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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Tourists killed in Tunisia museum attack

The Associated Press

TUNIS, Tunisia — Attackers opened fire Wednesday at a major museum in Tunisia's capital, gunning down 17 tourists as dozens more sprinted to safety. At least 21 people in all were killed, including two gunmen, but some attackers may have escaped, authorities said.

The attack on the famed National Bardo Museum in Tunis was the first on a tourist site in years in Tunisia, a shaky young democracy that has struggled to keep Islamic extremist violence at bay.

It wasn't clear who the attackers were but security forces immediately flooded the area. Tunisia's parliament building, next to the museum, was evacuated.

Private television Wataniya

showed masked Tunisian security forces escorting dozens of tourists up nearby steps and away from the danger, as armed security forces pointed guns toward an adjacent building.

Many elderly people, apparently tourists, ran in panic to safety, including at least one couple carrying two children.

Tunisian Prime Minister Habib Essid said 21 people were killed: 17 tourists, two gunmen, a Tunisian security officer and a Tunisian cleaning woman. He said the dead tourists came from Italy, Poland, Germany and Spain.

He said two or three of the attackers remained at large.

Several other people were reported wounded in the attack, including three Poles and at least two Italians. The Italian Foreign Ministry said 100 other

Italians had been taken to a secure location.

Some of the Italians at the museum were believed to have been passengers aboard the Costa Fascinosa, a cruise liner making a seven-day trip of the western Mediterranean that had docked in Tunis. Ship owner Costa Crociere confirmed that some of its 3,161 passengers were visiting the capital Wednesday and that a Bardo tour was on the itinerary, but said it couldn't confirm how many passengers were in the museum at the time.

The cruise ship recalled all the passengers to the ship and was in touch with local authorities and the Italian Foreign Ministry.

The National Bardo Museum, built in a 15th-century palace, is the largest museum in Tunisia and houses one of the world's

largest collections of Roman mosaics among its 8,000 works. The museum is near the North African nation's parliament, 2.5 miles from the city center. A new wing with contemporary architecture was built as part of a 2009 renovation, doubling the surface area.

The attack comes the day after Tunisian security officials confirmed the death in neighboring Libya of a leading suspect in Tunisian terror attacks and in the killings of two opposition figures in Tunisia.

Ahmed Rouissi gained the nickname of the "black box of terrorism." The information on his death was made public by security officials giving testimony in parliament and cited by the official TAP news agency.

DOD loses track of \$500M in aid to Yemen

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is unable to account for more than \$500 million in U.S. military aid given to Yemen amid fears that the weaponry, aircraft and equipment is at risk of being seized by Iranian-backed rebels or al-Qaida, according to U.S. officials.

With Yemen in turmoil and its government splintering apart, the Defense Department has lost its ability to monitor the whereabouts of U.S.-donated small arms, ammunition, night-vision goggles, patrol boats, vehicles and other supplies. The situation has grown worse since the United States closed its embassy in Sanaa, the capital, last month and withdrew many of its military advisers.

In recent weeks, members of Congress have held closed-door meetings with U.S. military officials to press for an account-

ing of the arms and equipment. Pentagon officials have said they have little information to go on and that there is little they can do at this point to prevent the weapons and gear from falling into the wrong hands.

"We have to assume it's completely compromised and gone," said a legislative aide on Capitol Hill, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

U.S. military officials declined to comment for the record. A defense official, speaking on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the Pentagon, said there was no hard evidence that U.S. arms or equipment had been looted or confiscated. But the official acknowledged that the Pentagon had lost track of the items.

"Even in the best-case scenario in an unstable country, we never have 100 percent accountability," the defense offi-

cial said.

Yemen's government was toppled in January by Shiite Houthi rebels, who receive support from Iran and have strongly opposed U.S. drone strikes in Yemen. The Houthis have taken over many Yemeni military bases in the northern part of the country, including some in Sanaa that were home to U.S.-trained counterterrorism units. Other bases have been overrun by fighters from al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

As a result, the Defense Department has halted shipments to Yemen of about \$125 million in military hardware that were scheduled for delivery this year, including unarmed Scan Eagle drones, other types of aircraft and Jeeps. That equipment will be donated instead to other countries in the Middle East and Africa, the defense official said.

Although the loss of weapons

and equipment already delivered to Yemen would be embarrassing, U.S. officials said it would be unlikely to alter the military balance of power there. Yemen is estimated to have the second-highest gun ownership rate in the world, ranking behind only the United States, and its bazaars are well stocked with heavy weaponry. Moreover, the U.S. government restricted its lethal aid to small firearms and ammunition, brushing aside Yemeni requests for fighter jets and tanks.

Washington has supplied more than \$500 million in military aid to Yemen since 2007 under an array of Defense and State Department programs. The Pentagon and CIA have provided additional assistance through classified programs, making it difficult to know exactly how much Yemen has received in total.

Okinawa Marines could be sent to help Vanuatu

By **SETH ROBSON**
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Commanders have directed Okinawa-based Marines to be ready to support cyclone relief operations in Vanuatu.

U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific spokesman Chuck Little said Wednesday that the III Marine Expeditionary Force had been told to be prepared to provide a Forward Command Element Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team to the storm-battered country.

Vanuatu, an archipelago of 65 islands between Australia and Hawaii, is struggling to recover from one of the most violent storms on record. Tropical Cyclone was packing 168 mph winds when it roared ashore last week, causing widespread damage and flooding.

New Zealand, Australian, British and French military forces are already supporting relief efforts — collecting im-

agery, evacuating survivors and delivering supplies, equipment and personnel to the islands. If there is a request for U.S. support, the Marine Corps team would help determine what would be required and how it could be provided, Little said.

Dave Polatty, a professor at the U.S. Naval War College, said personnel from the U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance are assessing the damage in Vanuatu.

"My gut tells me that, based on the size of the island chain, the distances are significant enough that I suspect navies from numerous nations will be involved," he said. "I will be surprised if the U.S. military doesn't send some capabilities to assist in the relief effort."

Vanuatu was a base for the Allies fighting Japan during World War II, Polatty said.

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Carter: House defense budget as is faces veto

By **TRAVIS J. TRITTEN**
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said Wednesday that the president would veto the proposed House defense budget that uses an emergency war fund to skirt defense spending limits.

Carter and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey each testified to the House Armed Services Committee that long-term military planning would be hamstrung by the budget unveiled this week, which puts \$94 billion into the Overseas Contingency Operations fund while maintaining a \$523 billion cap on the base budget. The proposal came from fiscal conservatives on the House Budget Committee and has set up a showdown with defense hawks in both chambers of Congress who

have been pushing for a cap-busting \$577 billion base defense budget and \$51 billion for overseas war efforts.

Carter waded into the debate Wednesday, saying President Barack Obama made it clear that he would veto any budget plan that keeps the sequester and hamstringing the military in its multiyear planning. The House proposal to tap OCO "doesn't work, because to have the defense we need and the strategy we have laid out, we need the budget we have laid out not just this year but for the years to come," Carter said. "It is not going to permit us to carry out the strategy as we have planned."

Dempsey said the military has a five-year strategy it hopes will be funded by a budget without the sequestration cap.

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Navy releases report on Mahan shooting

From wire reports

NORFOLK, Va. — The failures of a civilian police officer at the gate of Norfolk Naval Station allowed an intruder to enter the base without authorization last March and fatally shoot a sailor aboard the destroyer Mahan as it sat pierside, a Navy investigation has found.

The guard failed to ask the intruder for identification or

his intent, did not immediately pursue him when he realized the driver was not making a U-turn, and did not sound an alarm to warn others on base, demonstrating a complete lapse of proper security procedure, said the Navy report, released Tuesday evening.

Those errors were key factors in the deadly shooting of Petty Officer 2nd Class Mark Mayo, the investigation found.

But the report also cites deeper systemic problems with security on the world's largest naval base, including a lack of senior supervisors, manpower shortages, poor integration between the base and ship security, and broken equipment, including cameras, turnstiles and duress buttons. The report was released nearly a year since the March 24, 2014, attack.

Navy strategic air wing commander fired

WASHINGTON — The Navy fired the commander of an organization whose aircraft allow the president and the secretary of defense to directly contact the submarines, bombers and land-based missiles that comprise the nation's strategic nuclear force.

A Navy statement said Capt. Heather E. Cole was relieved of her duties as commander of Strategic Communications Wing 1, based at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., for what it called a "loss of confidence" in her ability to lead.

A spokeswoman, Cmdr. Jeanie Groeneveld, said the firing was based on findings of an investigation into her manage-

ment of the wing. Details were not released.

Cole's air wing has no role in operating nuclear weapons but is responsible for the Navy squadrons whose E-6B Mercury aircraft provide communications links between the president and the nuclear forces.

From The Associated Press

Japan probe threatens to US ambassador

TOKYO — Japanese police are investigating phone calls threatening to kill U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy and another American envoy, authorities said Wednesday.

Tokyo police are investigating calls to the U.S. Embassy threatening to kill Kennedy and similar ones targeting Alfred Magleby, the U.S. consul general based on Okinawa, an Okinawa police official said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment on the investigation.

Tokyo police declined to comment. The embassy also did not comment, citing policy regarding the ambassador's security.

Earlier this month, the U.S. ambassador to South Korea, Mark Lippert, was knifed by an anti-U.S. activist in Seoul and had to be hospitalized for several days.

From The Associated Press

Vonn wins downhill title

The Associated Press

MERIBEL, France — Lindsey Vonn won the World Cup downhill title for the seventh time after winning the last race in the discipline on Wednesday at the season-ending finals.

Her seven downhill titles and her 18th crystal globe are both records for women.

"It's incredible after being out with two knee operations. It is just amazing to be sitting where I am today," the American said. "I'm so proud and happy, and I really have to thank the people that supported me and got me back to where I am now."

Vonn finished 0.24 seconds ahead of Elisabeth Goergl and 0.30 ahead of Nicole Hosp.

Austrian racer Anna Fenninger finished second in the downhill standings. She trailed Vonn by 35 points heading into the

race, and failed to make an impact on the Roc de Fer course, finishing nearly one second behind Vonn in eighth place.

Vonn, who raced immediately after her, increased her speed on the bottom section to clinch a 66th career race win. She is the all-time leader in wins.

Some fans near the finish held up banners saying "Congrats Lindsey" as she raised her poles.

Vonn finished the downhill season with 502 points, putting her 103 ahead of Fenninger. Tina Maze of Slovenia was third with 356.

In the race for the women's overall World Cup title, Fenninger holds a 12-point lead over Maze.

Maze gained some ground on Fenninger by finishing fourth on Wednesday.

Vonn, a four-time overall World Cup champion, is out of contention for the overall title this season.

Vonn blew out her right knee in a super-G at the 2013 world championships in Schladming, Austria. She hurt her knee again in her comeback, keeping her out of last year's Sochi Olympics.

She went nearly two years without a victory before winning a downhill in Lake Louise, Canada, in December. The following month, she overtook Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell's 35-year-old record of 62 World Cup victories.

"I'm incredibly thankful to be holding another downhill title," Vonn said. "It's been a long two years coming back from my injuries."

Vonn will battle with Fenninger again on Thursday when the super-G title will be decided. Vonn is eight points ahead of Fenninger.

Also, Kjetil Jansrud clinched the men's downhill title by winning the last race, too.

Toews' 4 points carry Chicago

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jonathan Toews scored twice and assisted on both of Marian Hossa's goals to lead the Chicago Blackhawks past the slumping New York Islanders 4-1 on Tuesday night.

Toews recorded his first four-point game this season as the Blackhawks won their third straight and improved to 7-1-1 since Feb. 24 when leading scorer Patrick Kane broke his collarbone against Florida.

New York's Nikolay Kulemin scored at 5:29 of third period to end Corey Crawford's shutout bid, but the Islanders lost their season-worst fourth straight.

Although Crawford made 38 saves, he wasn't tested heavily by the goal-starved Islanders. New York has scored only one goal in each of its four consecutive losses.

Michal Neuvirth made 26 saves in place of injured No. 1 goalie Jaroslav Halak.

Canadiens 3, Panthers 2: P.K. Subban scored the last of Montreal's three second-period goals as the Canadiens held on to beat host Florida.

Devils 2, Penguins 0: Cory Schneider made 35 saves in earning his fifth shutout of the season, and New Jersey sent visiting Pittsburgh to its third straight loss.

Sabres 2, Bruins 1 (SO): Anders Lindback made seven of his 44 saves in overtime, then shut out Boston for three rounds of the shootout as visiting Buffalo rallied to win.

Senators 2, Hurricanes 1 (OT): Mark Stone scored the winning goal 4:46 into overtime, and Andrew Hammond became the second goalie in NHL history to allow two goals or fewer in each of his first 12 starts as Ottawa edged host Carolina.

Hammond (11-0-1) matched the record set by Boston's Frank Brimsek, who also went 12 consecutive games in 1938 without giving up more than two goals.

Wild 3, Predators 2 (OT): Matt Dumba scored 22 seconds into overtime to give Minnesota a win over host Nashville.

Jets 5, Sharks 2: Blake Wheeler scored two goals and added an assist to help Winnipeg top visiting San Jose.

Blues 4, Flames 0: Alex Steen scored two goals and Brian Elliott made 25 saves to lead St. Louis over host Calgary.

Canucks 4, Flyers 1: Alexandre Burrows scored a pair of goals 17 seconds apart in the third period, and host Vancouver beat Philadelphia.

Boeheim to retire in 3 years

The Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Syracuse basketball coach Jim Boeheim will retire in three years and the university's athletic director has resigned, the school announced Wednesday following a scathing NCAA report that imposed sanctions for violations that lasted more than a decade.

Chancellor Kent Syverud said Wednesday that Boeheim, a Hall of Famer and head coach for 39 years, decided to make the announcement to "bring certainty to the team and program in the coming years" and to allow for a smooth transition.

Athletic director Daryl Gross will take another marketing position with the school, while Pete Salas will serve as interim athletic director.

The violations involved academic mis-

conduct, extra benefits and the university's drug testing policy. Boeheim, 70, is already suspended for the first half of the next Atlantic Coast Conference season, a total of nine games. Syracuse will also have three scholarships taken away for four seasons and all wins vacated in which an ineligible player participated from 2004 through 2012.

The March 6 report by the NCAA Committee on Infractions found several violations, particularly in men's basketball.

Union head Clark wants Rose reinstated

LAKELAND, Fla. — The head of the Major League Baseball Players Association says

he wants Pete Rose to be reinstated.

Former All-Star first baseman Tony Clark made the remarks to reporters at spring training Tuesday, a day after new commissioner Rob Manfred said he had received an application from Rose.

Baseball's career hits leader agreed to a lifetime ban in 1989 following an investigation that concluded he bet on the Cincinnati Reds to win while managing the team.

"I would love to see Pete reinstated," Clark said.

Rose applied for reinstatement in September 1997 and met in November 2002 with Commissioner Bud Selig, who never ruled on the application. Selig was succeeded by Manfred in January. Now Rose is trying again to have the ban lifted.

Knicks surprise Spurs in OT

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The poor passing and sloppy shooting in overtime hurt, though the effort was more disappointing than the execution to Spurs coach Gregg Popovich.

"We didn't respect the game," he said. "We didn't respect our opponent. It was a pathetic performance, and I hope every player is embarrassed. Not because we're supposed to win the game, quote unquote, but it's about how you play the game."

The NBA's worst team played it better than its defending champions, and the New York Knicks surprised San Antonio 104-100 on Tuesday night.

Alexey Shved scored 21 points and made the key defensive play in overtime for the Knicks, who became the first team in NBA history to enter a game this late in a season with a winning percentage below .200 and beat the defending champs, according to information provided by Elias to the Knicks.

Pelicans 85, Bucks 84: Anthony Davis had 20 points and 12 rebounds as the host Pelicans held off Milwaukee.

Davis hit only 6 of 18 shots, but hit a clutch 15-footer that gave New Orleans an 85-82 lead with 1:07 left.

Clippers 99, Hornets 92: J.J. Redick scored 23 points and Chris Paul

had 20 points and eight assists as the host Clippers beat the Hornets.

The Clippers led 63-41 with 10 minutes left in the third quarter. Charlotte rallied within a point in the final period.

Blake Griffin had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Clippers.

Rockets 107, Magic 94: Donatas Motiejunas scored 23 points and the host Rockets used a big run late in the fourth quarter to break open a close game and beat the Magic.

Pistons 105, Grizzlies 95: Reggie Jackson had 23 points and a career-high 20 assists as the Pistons ended a 10-game skid with a comeback victory over the Grizzlies.



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Science shows fans favor the underdog

The Associated Press

If you got that warm and fuzzy feeling the weekend Lehigh beat Duke or the year N.C. State socked Phi Slama Jama or the time Butler almost did it, you are not alone.

The science shows, again and again, that we can't resist pulling for the teams called the Anteaters (that's UC Irvine). Or for the UABs of the world to upend the UCLAs. For the time-tested crowd pleaser, the No. 12 seed, and for anyone else with the label 'underdog' when March Madness rolls around.

About a dozen studies over the past 25 years have shown, in one way or another, that we, as sports fans, are inexorably drawn to the team with the odds stacked against it.

"It's the prominent narrative in sports," said Nadav Goldschmied of University of San Diego, who collaborated on one of the studies.

This penchant runs counter to almost everything else we're wired to think. Scientific studies show people want to be associated with success and that our self-esteem grows when we're part of the "in" crowd. Walk one well-dressed job candidate through the door, then follow him up with a schlub, and the studies show the majority of us favor the person

who appears more attractive, almost regardless of their credentials.

But take that same dynamic into a sporting contest, where it's a scraggly No. 14 seed against a polished No. 3, and the perceptions change.

One of Goldschmied's studies had people watch a basketball game between two relatively unknown European teams after reading different write-ups about the rivalry. One group was led to believe Team A had won the last 15 meetings; the other was led to believe Team B had won all those games. Who they rooted for tilted based on who they considered the underdog.

Furthermore, in both cases, the team perceived as the underdog was viewed as the team giving more effort with less ability.

"That's just the story we tell ourselves," Goldschmied said. "We don't have to look too deep to figure it out."

One minor detail: It's not always true.

Another study conducted by an Ohio State professor showed that groups that felt they had more to lose actually tried harder, which basically tears apart the whole theory that the Lafayettes, Eastern Washingtons and Belmonts of the world will be laying more on the line this week than Kentucky, Kansas and Wisconsin.

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In this study, college students were

asked to perform a simple task, and were told a group of students from another specific college was doing the same work.

In the studies where one of the competing schools was listed appreciably higher in the U.S. News and World Report college rankings, the students from that school completed about 30 percent more of the task — in short, they worked harder — than when they were competing against a college ranked better or equal to theirs.

Conclusion: "The motivation gains were there when students felt their group's superior status was threatened," said the study's co-author, Robert Lount of Ohio State's Fisher College of Business.

"We came at it from a completely different angle, which was, we know we like to avoid losing more than we appreciate the joy of winning," Lount said. "If you think of your own team as favored, the team may work especially hard to make sure it comes out on top."

For all our love of underdogs, there are a few exceptions.

If a person has a specific rooting interest in a team — say the college they graduated from — they tend to favor that team, even if the team isn't the underdog.

It helps explain a study that found when big-conference teams are seeded better in games against mid-majors in the tournament, the Vegas point spread for the

big-conference teams is inflated by an average of about two points a game.

"You look at the power conferences, and you see their following is much stronger than those of the smaller schools," said the study's co-author, Jim Lackritz, a statistics expert at San Diego State. "People put their money where their hearts are and that drives the line up."

All of which could serve as good advice for people picking against point spreads over the next few weeks.

The majority of us, though, will fill out brackets — no point spreads involved — based on feel and feeling. Many will pay scant attention to the fact that double-digit seeds have won a mere 41 of 172 games during the opening week — less than 24 percent — over the past five years.

Seems like more, doesn't it?

Well, we're wired to remember it that way.

Quick quiz: Who won the fight at the end of the first "Rocky" movie?

Answer: Apollo Creed.

But in a study Goldschmied is currently conducting, he said a majority of those asked answered "Rocky."

"We will bend our memory," Goldschmied said. "We have forced our memory to change just to fit the underdog story. It's because of the underdog mode in all of us."

Rebels stun BYU

The Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio — Ole Miss pulled off the NCAA tournament's first big comeback.

Against the team that's known for the biggest one of all, no less.

Stefan Moody scored 26 points and led Mississippi's comeback from a 17-point halftime deficit to a 94-90 victory over BYU on Tuesday night in the First Four.

The Rebels (21-12) trailed until Moody led a 15-2 run midway through the second half. He hit a late three-pointer that helped finish it off.

"Welcome to March Madness!" Mississippi coach Andy Kennedy said.

It was some way to get it going.

Ole Miss goes to Jacksonville, Fla., to play sixth-seeded Xavier on Thursday afternoon in the East Region, a team that Kennedy knows well from his days as a coach at Cincinnati.

BYU (25-10) pulled off the biggest comeback in NCAA tournament history in Dayton three years ago, rallying from a 25-point first-half deficit to a 78-72 win over Iona in the First Four. This time, the Cougars couldn't hold the big lead.

"This game will sting for quite a while," coach Dave Rose said. "It was pretty similar to (three) years ago when we were here."

Tyler Haws, a senior guard who is BYU's all-time leading scorer, had 33 points but missed a three-pointer as BYU tried to catch up in the closing seconds. It was the first time this season that the Cougars lost after leading by 17 points.

"We did enough offensively to win the game," Haws said. "We found our rhythm in the first half and got it going. It got away from us in the second half. We didn't really have any answers for them defensively."

Haws had 19 points in the first half, helping the Cougars pull ahead 49-32. Moody got the Rebels' guard-driven offense going midway through the second half, when three BYU players picked up

their fourth fouls and things opened up near the basket.

"Definitely a sense of urgency," said Moody, whose 26 points were an Ole Miss NCAA tournament record. "We could have went in the locker room, sulked about it and come back out, and it would have just got worse."

M.J. Rhett added a career-high 20 points for Ole Miss, including a pair of three-point plays and a dunk during the go-ahead run.

Chase Fischer put the Cougars ahead 8-0, making a reverse layup and a pair of 3s. Ole Miss missed 15 of its first 19 shots overall as BYU took control. Fischer finished with 23 points, going 6-for-12 from beyond the arc.

Kennedy gets to prepare for another game against Xavier, an old nemesis. Kennedy was an assistant coach for four years at Cincinnati and interim coach for one season. Xavier and Cincinnati play an annual crosstown rivalry game.

"I'm good friends with (Xavier coach) Chris Mack," Kennedy said. "Obviously I'm very familiar with Xavier from my UC days."

Tip ins: Ole Miss: The Rebels held down guard Kyle Collinsworth, who set an NCAA record with six triple-doubles this season. Collinsworth didn't score in the first half, missing all four of his shots, and finished with eight points, seven rebounds and 10 assists.

BYU: Haws had his fifth 30-point game of the season. He finishes with 2,720 points. "It hurts to end this way," he said.

Tournament tidbits: Ole Miss: The Rebels improved to 5-7 in the NCAA Tournament.

BYU: The Cougars are 15-32 all-time, including 10-19 in their opening game.

Dominating up front: Ole Miss had 16 offensive rebounds to only six for BYU, resulting in 16 second-chance points to only four for the Cougars.

Pirates outlast Jaspers; UK next

The Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio — Hampton coach Edward Joyner Jr. had joked he'd need a lot of help if his team advanced to play No. 1 Kentucky.

"Jesus on speed dial," he kidded.

So after Hampton extended its unlikely run, beating Manhattan 74-64 Tuesday night in the First Four to dial up a date with the mighty Wildcats, Joyner grabbed a cell phone and pretended to make a really, really long-distance call.

"Hello? Hello?" he said at a postgame news conference.

Then he put down the phone, laughed, and said, "I guess he'll get back to me."

Reginald Johnson scored 15 points and made two critical defensive plays down the stretch and Quinton Chievous added 15 points and 13 rebounds before leaving with a sprained ankle in the final minutes.

"Hopefully I can keep icing it, get treatment and be ready for Kentucky on Thursday," said Chievous, a Tennessee transfer in his first year with the Pirates.

The Pirates (17-17) scored the first seven points, led by as many as 12 in the opening half and then, after Manhattan had rallied within a point, pulled away at the finish.

Johnson sealed the game with two huge steals, the second leading to his floor-length assist pass to Emmanuel Okoroba for a layup. Okoroba then hit a scoop shot on a drive and the lead was 67-58 with 90 seconds remaining. Manhattan (19-14) never threatened again.

The 68th team in a 68-team field, Hampton won as an underdog yet again.

"We love that. We take that head on," said Brian Darden, who scored 13 points including clinching free throws at the end. "That's our image."

Shane Richards scored 17 points and

Emmy Andujar 11 for the Jaspers, champions of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Tournament.

"You have to give Hampton credit," said coach Steve Masiello, who played four years at Kentucky and would have been the center of attention in Louisville had his team won. "I know we're all caught up in whether they had a losing record, [the fact that] they're 68th and we're 67. But they came out and played tonight."

No losers' lament: Hampton is the 24th team to make the NCAA tournament field with a losing record — and became the third in four years to win a game.

The Pirates started the season 1-5, won only two of 10 games during one span in the heart of the schedule, and closed the regular season just 12-17. They won four in a row to win the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference Tournament's automatic NCAA berth.

"As a team we never stopped believing," Joyner said. "We're happy where we are — and sometimes you gotta go through adversity to get to where you are."

Tip-ins: Hampton: No. 15-seeded Hampton shocked second-seeded Iowa State 58-57 in the 2001 tournament's first round in Boise, Idaho, when Tarvis Williams hit a 4-footer with 6.9 seconds left. It ranks as the greatest win in program history.

Manhattan: The Jaspers won't get a chance to create a bracket racket as they have twice before. Seeded 12th, they surprised No. 5 Florida 75-60 in the 2004 first round, and also pinned fourth-seeded Oklahoma with a 77-67 loss in the first round in 1995. They fell to 3-9 in their eight trips to the NCAAs.