

STARS AND STRIPES®

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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2 US servicemembers killed in Afghanistan

Stars and Stripes

Two U.S. servicemembers were killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday, according to a statement from the U.S.-led NATO Resolute Support mission.

No other details were available. Their names are being withheld until 24 hours after next of kin are notified, the statement said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the deaths Wednesday, saying in a brief statement on Twitter that the Americans were killed in an ambush in Wardak province on the outskirts of Sayad Abad district. The district is located about 60 miles south of Kabul, along the Kabul-Kandahar Highway.

News of the deaths comes about two months after three Marines assigned to

25th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division were killed in a car bombing outside Bagram Air Field. The April 8 incident, which happened only days before they were expected to return home from Afghanistan, wounded three other Americans, an Afghan contractor and five Afghan civilians.

The U.S. war in Afghanistan is now in its 18th year. Some 14,000 American troops are deployed there and are charged with two separate but related missions.

About 8,500 are training and advising Afghan security forces in stabilizing the country and battling the Taliban insurgency as part of the U.S.-led NATO mission. The remainder are part of a bilateral counterterrorism operation against al-Qaida and Islamic State fighters.

More than 2,400 U.S. military person-

nel have been killed and more than 20,000 have been wounded since the beginning of the Afghan War in October 2001.

Wednesday's deaths came one day after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, on a visit to Kabul, said Washington is hopeful a peace agreement that would bring an end to the war in Afghanistan can be reached before Sept. 1.

A fresh round of peace talks is expected to begin Saturday between representatives of the U.S. and the Taliban in Doha, Qatar.

The Taliban have so far refused to hold direct talks with the Kabul government, which they regard as Washington's puppet regime. Informal Afghan-to-Afghan talks planned for earlier this year in Doha were canceled after both sides disagreed over who should attend.

Remains of 3 Marines recovered in air crash ID'd

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The Marine Corps has identified three servicemembers whose remains were recovered in a salvage operation following the crash of two military aircraft late last year off the coast of Japan.

Five crewmembers of a KC-130J tanker and the pilot of an F/A-18 Hornet were killed in a midair collision during a nighttime training mission on Dec. 6. The Hornet's weapons officer was the sole survivor. Both aircraft were based at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

A salvage operation, which began May 27, concluded June 7 after recovering the remains as well as the KC-130J's cockpit voice and digital flight recorders.

III Marine Expeditionary Force said in a statement Wednesday that it had identified

the following Marines whose remains were recovered: Lt. Col. Kevin R. Herrmann, 38, of New Bern, N.C.; Maj. James M. Brophy, 36, of Staatsburg, N.Y.; and Staff Sgt. Maximo A. Flores, 27, of Surprise, Ariz.

The remains will be released to the fallen Marines' families in accordance with their wishes, III MEF said in its statement.

The bodies of Cpl. Daniel E. Baker, 21, of Tremont, Ill., and Cpl. William C. Ross, 21, of Hendersonville, Tenn., were not recovered, the statement said.

The Hornet pilot, Capt. Jahmar Resilard, 28, was pronounced dead after being found by a Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ship the day after the crash.

The cause of the collision remains under investigation, III MEF said in its statement.

Mass. RMV chief resigns after crash that killed 7

Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. — The head of the Massachusetts motor vehicle division has resigned after her agency failed to terminate the commercial driving license of a man whose collision with a group of motorcyclists on a rural New Hampshire road left seven bikers dead.

Volodymyr Zhukovskyy, 23, pleaded not guilty Tuesday to seven counts of negligent homicide.

The crash victims were members or supporters of the Marine JarHeads, a New England motorcycle club that includes Marines and their spouses and ranged in age from 42 to 62.

Massachusetts Department of Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack said in a statement that the state Registry of Motor Vehicles failed to act on information provided by the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles

about a drunken driving arrest involving Zhukovskyy.

Pollack said the arrest should have cost him his commercial driving license. As a result, she accepted the resignation of Erin Deveney.

Zhukovskyy, a transport company driver who has a history of traffic arrests, was ordered Tuesday to remain in preventive detention, with a judge saying his driving record poses a potential danger to the public and himself.

The Dodge pickup Zhukovskyy was driving was towing a flatbed trailer and collided with the motorcycles in Randolph early Friday evening, investigators said.

He was driving erratically and crossed the center line, according to criminal complaints released Tuesday.

A survivor of the crash said the trailer wiped out most of the bikers behind him.

Navy eyes shipyard in Philippines port as repair facility

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

A bankrupt commercial shipyard in the Philippines may present an opportunity for the Navy to reestablish itself at a major port it vacated nearly 30 years ago.

"The U.S. Navy is exploring the viability of Subic Bay Hanjin Shipyard for use as a potential repair and maintenance facility," Cmdr. Nate Christensen, the fleet deputy public affairs officer, said in an email Wednesday.

The shipyard's owner, Hanjin Philippines, declared bankruptcy earlier this year, owing \$900 million to South Korean creditors. Since then, a pair of Chinese firms have expressed an interest in buying the facility, sparking alarm in some quarters.

Subic Bay was once home to thousands of U.S. sailors and their families before the Navy vacated the bases in 1992. It's still a regular port call for U.S. warships and Marines who practice beach landings nearby in Zambales province.

The strategic harbor's importance has grown amid Chinese efforts to build military facilities on artificial islands and claim sovereignty over territory to the west in the South China Sea.

"No final decisions have been made [about the shipyard]," Christensen said.

However, retired Navy Capt. Brian Buzzell, writing in the U.S. Naval Institute News this month, said Hanjin's financial woes represent a "golden chance to return to Subic Bay."

China wasn't a naval threat when the U.S. and the Philippines negotiated their alliance in the 1940s, he wrote.

"No one foresaw the emergence of China as a political, economic, and military juggernaut that would assert historical claims to South China Sea islands, reefs, and territory," he wrote.

Navy freedom of navigation operations and Air Force overflights are not deterring Beijing from securing de facto sovereignty over the South China Sea, he wrote.

Hanjin's Subic facility was the fifth-largest shipyard in the world, with more than 30,000 Filipino employees. Before it closed in February it had built 123 large cargo container vessels, bulk carriers and carriers of crude oil, liquified petroleum gas and mineral ores since 2008, Buzzell wrote.

The shipyard could help the Navy's mission in the western Pacific by negating the need to send ships to Pearl Harbor for maintenance. It could also help the Navy grow its fleet to 355 ships after the closure of many U.S. shipyards in recent decades, he wrote.

Navy to reimburse some licensing fees for spouses

BY SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

Sailors can be reimbursed up to \$500 to cover the cost of their spouses' professional licenses or certifications if an assignment requires them to move to a different state, the Navy announced this week.

"This is part of an ongoing effort to show Navy families we are working to expand family support programs and facilitate spouse employment opportunities," Perry Christiansen, lead for the Navy's family readiness programs policy, said in a statement.

Each state has its own licensing requirements and fees for various professions, from doctors and lawyers to midwives and athletic trainers.

A license in one state generally can't be transferred to another, and the cost of applying for recertification in a new state can be burdensome. But without completing the process, spouses often can't work in their chosen field.

Servicemembers, not their spouses, must apply for the funds, which cover the costs of exams and registration fees.

The Army, Air Force and Marines began offering similar reimbursements last month as part of a five-year pilot program, which was approved as part of the 2018 defense budget on Dec. 12, 2017.

Military spouses who moved from one state to another after that date are eligible for the program if they had to recertify for a profession they were licensed to practice in the previous state.

Military families returning to the U.S. from overseas qualify for the program if the spouse was licensed in one state before the overseas tour and is returning to a different state.

A report published by the Rand Corp. in 2015 found that frequent moves can make it difficult for military spouses to "find employment in occupations of their choosing ... and maintain long-term careers." Compared with their civilian counterparts, military spouses are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, the report said.

Advocates for military families, including Karen Pence, wife of Vice President Mike Pence, have long sought accommodations for spouses of military servicemembers who often move on government orders. Some states waive certain fees or grant exceptions to some licensing requirements for military family members.

"Employment issues are one of the biggest challenges military spouses face, especially for those who have jobs that require licensures," Karen Pence said last fall at the Association of the U.S. Army's annual meeting and exposition.

Defense's turn at SEAL's murder trial

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Defense lawyers planned to go on the offensive Wednesday in the murder trial of a decorated Navy SEAL charged with killing a wounded young Islamic State prisoner in Iraq and shooting at civilians.

The prosecution rested its case Tuesday in the San Diego court-martial of Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher, a Bronze Star recipient. The judge in the case rejected a defense request to issue a summary judgment finding Gallagher not guilty of murder and attempted murder.

On Wednesday, the defense planned to show jurors videotaped testimony from an Iraqi general who handed over the fighter to Gallagher, 40, for medical treatment after the adolescent was wounded in an airstrike. The general gave videotaped testimony in June when he visited San Diego.

Prosecution witnesses, including a fellow

Navy SEAL, testified that Gallagher stabbed the prisoner twice in the neck in May 2017 and that the attack could have been fatal.

Defense lawyers say testimony from the Iraqi general and other witnesses will show Gallagher isn't guilty. They already have contended that the witnesses against him offered tainted or even false testimony. They have questioned the methodology of the chief investigator and noted the lack of a body or other physical evidence.

Prosecutors called seven SEALs from the platoon to testify in the court-martial at Naval Base San Diego that started a week ago. One witness, Corey Scott, a medic, shocked the courtroom last week after he admitted to the killing, saying he plugged the militant's breathing tube after Gallagher stabbed the boy as an act of mercy because he feared he would be tortured and possibly killed by Iraqi forces if he survived.

WWII servicemember graves found on atoll

Associated Press

HONOLULU — A nonprofit organization that searches for the remains of U.S. servicemen lost in past conflicts has found what officials believe are the graves of more than 30 Marines and sailors killed in one of the bloodiest battles of World War II.

A team working on the remote Pacific atoll of Tarawa found the graves in March, said Mark Noah, president of History Flight.

The remains are believed to belong to Marines and sailors from the 6th Marine Regiment killed during the last night of the three-day Battle of Tarawa.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency expects to pick up the remains and fly them to Hawaii next month, said Dr. John Byrd, director of the agency's laboratories.

Military forensic anthropologists will then work to identify them using dental records, DNA and other clues.

More than 990 U.S. Marines and 30 U.S. sailors were killed in the 1943 Battle of Tarawa after the U.S. launched an amphibious assault on the small island some 2,300 miles southwest of Honolulu.

Marines and sailors quickly encountered Japanese machine-gun fire when their boats got stuck on the reef at low tide. Americans who made it to the beach faced brutal hand-to-hand combat.

The U.S. military buried its men in makeshift cemeteries where they fell. But Navy construction battalion sailors removed markers for the graves when they hurriedly built runways and other infrastructure to help U.S. forces push farther west across the Pacific toward Japan.

History Flight has recovered the remains of 272 individuals from Tarawa since 2015, when it began excavating under a contract with the Defense Department, Noah said. He estimates there are at least another 270 to be found.

Tarawa is now part of the Republic of Kiribati. Its government allowed History

Flight to demolish an abandoned building in its latest search. Many of the graves were underneath it.

A large number of graves also are below the water table, meaning History Flight workers must pump water from the site each day to excavate.

Byrd said the Army Graves Registration Service excavated some of Tarawa's temporary cemeteries in the late 1940s but left behind parts of individuals during this process.

History Flight is now thoroughly excavating the gravesites, leading them to find some partial remains that have been matched with those already buried as "unknowns" in a national cemetery in Honolulu.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency dug up these remains in 2017 to make additional identifications.

The agency has identified more than 100 individuals excavated from Tarawa and the Honolulu cemetery since 2015.

Japan dismisses report of Trump ending pact

By HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The Japanese government has dismissed a U.S. media report saying that President Donald Trump spoke of ending the two nations' long-standing postwar defense pact.

Bloomberg News, citing anonymous sources, reported Monday that Trump had privately mused about withdrawing from the "one-sided" security treaty with the United States' longtime ally. The president said the accord is unfair because it promises U.S. aid if Japan is attacked but doesn't oblige Japan to come to America's defense, the Bloomberg report said.

However, Japan's chief Cabinet secretary, Yoshihide Suga, told reporters at a news conference in Tokyo on Tuesday that "there is no such talk as mentioned in the report."

"We have confirmation from the White House that it is inconsistent with the U.S. government's stance," Suga said.

The U.S.-Japan alliance is the basis of Japan's security and diplomatic policy, and the two countries have been cooperating closely for international peace.

After receiving subpoenas, Mueller will appear before 2 House panels

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former special counsel Robert Mueller has agreed to testify publicly before Congress on July 17 after Democrats issued subpoenas to compel him to appear, the chairmen of two House committees announced.

Mueller's unusual back-to-back testimony in front of the House Judiciary and Intelligence committees is likely to be the most highly anticipated congressional hearing in years, particularly given Mueller's resolute silence throughout his two-year investigation into Russian contacts with President Donald Trump's campaign. Mueller never responded to angry, public attacks from Trump, nor did he ever personally join his prosecutors in court or make announcements of criminal charges from the team.

His sole public statement came from the Justice Department podium last month as he announced his departure, when he sought to explain his decision to not indict Trump or to accuse him of criminal conduct. He also put lawmakers on notice that he did not intend to say more than what he put in the 448-page report.

"We chose those words carefully, and the work speaks for itself," Mueller said May 29. "I would not provide information be-

yond what is already public in any appearance before Congress."

Those remarks did little to settle the demands for his testimony. The two committees continued negotiations that had already been going on for weeks, saying they still wanted to hear from Mueller no matter how reluctant he was.

"When you accept the role of special counsel in one of the most significant investigations in modern history, you're going to have to expect that you're going to be asked to come and testify before Congress," House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., told reporters shortly after the announcement.

Trump himself simply tweeted, "Presidential Harassment!"

In the report issued in April, Mueller concluded there was not enough evidence to establish a conspiracy between Trump's presidential campaign and Russia, which was the original question that started the investigation. But he also said he could not exonerate Trump on obstruction of justice. The report examined several episodes in which Trump attempted to influence the investigation.

Democrats say it is now the job of Congress to assess the report's findings.

Woman who aided Islamic State seeks leniency

Associated Press

NEW YORK — An American woman who admitted to participating in the online recruitment of Islamic State fighters is seeking leniency in her terrorism case over the objections of prosecutors who say she double-crossed them.

Defense attorneys for Sinmyah Amera Caesar, who once used the nom de guerre “Umm Nutella,” argued at a sentencing hearing Tuesday in federal court in Brooklyn that she’s a lost soul worthy of redemption. They want her sentenced to time served — about two years — and a lifetime of supervision that would include participating in a rehab program.

Prosecutors, burned by Caesar’s efforts

to secretly get back in touch with her ISIS contacts after signing up as a cooperater, told U.S. District Judge Jack Weinstein that she’s still a terrorist threat who deserves a severe punishment of at least 30 years behind bars.

Caesar, 24, “was a committed recruiter and self-described ‘assistant’ to the terrorist group, connecting ISIS supporters in the United States to ISIS facilitators and operatives abroad,” the government wrote in court papers.

At the hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Josh Hafetz said the defendant’s interactions involved “two confirmed ISIS operatives” in the Middle East who were ultimately killed in airstrikes.

Defense attorney Deirdre Von Dornum

insisted the communications were a misguided attempt to find comfort from a community of fellow Muslims.

“Yes, she messed up,” Von Dornum said about her client’s violation of her cooperation agreement. “We just need to give her a lot more help this time.”

Weinstein adjourned the hearing until Wednesday, when he was expected to hear further arguments and from Caesar before deciding her sentence.

“The question for the court is whether you can be trusted,” Weinstein said.

Little was known about Caesar before the hearing because her case was largely kept under seal to protect her from retaliation while she offered the government assistance in identifying threats from ISIS.

Air Force veteran freed from detention in Libya

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — An American Air Force veteran who was accused of acting as a mercenary in Libya has been freed after a six-week detention in a murky episode that highlights the tangled nature of that country’s civil war, officials said Tuesday.

Jamie Sponaugle, 31, of Florida, was piloting an aircraft near the Libyan capital of Tripoli on May 7 when his plane went down, according to officials and individuals familiar with the incident, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Libyan National Army said it shot down the aircraft, which it said was a Mirage F1 combat jet piloted by a man The Washington Post is now identifying as Sponaugle, as it conducted bombing raids against LNA forces in the area. The Washington Post withheld publication of

Sponaugle’s detention at the request of U.S. officials who were working to secure his release.

The LNA is one of two factions locked in a yearslong fight for control of Libyan territory and government institutions, a conflict that has plunged the country into a protracted limbo and erased much of the hope created by the 2011 revolution.

The apparent involvement of an American military veteran in an ongoing battle for Tripoli between the LNA and its rival, the U.N.-backed Government of National Accord, illustrates the complexity of a long-simmering conflict that has emerged as a major global proxy war involving illicit arms and dueling accusations of mercenary use.

It also draws attention to the shifting U.S. policy on Libya. While senior Trump

administration officials have devoted limited time to Libya, the president appeared to upend years of steady support for the Tripoli-based GNA in April when he publicly praised Khalifa Hifter, the strongman who heads the rival LNA.

“We are always pleased to see Americans held captive overseas returned home to their friends and family,” Ambassador Robert O’Brien, President Donald Trump’s envoy for hostage affairs, said in a phone interview. “We appreciate his captors’ decision to release him. We also thank the kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its role in resolving this case.”

Officials said that Sponaugle was flown on Tuesday to Saudi Arabia, where he is expected to meet with U.S. consular officials and undergo a medical and psychiatric examination.

Poll: A third of US support strike in N. Korea scenario

The Washington Post

TOKYO — More than a third of Americans would support a preemptive nuclear strike on North Korea if that country tested a long-range missile capable of reaching the United States, new research has found, even if that preemptive strike killed a million civilians.

The survey of 3,000 Americans was conducted by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and British research firm YouGov. It asked people to consider a scenario in which North Korea had tested a long-range missile and the U.S. government was con-

sidering how to respond. Most did not want their government to launch a preemptive strike, but a large minority supported such a strike, whether by conventional or nuclear weapons.

“For many of these hawks, support for an attack, even in a preventive war, does not significantly decrease when the story says that the United States would use nuclear weapons that are expected to kill 1 million North Korean civilians,” the report found.

“As we have previously found, the U.S. public exhibits only limited aversion to nuclear weapons use and a shocking willingness to support the killing of enemy

civilians.”

The United States is the only country to have used nuclear weapons in warfare, dropping bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and killing around 200,000 people.

The report was conducted in February, presumably before the breakdown of a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Hanoi at the end of that month.

Since then, North Korea has tested short-range ballistic missiles, but Trump and Kim have also exchanged letters and mutual praise.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

'Jeopardy!' champ out of Poker world series

NV LAS VEGAS — "Jeopardy!" champion and professional sports gambler James Holzhauer lost a bid to win cash for a charity in two World Series of Poker events in Las Vegas.

Tournament spokesman Seth Palansky said Tuesday that Holzhauer and Poker Hall of Famer Mike Sexton played about five hours Monday before finishing out of the money in a tag-team tournament.

Earlier, the 32-time "Jeopardy!" winner finished short of the prize pool in 454th place among some 1,800 entrants in a No-Limit Hold'em tournament.

Historic church to hold its final Mass

IL CHICAGO — The Archdiocese of Chicago said the final Mass at a historic city church that has fallen into disrepair will be held next month.

St. Adalbert Church has been around for more than 100 years. Church officials have said more than \$3 million is needed to repair the building, including its towers.

Church officials said the last Mass will be July 14.

The parish was founded in the 1870s and the current church was built in 1912.

Woman uses shovel to kill cobra on her patio

PA FAIRLESS HILLS — A Pennsylvania woman used a shovel to kill a cobra she saw slithering on the patio of her apartment.

Kathy Kehoe, 73, said the squawking of some blue jays outside her unit caught her attention. When she looked outside, she saw a serpent that was

about 4 to 5 feet long.

She said she saw the lateral spot that is commonly found on cobras and nudged its tail. When it came up and spread its hood, she realized it was a cobra.

Kehoe then took photos of the snake before killing it.

The apartment complex is the same one where officials removed 20 venomous snakes from another apartment in March.

Dog's discovery leads to head and torso

SC SENECA — South Carolina authorities said they found the head and torso of a woman's body.

The State reported that the decomposed remains were found Monday. They're presumed to be associated with other human bones discovered in a wooded area less than 10 miles from Clemson University.

Seneca police said a pet dog dug up the first bone in its owner's yard. An expanded search uncovered other bones along a creek.

Oconee County Coroner Karl Addis said preliminary studies suggest the bones came from a white woman, between 25 and 45 years old. An autopsy is pending, and DNA will be compared against known missing persons.

Puppy lost after SUV crash found

AZ FLAGSTAFF — A recently adopted puppy that disappeared after her owner crashed in Arizona survived 13 days in the mountains and has been reunited with her owner.

The Arizona Daily Sun reported volunteers found Bella, a 4-month-old mixed yellow

lab, almost two weeks after Michael Crocker rolled over his SUV off Route 66 in Flagstaff.

Crocker was airlifted to a hospital in Phoenix after crashing on May 14 but Bella was nowhere to be found.

A Humane Animal Rescue and Trapping Team member found the whimpering pup not too far from the crash site.

Site of reported alien abduction noted

MS PASCAGOULA — A historical marker was placed near the river where two men in southern Mississippi said they were abducted by aliens in 1973.

News outlets reported the city of Pascagoula dedicated the marker recently at Lighthouse Park.

Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker said they were on the shores of the Pascagoula River when what appeared to be aliens pulled them onboard a UFO, examined them for about 30 minutes and then returned them to Earth.

Both reported the event to the sheriff's department and were checked out at a hospital after the reported incident on Oct. 11, 1973.

Student is sued over damage from sprinkler

VA DUMFRIES — A hotel's insurance company has sued a high school student it claims caused more than \$690,000 in damage by activating a sprinkler inside one of its rooms.

The Virginian-Pilot reported Landstown High School senior Cade Anderson stayed at the hotel in Dumfries on Oct. 20, 2017, ahead of a junior ROTC drill competition the next day.

Anderson's attorney said his client hung his uniform on a

sprinkler to properly affix all of the ribbons and medals. When he took the uniform down, the sprinkler activated.

Prince William County Assistant Fire Chief Matt Smolksky said 10 rooms, the hotel's kitchen and dining area flooded. Anderson's room was on the fourth floor.

Graffiti artist hired by city is arrested

MI DETROIT — A graffiti artist commissioned to paint a mural on a Detroit viaduct was arrested by police who believed he was committing vandalism.

Sheefy McFly, 29, whose real name is Tashif Turner, had been commissioned as part of a multi-year effort to fight illegal graffiti with city-approved artwork.

McFly said he didn't have his city-issued permit with him.

Detroit police spokeswoman Nicole Kirkwood said officers found McFly uncooperative. She said the disagreement led to McFly being arrested on suspicion of resisting and obstructing and for a warrant previously issued for a parking ticket.

Man at festival strips, overturns equipment

DE DOVER — Police said an intoxicated man at Delaware's popular Firefly Music Festival stripped naked, streaked through the venue and knocked over sound gear.

Dover police said the unnamed 21-year-old Delaware man knocked around some DJ equipment at a concert tent while in the nude.

Dover police Cpl. Mark Hoffman told the Delaware News Journal no assaults were reported.

From wire reports

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Yankees homer in 28th straight game

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge and his teammates were joking about which one of them would hit the home run that gave the New York Yankees a major league-record 28 straight games with a long ball.

The 6-foot-7 slugger, batting second in the lineup, predicted the mark might fall in the first inning.

Judge was right, even though he never had a crack at it. The first chance went to leadoff man DJ LeMahieu — and nobody else got one.

LeMahieu and Judge hit back-to-back homers to begin

the bottom of the first inning, and New York held on to beat the Toronto Blue Jays 4-3 Tuesday night.

“I was just trying to do what he did. He’s been our MVP,” Judge said. “DJ stole the show. We’re happy for him. No better person I want breaking that record.”

Gleyber Torres and Edwin Encarnacion each poked a solo shot over the short right-field porch for the Yankees, who shook off another injury to Giancarlo Stanton and won for the 10th time in 11 games. The AL East leaders are 8-1 on a 10-game homestand that wrapped up Wednesday.

Aroldis Chapman allowed a run in the ninth before retiring Freddy Galvis on an easy grounder with two aboard for his 23rd save in 25 tries.

“It certainly wasn’t perfect tonight, but the long ball obviously played a huge role,” Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

Stanton exited in the fourth with a bruised right knee and was scheduled for an MRI. He got tangled up with Toronto pitcher Clayton Richard (0-4) in the first while getting thrown out on a headfirst slide into third base.

The 2017 NL MVP just returned last Tuesday from in-

juries to his biceps, shoulder and calf that had sidelined him since March 31.

Nonetheless, the Yankees wasted no time rewriting the record book on this night.

LeMahieu hit his fourth career leadoff shot into the second deck down the left-field line, breaking a mark New York shared for one day with the 2002 Texas Rangers, who homered in 27 consecutive games.

“We’ve got something special,” Judge said.

The Yankees quickly added another one, too, when Judge followed with an opposite-field drive into the right-field stands.

MLB roundup

Machado homers in first trip back to Baltimore

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — After the faithful fans showered Manny Machado with cheers and love, the former Baltimore star made himself right at home — again — at Camden Yards.

Machado marked his return with a performance reminiscent of his time with the Orioles, hitting a long homer and driving in two runs to help the San Diego Padres roll to an 8-3 victory on Tuesday night.

Machado played seven years with the Orioles before being traded last July, months before becoming a free agent. The third baseman signed a 10-year, \$300 million contract with the Padres in February.

Playing in the stadium where he made his major league debut in 2012, Machado received a standing ovation from many in the crowd of 21,644 before striking out in the first inning.

In the third, however, he hit a shot off Jimmy Yacabonis (1-2) that traveled an estimated 455 feet. One inning later, he drilled a run-scoring single to left field.

“It was awesome,” Machado said. “I came back, and like

always, the fans did not disappoint. It was good to come back home.”

Before the game, Machado said he was “weird nervous.” Afterward, he cherished yet another memory forged at his favorite stadium.

“I didn’t know what to expect. They go above and beyond. It was truly something special that I’ll never forget,” he said. “It was just amazing. The fans gave me a standing O. It tells you everything about the fan base here.”

The home run was Machado’s 100th at Camden Yards. The 2010 first-round draft pick has a 12-game hitting streak and an RBI in a career-high eight straight games.

Extending those streaks in Baltimore was a nice bonus.

“He loves this city. He loves the people of this city,” San Diego manager Andy Green said. “To come back immediately and to do what he did today, to homer, I know it meant a lot to his family. It’s fun to watch a really good person experience a really good day.”

Red Sox 6, White Sox 3: Xander Bogaerts hit a two-run

homer and David Price (5-2) struck out nine, leading host Boston past Chicago.

Phillies 7, Mets 5: Maikel Franco hit a go-ahead two-run homer for the second straight game, powering host Philadelphia past New York.

Nationals 6, Marlins 1: Max Scherzer (7-5) struck out 10 in eight innings and won his fifth straight start to lead visiting Washington past Miami.

Dodgers 3, Diamondbacks 2: Enrique Hernandez hit his sixth career leadoff home run and Justin Turner added a solo shot to power visiting Los Angeles.

Braves 3, Cubs 2: Ozzie Albies and Ronald Acuna Jr. homered, Max Fried (9-3) pitched six innings of two-hit ball and visiting Atlanta beat Chicago.

Royals 8, Indians 6: Hunter Dozier’s grand slam capped visiting Kansas City’s stunning five-run rally in the ninth inning off Cleveland closer Brad Hand (4-3).

Rangers 5, Tigers 3: Jesse Chavez (3-2) pitched into the seventh inning in his longest outing in over two years, and visiting Texas beat Detroit.

Astros 5, Pirates 1: Yuli Gurriel and Alex Bregman homered to back up a solid start by Gerrit Cole (7-5) in his first meeting against his former team, and host Houston beat Pittsburgh.

Twins 9, Rays 4: Eddie Rosario had four hits, Willians Astudillo added three hits and host Minnesota extended Blake Snell’s (4-7) troubles.

Mariners 8, Brewers 3: Daniel Vogelbach hit a two-run homer to lift his team past host Milwaukee for Seattle’s first interleague win in five tries this season.

Athletics 7, Cardinals 3: Chad Pinder and Marcus Semien homered in a six-run fifth inning, and visiting Oakland rallied to beat St. Louis.

Giants 4, Rockies 2: Madison Bumgarner (4-7) struck out 11 batters in six innings and also drove in a run with an RBI single that helped lead host San Francisco past Colorado.

Angels 5, Reds 1: Tommy La Stella hit a leadoff inside-the-park homer and Luis Rengifo added a three-run shot for host Los Angeles in a victory over Cincinnati.

Women's World Cup

Netherlands tops Japan on late penalty

Associated Press

RENNES, France — Tears were still flowing from Saki Kumagai's eyes more than 30 minutes later.

With victorious Dutch rivals passing her on the way out of the stadium, Japan's captain seemed to find solace in speaking about the penalty long after it cost her team a place in the quarterfinals of the Women's World Cup.

With Tuesday night's game entering the 90th minute locked at 1-1, Kumagai's outstretched left arm blocked the shot Vivianne Miedema had aimed into the right side of the net.

"It hit my hand for sure," Kumagai said. "It's difficult to accept but it's also sad. I know that is football."

Referee Melissa Borjas pointed to the penalty spot and Lieke Martens netted her second goal of the game in the 90th

minute to seal a 2-1 victory that sent the Netherlands into the quarterfinals for the first time.

"We have made history," Martens said. "I'm not usually taking the penalties but I felt really good this game. I asked Sherida Spitse if I could take it and she gave it directly to me and I felt quite relaxed about it."

The reigning European champions will need to maintain that composure as they prepare for a meeting with Italy on Saturday after going one stage further than their Women's World Cup debut four years ago.

"We were standing in the circle after the match and we were so happy, yelling at each other," Netherlands coach Sarina Wiegman said. "We were saying, 'Let's continue writing history.'"

It is journey's end for Japan, which won the 2011 tourna-

ment and was the runner-up four years later.

The strength of the second-half display counted for nothing.

As befitting a meeting of the Asian and European champions, the game produced some of the slickest action of the World Cup. A backheel flick set up Martens to send the Dutch in front in the 17th minute and Yui Hasegawa equalized in the 43rd to complete a slick passing move.

But the post, crossbar and goalkeeper Sari van Veenendaal thwarted Japan's pursuit of a winning goal.

"I think we lacked the clinical edge," Japan coach Asako Takakura said. "We have to accept the result, we're defeated, we're very disappointed and for all the players I feel very sorry for them and frustrated."

With the last Asian team eliminated, the Women's World

Cup will have a record seven European teams in the quarterfinals. Norway and England meet in Le Havre on Thursday and France takes on the United States the following night. After the Netherlands plays Italy on Saturday, Germany and Sweden will meet.

"It's really tough to be here," Netherlands forward Miedema said. "Sometimes it kind of feels like a Euros."

That is a title already won by this team, thanks to Miedema's goals in the final two years ago on home soil.

The fans won't have far to travel for the World Cup quarterfinal, with Valenciennes around two hours' drive from the Netherlands.

It will be another chance for the orange-clad fans who danced and sang their way in a convoy to the stadium on Tuesday to stamp their mark on this tournament.

Rocker, Vanderbilt even CWS finals with Michigan

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Vanderbilt's go-to guy throughout the postseason once again delivered a dominant performance.

Freshman Kumar Rocker struck out 11 while pitching 6¹/₃ innings of three-hit ball, and Vanderbilt got to Michigan's shaky bullpen in a 4-1 win in Game 2 of the College World Series finals Tuesday night.

The Commodores (58-12), who set the Southeastern Conference single-season wins record, forced a winner-take-all Game 3 on Wednesday night at TD Ameritrade Park.

"We had the right guy on the mound," Vandy coach Tim Corbin said. "I haven't been around him that long, but I know the fibers of the kid. I know how he's directed. I know how he thinks. I know how he attacks."

Rocker (12-5), who pitched

a no-hitter against Duke in the super regionals the last time the Commodores faced elimination, set the tone in another in a line of strong performances. Ten of the 6-foot-4, 255-pound Rocker's first 11 pitches were strikes.

Michigan (50-21) failed to score in the opening inning for the first time in its five CWS games, and five of its first six batters struck out.

"He's as advertised," Michigan coach Erik Bakich said. "He's got a special breaking ball that's tough to see. You try to sit on a fastball, and he throws enough of those breaking balls for strikes. You try to sit on the breaking ball, and he gets you with a 95-mph fastball."

Redshirt freshman Isaiah Paige (4-1), pitching for the first time since June 8 in regionals, drew the start for Michigan and worked four-plus innings.

The problems for the Wolverines started after Paige departed. The Commodores picked up an unearned run in the fifth and then Jack Weisenberger, who relieved Benjamin Keizer with two runners on in the sixth, let in two runs on wild pitches to back-to-back batters.

Philip Clarke's ninth homer, against Angelo Smith, made it 4-0.

Other than Jeff Criswell, a starter until the postseason, Michigan's bullpen hadn't been tested until Tuesday. The Wolverines used only three pitchers in winning their first four CWS games.

"I thought early we were squeezing it," Corbin said. "We settled in a little bit better as the game went along, and we took the runs that were given to us. But at the same time, I thought we hit the ball better from the fifth inning and on,

after Clarkey hit that home run actually."

Rocker worked around two singles, two walks and two errors through six shutout innings. Jack Blomgren singled against him leading off the seventh and a balk put him on second. Rocker struck out Joe Donovan and then left to an ovation from the fans behind the Vanderbilt dugout.

"It's comforting as a team to have a freshman that can do what he does on a daily basis, on a weekly basis," said Clarke, Vandy's catcher. "It gives us the energy we need, especially on a day like today."

Michigan scored its only run when Ako Thomas greeted closer Tyler Brown with a base hit.

Rocker is 10-1 in his last 11 starts, and he's 4-0 in the NCAA Tournament with a 0.96 ERA, 44 strikeouts, five walks in 28 innings.

IOC to change bid process, host election

Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — Olympics hosted in multiple cities or countries. Bidders proactively invited. Candidates recommended with possibly no opponents.

Radical changes in how and when Olympic hosts are picked were voted in Wednesday as the International Olympic Committee looks to avoid negative headlines and angering local taxpayers following referendum losses and excessive spending on white elephant venues.

Stung by recent public votes in Europe and Canada, the IOC agreed that future bidders could need to win a referendum before entering a race.

“We cannot, I suggest, continue to be damaged as we have in the past,” veteran IOC member John Coates said, presenting reforms already tested in the 2026 Winter Games contest.

On Monday, Milan-Cortina in northern Italy beat Stockholm-Are, which tied Sweden to Latvia’s bobsled track, in a campaign where support from national and city governments was often shaky.

Future Olympic bidders will be required to use existing and temporary venues and infrastructure, while being steered away from costly construction projects.

A new, flexible campaign timetable will end the Olympic Charter rule requiring hosts to be voted on seven years in advance of a Summer or Winter Games. That rule already had to be waived in 2017, allowing Los Angeles to be picked 11 years in advance of the 2028 Summer Games.

There might not be an election at all.

A key part of the new process is creating new Olympic panels — one each for Summer and Winter Games — which will recommend one or more candidates for an election.

It chimes with IOC President Thomas Bach’s wish to avoid “too many losers” — a phrase first heard during the 2024 race as it became a double award. Paris got the 2024 Games, while Los Angeles got 2028.

The new panels will be empowered to have “permanent ongoing dialogue” with potential bidders and proactively approach preferred hosts. They

will report first to the Bach-chaired executive board, which will pick the members.

Coates said the process targets “developing a significant pipeline” of candidates even beyond the next bidding contest.

The IOC was not being “control freaks” demanding legal guarantees far in advance, said Richard Pound, the longest serving member.

“Once you make a decision on the host city, millions of people start to make plans based on that and hundreds of millions of dollars are committed to it,” Pound said.

The IOC’s reformed approach to bidding followed Bach’s election in September 2013 and after Russia’s \$51 billion spending on venues, infrastructure and budget overruns for the 2014 Sochi Olympics.

In other decisions Wednesday, Athens was chosen to host the IOC’s 2021 meeting. That session, from June 24-26, will include a presidential election with Bach currently expected to get a final four-year term unopposed.

Former Philadelphia 76ers co-owner Erick Thohir was among 10 new members elect-

ed. Thohir, also the former chairman of Inter Milan, is president of the Indonesian Olympic committee.

Other new members include: Laura Chinchilla, the president of Costa Rica from 2010 to 2014; Credit Suisse bank CEO Tidjane Thiam; and Narinder Batra, the president of the Indian Olympic body. Batra also leads the Lausanne-based governing body of field hockey.

The biggest voting total, and loudest applause, went to Greek Olympic president Spyros Capralos. In 2012, the IOC formally warned Capralos after he was implicated in black market ticket sales for the London Olympics.

Two changes were made to the 15-member IOC executive board: Prince Feisal al Hussein of Jordan was elected to replace Gunilla Lindberg of Sweden, whose eight-year term ended.

Nawal el Moutawakel of Morocco, the 400-meter hurdles gold medalist at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, was elected to join the board when Willi Kaltschmitt of Guatemala leaves in January.

Olympic status stripped from boxing body AIBA

Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — The IOC stripped Olympic status from troubled boxing body AIBA on Wednesday and will now organize qualifying and final tournaments for the 2020 Tokyo Games.

AIBA had created “very serious reputational, legal and financial risks” for the IOC and its American stakeholders, Olympic inquiry panel chairman Nenad Lalovic said.

The election of AIBA president Gafur Rakhimov, who is under United States federal sanctions for suspected links to eastern European organized crime, prodded the IOC last year to investigate boxing’s governance, debts and integ-

ity of Olympic bouts.

International Olympic Committee members voted to endorse the executive board’s recommendation last month to suspend AIBA’s Olympic status.

Lausanne-based AIBA has said it is near bankruptcy with debts of about \$17 million. It is cut off from future income from Tokyo revenues, and the 2019 world championships for men and women in Russia are no longer Olympic qualifiers.

AIBA has an emergency meeting scheduled for Thursday in Geneva, which an IOC delegate is scheduled to attend.

AIBA hoped for a reprieve by Rakhimov leaving his duties to an interim replacement in March, though he could choose

to return at any time this year.

“These risks don’t disappear by the mere fact of Mr. Rakhimov ‘stepping aside,’” IOC board member Lalovic said, noting the Uzbek’s “level of influence and control remains uncertain.”

In December 2017, the U.S. Treasury Department noted “Rakhimov has been described as having moved from extortion and car theft to becoming one of Uzbekistan’s leading criminals and an important person involved in the heroin trade.”

The IOC had to avoid the consequences of fixed bouts or suspect results in Tokyo, said Morinari Watanabe, who leads the Olympic panel overseeing the next Olympic boxing competitions.

“It’s not just losing trust in boxing. It’s lost trust in the Olympic Games, it’s lost trust in the IOC,” said Watanabe, the Japanese president of the International Gymnastics Federation.

IOC president Thomas Bach said “we are all concerned with the refereeing.”

Boxers’ lack of faith in AIBA at each Olympics from 2008 to 2016 were raised by Lalovic, who led a three-member inquiry team.

Those doubts persisted despite AIBA reviews after each Olympics, Lalovic noted to an audience that included former AIBA president C.K. Wu, an IOC member for 31 years.

Wu oversaw each post-Olympic integrity review.