal, moving it forward. It struck four spectators and the vendor before it was brought under control.

The Monterey Herald says two victims were taken by ambulance to Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. Their names were not released, and the hospital said it could not give out information on injuries over the phone.

A's Piscotty has surgery for melanoma

OAKLAND, Calif. — Oakland Athletics outfielder Stephen Piscotty will be out until at least next week after he had a melanoma removed from his right ear.

The 28-year-old Piscotty had surgery Thursday after the melanoma on the outer lobe of his ear was discovered during a routine spot check on May 28. A biopsy came back positive a week later.

Dr. Brian Parrett performed the operation at the California Pacific Medical Campus.

Piscotty will be evaluated daily and the A's expect him to return next week.

England moves on to next level of Cup*Associated Press*

LE HAVRE, France — As roommates at the Women's World Cup, Jodie Taylor and Beth Mead have built a connection that helped lead England into the second round of the tournament.

Mead delivered a low cross from the left flank and Taylor sneaked into a central location, nudging the ball into the net to earn a 1-0 victory over Argentina on Friday and secure England's place in the second round with a game to spare in Group D.

"I just knew where Beth was going to play it," Taylor said. "It must be roommates becoming more connected. It was such a good ball from Beth. I do believe the closer you are as a team the better your performance will be on the pitch."

Argentina had frustrated England for 61 minutes and goalkeeper Vanina Correa was nearly flawless — she even stopped a penalty kick — until Taylor and Mead connected on the game-winning goal.

Taylor's goal ended a 540-day scoring drought that had stymied the Golden Boot winner from the 2017 European Championship.

"It's not until people start bringing it up that you start thinking about it," said Taylor, who plays in the U.S. for the Se-

attle Reign.

England had to be patient against the resilient Argentines, who collected their first-ever World Cup point in an opening draw against Japan. Finding a way past Correa wasn't easy.

The 35-year-old goalkeeper was coaxed back into competition after giving birth to twins in 2017 and her appearance in this tournament makes Correa the only Argentine woman to appear in three World Cups.

"Generally, for women goalkeepers, things are changing, we're having better training," she said. "It's not nice to criticize goalkeepers even if we do sometimes make mistakes."

Jill Scott discovered how hard it would be to beat Correa in the 13th minute when her header was collected.

While Nikita Parris scored the first England goal in the opening 2-1 victory over Scotland on Sunday, she missed her chance to do it again. After Linda Bravo's sliding tackle brought down Alex Greenwood, Parris sent her spot kick to the right and Correa pushed it onto the post.

Correa's hand denied Parris, and her foot thwarted Mead just before halftime. When Fran Kirby hooked a ball through to Mead, the low shot was turned away by Correa's outstretched right boot.

Netherlands wins, advances*Associated Press*

Vivianne Miedema scored a goal in each half Saturday to advance the Netherlands into the second round of the Women's World Cup for the second straight tournament with a 3-1 win over Cameroon on Saturday at Valenciennes, France.

Miedema put the Dutch in the lead in the 41st minute of the Group E match at Stade du Hainaut and then finished it off

in the 85th.

Dominique Bloodworth also scored for the Netherlands in the 48th minute, while Gabrielle Onguene got Cameroon's goal in the 43rd.

Cameroon is in last place in the group, with no points and a minus-3 goal difference, and it is all but eliminated. Cameroon plays New Zealand on Thursday, and the Netherlands meets Canada in a match that kicks off at the same time.

Renfroe's 3 HRs lift Padres over Rockies

Associated Press

DENVER — Hunter Renfroe hit his third homer of the game in the 12th inning after Fernando Tatis Jr. tied it as part of a six-run rally in the ninth and the San Diego Padres stunned the Colorado Rockies 16-12 on Friday night.

Tatis led off the 12th with a triple to deep center and scored on pinch-hitter Austin Allen's double off reliever Jairo Diaz (1-1). Manny Machado added an RBI double and Renfroe hit a towering two-run homer to wrap up an improbable win.

Renfroe also had a solo shot in the second and a two-run homer in the ninth for his second career three-homer game.

Down 11-5 in the ninth, the Padres rallied off Rockies re-

liever Mike Dunn, who gave up a two-run single to Eric Hosmer, followed by Renfroe's homer. Closer Wade Davis allowed two singles and a walk before Tatis delivered a two-out, two-run single to center that tied the game.

The Rockies had never blown a lead of six or more runs in the ninth inning before Friday, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Craig Stammen (5-3) earned the win by pitching a scoreless 11th inning and Kirby Yates finished up the 12th.

This five-hour, four-minute marathon featured a combined 39 hits, 16 pitchers and plenty of dramatic twists.

Machado had four hits, including a solo homer, while Rockies outfielder David Dahl

capped a 12-pitch at-bat by lining a two-run shot in the third over the fence in left-center. Ian Desmond added a three-run, inside-the-park homer during a five-run sixth inning that helped the Rockies extend the lead to 9-3. It looked like it put the game out of reach.

But things were just heating up as Colorado's bullpen faltered in allowing 15 runs.

Trevor Story collected three hits before the smooth-fielding shortstop left the game in the eighth after a grounder took a bad hop, glanced off his glove and struck him in the head.

Charlie Blackmon had four hits, including a solo homer in the 12th, and is now hitting .437 at Coors Field this season. What's more, Blackmon's reached base in all 24 home

games he's appeared in.

The starters: Rockies starter Jeff Hoffman allowed three hits and one run — a solo homer by Renfroe in the second.

Cal Quantrill, the son of long-time major league pitcher Paul Quantrill, allowed four runs over five innings. Quantrill's start was the major league-leading 29th by a Padres rookie.

Speedy Desmond: With two on, Desmond drilled a pitch down the line in right that Josh Naylor missed on a diving attempt. Naylor tracked down the bounding ball with Desmond motoring around the bases. The relay throw home was off target to get Desmond, who slid head-first into the plate and let out a scream soon after standing.

MLB roundup

Bauers hits for cycle in Cleveland's rout of Detroit

Associated Press

DETROIT — Cleveland's Jake Bauers hit for the cycle, and the Indians routed the Detroit Tigers 13-4 on Friday night after scoring eight runs in the fourth inning.

Bauers singled and tripled in that inning. He also hit a double in the second and a two-run homer in the eighth, becoming the first Cleveland player to hit for the cycle since Rajai Davis did it at Toronto on July 2, 2016.

Leonys Martin's three-run homer highlighted Cleveland's eight-run fourth. The Indians sent 13 men to the plate that inning, turning a 3-2 deficit into a 10-3 advantage. The first six batters of the inning reached base.

Adam Plutko (3-1) allowed two earned runs and five hits in six innings for Cleveland. He walked one and struck out six.

Ryan Carpenter (1-4) threw 92 pitches but only lasted three-plus innings. He allowed six earned runs, eight hits and four walks.

Miguel Cabrera and Brandon Dixon hit consecutive homers for Detroit in the second.

Braves 9, Phillies 8: Brian McCann capped his team's three-run ninth inning with a two-run single off Hector Neris, and host Atlanta beat Philadelphia for its eighth straight win.

Atlanta improved to 23-9 since May 10 and opened a 2½-game lead over Philadelphia in the NL East. It was the first game between the division rivals since the Phillies swept three games from the Braves in late March.

Neris (1-3) was attempting to go 15 for 15 in save chances this year, but couldn't find the formula on his 30th birthday. He recorded two outs and allowed three hits in Philadelphia's fourth loss in five games.

Jerry Blevins (1-0) pitched the ninth for the win.

Bryce Harper and Rhys Hoskins each hit a two-run homer for the Phillies, and Scott Kingery added a solo drive.

Rays 9, Angels 4: Tommy Pham hit a pair of RBI singles as host Tampa Bay overcame

another subpar start by Blake Snell and rallied past Los Angeles.

Nationals 7, Diamondbacks 3: Max Scherzer struck out 10 in seven innings as Washington beat visiting Arizona.

Pirates 11, Marlins 0: Steven Brault scattered eight hits over six innings, and Pittsburgh stopped a seven-game slide by routing host Miami.

Cardinals 9-5, Mets 5-4: Dexter Fowler hit a go-ahead, three-run homer moments after Paul DeJong's tying shot in the eighth inning, and visiting St. Louis beat New York to sweep an odd double feature.

Rangers 7, Reds 1: Roughened Odor hit his fourth career grand slam, Delino DeShields singled and drove in a run during a reunion with his dad, and Texas rode its bullpen to victory over host Cincinnati.

Red Sox 13, Orioles 2: J.D. Martinez hit two of Boston's season-high six home runs off host Baltimore's beleaguered pitching staff in the rout.

Twins 2, Royals 0: Mitch Garver's two-run homer in the

eighth inning snapped a scoreless tie in Minnesota's win over visiting Kansas City.

Astros 15, Blue Jays 2: Robinson Chirinos hit his first grand slam and finished with a career-high six RBIs as host Houston topped Toronto, improving to 9-3 in June.

White Sox 10, Yankees 2: Lucas Giolito pitched into the seventh for his ninth straight win as Chicago beat visiting New York.

Mariners 9, Athletics 2: Omar Narvaez hit a two-run homer, J.P. Crawford drove in three runs after coming off the injured list, and Seattle beat host Oakland.

Dodgers 5, Cubs 3: Rich Hill pitched seven strong innings and singled in the go-ahead run in the fourth inning, helping Los Angeles beat Chicago for its seventh straight home win.

Giants 5, Brewers 3: Pablo Sandoval, Kevin Pillar and Mike Yastrzemski homered in San Francisco's win over visiting Milwaukee.