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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Moon seeks to revive US-N. Korea nuke talks

BY KIM GAMEL
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea proposed semi-official three-way talks to get U.S.-North Korea nuclear negotiations back on track, while Seoul and Washington launched a week of small-scale military exercises that replaced annual war games.

President Moon Jae-in said he will revive his role as mediator between the adversaries after last week's summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un collapsed without agreement.

"We hope that the two sides will continue their dialogue and that the two leaders will achieve the settlement that was put off this time by meet-

ing again at the earliest date possible," Moon said in a meeting of his National Security Council.

"Our role has also once more become significant in the process," he added, calling on his top officials to seek ways to narrow the gap and get U.S. and North Korean officials back to the table in working-level talks.

Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha suggested dialogue involving officials and private experts from the two Koreas and the United States to help bridge differences over the extent of sanctions relief in exchange for denuclearization steps.

The breakdown of the second Trump-Kim summit — held Feb. 27-28 in Hanoi, Vietnam — was a setback for the South, which is eager to advance inter-

Korean economic projects and prevent a new conflict on the divided peninsula.

Trump said he had to "walk away" instead of taking what he called a "bad deal." But the two sides have promised to continue dialogue.

Moon took office at a time when the North and the United States were trading threats of war as Pyongyang showed strong progress in developing a long-range nuclear weapon.

He has frequently had to step in to push the two sides to the table, including helping to set up the first U.S.-North Korea summit on June 12 in Singapore.

Moon also insisted that South Korea will press forward with initiatives with the North but will stay within the limits of the U.S.-led economic sanctions, which are aimed at punishing Pyongyang for its nuclear

weapons program.

The U.N. Security Council has granted several exemptions to allow projects such as demining operations and a train survey to go forward.

In a bid to keep tensions low, Seoul and Washington have canceled annual war games known as Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, which traditionally have involved tens of thousands of U.S. and South Korean soldiers and the deployment of powerful aircraft carriers and strategic bombers. The drills always infuriate the communist state, which considers them a rehearsal for an invasion.

Instead, the allies kicked off a rebranded computer-simulated exercise dubbed Dong Maeng, which means "alliance," on Monday but gave few details about what it entails.

Parents lament elimination of DODEA Spanish program

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The U.S. military's school system is getting rid of a popular Spanish language program offered at dozens of its elementary schools overseas and stateside — and parents aren't happy about it.

The Department of Defense Education Activity announced in school newsletters late last year that it was discontinuing its Foreign Language in the Elementary School, or FLES, at the end of the current school year.

The program cut is part of a larger cost-saving measure to trim some 300 teachers in DODEA, a move that will increase middle and high school class sizes and free up funds for other priorities, such as the continued rollout of new college and

career-ready academic standards, DODEA officials have said.

Parents, meanwhile, have expressed disappointment with the decision in interviews with Stars and Stripes and on social media.

"I'm absolutely disappointed and feel like everybody loses," said Jessica Moisan, an Air Force spouse whose children participate in FLES at Sembach Elementary School near Kaiserslautern.

"At least keep it running in the schools where it's thriving," Moisan said.

FLES began as a DODEA pilot program in 2006. The intent was to introduce children to a second language at a young age, heeding a call to action from Defense Department leaders to increase the nation's foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding fol-

lowing the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

FLES was designed to provide a minimum of 90 minutes of Spanish instruction per week. It started in 27 schools and expanded to 61 schools in 2008, including 18 in Europe. It's mostly offered in kindergarten through third grade, though more than a dozen schools expanded the program to include fourth and fifth grade and, in a few instances, sixth grade.

DODEA made the decision to end FLES based on a 2014 review that found inconsistencies between schools in the program, including with curriculum, quality of instruction and teacher language fluency, among other factors, DODEA officials said.

FLES classrooms were observed and teachers and students were interviewed, said Lisa Holloway, DODEA chief of

curriculum and standards.

"I only observed maybe five FLES classrooms, and I never saw the same thing taking place in any of those classrooms," she said.

DODEA's evaluation of FLES included a visit to the schools that were part of the pilot and any other nearby schools that subsequently added a FLES program, DODEA spokesman Will Griffin told Stars and Stripes.

Holloway said some schools were using the original curriculum from the pilot while others created their own curriculum or used online materials.

Language ability varied. Some FLES teachers were native Spanish speakers while others had only one college-level Spanish course, the minimum language requirement for the program, she said.

Vet held in Korea flies home after mixup

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — U.S. Army combat veteran Tong Yi flew home Monday, nearly a month after he was detained in South Korea for allegedly violating strict conscription rules.

Yi, 40, an Ohio restaurant owner who also goes by the name Don, traveled to Seoul last month to attend his father's funeral.

Airport authorities prevented him from leaving the country on Feb. 6 because he faced a decades-old accusation of draft dodging.

South Korean police detained him for several hours. He was later released from custody but barred from leaving the country until March 2 pending review.

Prosecutors later said he

was guilty, but they decided not to pursue the case, according to Yi.

Yi, who was born in Seoul but emigrated with his family at age 9, said he's not angry about the experience.

"I don't think anyone meant me harm, and I believe they have these laws in place for a reason," he told *Stars and Stripes* in a text message Monday from the gate while waiting for his flight.

He said all the officials he met were "sympathetic to my situation and were very professional."

Yi said he received American citizenship while serving in the U.S. Army from 2004 to 2012, including tours in Afghanistan and South Korea.

South Korea, which has faced a threat from heavily armed North Korea since their

1950-53 war ended in stalemate, requires all able-bodied men to serve some two years in the military.

It has strict rules governing conscription, including one that compels South Korean-born men to declare plans to remain abroad and change citizenship when they turn 18.

Yi failed to do so. He said he didn't realize he still had responsibilities in his native land and his detention resulted from a misunderstanding.

His advice to anybody who might find themselves in a similar situation is to check with the South Korean Consulate in the United States before traveling to the peninsula.

Similar situations have occurred in the past due to South Korea's strict laws and attention to family bloodlines.

In one extreme case, an

American man was forced into the South Korean military even though he was born in Champaign, Ill., to immigrant parents.

Young Chun, who wrote a book about his experience called "The Accidental Citizen-Soldier," went to teach English for a year in South Korea in 2002 only to learn his birthplace had been mistakenly entered in the official family registry system as Seoul.

The government said the then-22-year-old had to complete his mandatory military service or face prison.

In Yi's case, he received an outpouring of support from his community, fellow veterans and many servicemembers after he posted an appeal on Facebook.

"I have so much to be thankful for," Yi said.

DOD sends THAAD system Israel to bolster its defenses

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — The U.S. military has deployed an advanced missile defense system to Israel where it will operate from various locations in an effort to bolster Israeli defenses, the military said Monday.

The decision to send the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, known as THAAD, to Israel was part of a new Pentagon strategy that calls for the more rapid and unpredictable deployment of forces around the world.

"These actions make our activities unpredictable to adversaries while maintaining strategic predictability for our allies and partners," U.S. European Command said in a statement. EUCOM did not cite a specific threat, but Israel has grown increasingly concerned about Iran-backed forces in

neighboring Syria, where the Jewish state has carried out scores of airstrikes.

Dynamic Force Employment, which was introduced by former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, already has altered how the Navy sends its warships worldwide as it shifts from traditional six-month deployments to a flexible system that can involve shorter but more frequent stints at sea.

Last year, the Army released a new strategy that also called for more unpredictable deployments. At the direction of acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan, the 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command out of Fort Bliss, Texas, was dispatched to Israel for an unspecified duration.

It's perhaps the highest profile "Dynamic Force Employment" modeled mission for U.S. Army Europe.

Video showing 2 Marines in blackface investigated

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Marine Corps has launched an investigation into a video of two Marines in blackface, dressed in combat uniforms and making racial slurs that was posted to social media and viewed by hundreds of thousands of people.

The video was posted by a Marine assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in California, according to the Marines.

The investigation is being conducted by the unit that the Marines are assigned to, the 3rd Marine Airlift Wing, according to a statement Monday from the unit.

Marine officials did not identify the servicemembers who appear in the video by name.

The video was posted initially on Snapchat and then reposted

on Twitter by an individual who said he shared it to point out racism in the Marine Corps.

In the video, two Marines in their uniforms appear with their faces darkened.

One Marine is heard saying, "blackface." The other Marine then places his cover on his head and salutes as he says, "Good morning, sir."

The clip ends as the first Marine says, "Hello, monkey."

Both Marines in the video appear to be white males.

It was not clear when the video was initially posted to Snapchat, but it was shared on Twitter on Feb. 23 and has since been viewed about 250,000 times, shared another 7,600 times and received at least 880 comments.

"Our leaders are committed to maintaining an environment of professionalism, dignity, and respect," the Marine statement emailed Monday read.

Tornado kills at least 23 people in Ala.

Associated Press

BEAUREGARD, Ala. — Rescuers searched for victims Monday amid homes smashed to their foundations, shredded metal dangling from trees and dead animals lying in the open after a tornado ripped through a rural Alabama community and killed at least 23 people, including children.

Traveling straight down a county road, the twister on Sunday carved a trail of destruction at least a half-mile wide and about a mile long Sunday, overwhelming the Lee County coroner's office, which was forced to call in help from the state.

"It looks like someone almost just took a giant knife and scraped the ground," Sheriff Jay Jones said.

With daybreak, volunteers used chain saws to clear paths for emergency workers, and at the R&D Grocery, people were constantly asking each other if they were OK.

"I'm still thanking God I'm among the living," said John Jones, who has lived most of his life in Beauregard, an unincorporated community of roughly 10,000 people about 60 miles east of Montgomery near the Georgia state line.

The twister, with winds of 160 mph or higher, was part of a powerful storm system that

slashed its way across the Deep South, spawning numerous tornado warnings in Georgia, South Carolina and Florida.

"All we could do is just hold on for life and pray," said Jonathan Clardy, who huddled with his family inside their Beauregard trailer as the tornado ripped the roof off. "It's a blessing from God that me and my young'ns are alive."

"Everybody in Beauregard is a real close-knit family. Everybody knows everybody around here. Everybody is heartbroken," he said.

The sheriff said children were among the dead but he didn't know how many. He said the death toll may rise as the

search continues amid houses reduced to their concrete slabs.

Levi Baker took a chain saw to help clear a path for ambulances and other emergency vehicles. He said he saw dead people and animals and demolished houses, with one home swept off its foundation and left in the middle of a road.

Along the hard-hit country road, giant pieces of metal from a farm building dangled from pine branches 20 feet in the air. For an entire mile down the road, pines were snapped in half.

A mobile home crushed by two trees marked the end of the path of destruction.

Husband and stepdaughter charged in woman's death

The Baltimore Sun

BALTIMORE — The story of a woman who was fatally stabbed in December after reportedly giving money to a panhandler — a case that drew national attention and spread fear through Baltimore — was actually a ruse by her husband and stepdaughter, who have been charged in her death, police announced Sunday night.

Keith Smith, 52, and his daughter, Valeria Smith, 28, were arrested by Texas State Police near the U.S.-Mexico border while trying to flee the country Sunday, acting Baltimore police Commissioner Michael Harrison said.

Warrants charging them with first-degree murder in the death of Keith Smith's wife, Jacquelyn Smith, were issued, Harrison said.

"The information and evidence points it wasn't a panhandler," Harrison said. "People take advantage of Baltimore. We want to make sure the truth comes out and justice is done."

Jacquelyn Smith, 54, an electrical engineer at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, was stabbed to death about 12:30 a.m. on Dec. 1.

Just days after the stabbing, Keith Smith and Valeria Smith, who also identified herself as Shavon, appeared at a tearful news conference at the scene.

They blamed Jacquelyn Smith's death on a man who approached their car after she reached out the window to give money to a woman begging in the rain with a baby. They said the man came up to the car under the guise of thanking Jacquelyn Smith, then reached into the car and snatched her necklace and pocketbook, stabbing her in the process.

Several members of Jacquelyn Smith's family had doubted that story from the beginning, said her brother, Marcel Trisvan, of Havre de Grace, Md.

"I already know it's Keith," he said.

Trisvan said police provided no information to the family, but detectives had increasingly been asking the family about his sister's relationship with her husband.

"All the questioning has been specific to Keith. That kind of sums it right there," he said. "It never made sense. I told [detectives] from the very beginning there are no suspects out there."

House Democrats seek more documents in Trump probe

CQ-Roll Call

WASHINGTON — The House Judiciary Committee has requested a sweeping list of documents and information about possible obstruction of justice and corruption by President Donald Trump and his associates, including former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort and one of his closest advisers.

Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler's requests to Manafort and his public affairs consultant, Jason Maloni, could indicate Democrats on the committee believe there may have been back channel communications between the White House and Trump's former associates about presidential pardons.

Overall, 81 people and entities received a slew of documents that include letters and record requests from Nadler, including key staff on the president's 2016 and re-election campaigns, his inaugural committee, his family and his businesses. The president's eldest sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, are on the list, along with Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner.

"We have sent these document requests in order to

begin building the public record," Nadler, D-N.Y., said in a statement.

Trump contended Monday he intends to cooperate — to some extent, at least — with House Democrats' demand for information.

"I cooperate all the time with everybody," Trump said during a reception for the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision Champion North Dakota State Bison football team. "It's a political hoax."

The first item on Nadler's document request asks Manafort to provide materials related to "possible pardons for yourself, (former national security adviser) Michael Flynn, or (former Trump personal lawyer) Michael Cohen." Trump Organization chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg, whom Cohen implicated in multiple crimes last week during testimony he gave to the House Oversight Committee, is on the list.

Nadler said the special counsel and prosecutors in the Southern District of New York, which are probing many of Trump's associates, were aware of the committee's investigation launch.

Hundreds evacuate ISIS-held area in Syria

Associated Press

BAGHOUZ, Syria — Hundreds of people including fighters from Islamic State evacuated their last foothold in eastern Syria on Monday, hours after U.S.-backed Syrian fighters said they were forced to slow their advance because the extremists are using civilians as human shields.

Despite that hindrance, a spokesman for the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, Mustafa Bali, tweeted that the battle to retake Baghouz, the last territory in Syria held by ISIS, was “going to be over soon.”

Later Monday, an SDF official said some 500 people, including fighters, have surrendered and evacuated the village of Bag-

houz and its surrounding areas. Ciyager, the nom de guerre of an official with the Kurdish-led SDF, added that 200 more people were expected to evacuate the village of Baghouz later Monday.

Dozens of men, women and children climbed hills on foot and were later seen getting into small trucks after they were searched by SDF fighters manning the evacuation corridor.

An SDF spokeswoman said the offensive has slowed down but pressure is being kept up away from the corridor to prevent fighters from infiltrating or sabotaging the area. She spoke on condition of anonymity because she was not authorized to speak to the press.

The U.S.-backed forces resumed their offensive on Baghouz on Friday after a two-week pause to allow for the evacuation of civilians.

Retaking the sliver of land would be a milestone in the devastating four-year campaign to end ISIS’ self-proclaimed “caliphate” that once straddled a vast territory across both Syria and Iraq.

“We’re slowing down the offensive” due to a small number of civilians held as human shields, Bali said. The previous night, an SDF statement said the Kurdish-led forces would continue their military campaign “to take control of the last ISIS-held pocket in Baghouz and to liberate the remaining

civilians who are being used as human shields.”

“In order not to harm them, we are advancing slowly but we assert that the battle of Baghouz will end in a short period of time,” it said.

ISIS militants are desperately fighting to hang on to the last tiny piece of land in eastern Syria, deploying snipers and guided missiles and using dug-out tunnels for surprise attacks.

On Sunday, black smoke billowed over the besieged speck of land in the village after airstrikes hit several targets. SDF fighters had tightened the noose on the militants the day before, advancing from two fronts and cutting off their access to the river in Baghouz.

Putin: Russia suspending participation in INF pact

Associated Press

MOSCOW — President Vladimir Putin on Monday suspended Russia’s participation in a key nuclear arms treaty, following Washington’s decision to withdraw from it.

Putin’s decree means Russia is suspending its obligations under the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty and will continue to do so “until the U.S. ends its violations of the treaty or until it terminates.”

The U.S. gave notice of its intention to withdraw from the INF a month ago, setting the

stage for it to terminate in six months unless Moscow returns to compliance. Russia has denied any breaches and accused the U.S. of violating the pact.

The U.S. has accused Russia of developing and deploying a cruise missile that violates provisions of the pact that ban the production, testing and deployment of land-based cruise and ballistic missiles with a range of 310 to 3,410 miles.

The move also reflected President Donald Trump’s administration’s view that the treaty was an obstacle to efforts

needed to counter intermediate-range missiles deployed by China, which isn’t part of the treaty.

Russia has charged that the U.S. has breached the pact by deploying missile defense facilities in eastern Europe that could fire cruise missiles instead of interceptors — a claim rejected by the U.S.

The collapse of the INF Treaty has stoked fears of a replay of a Cold War-era Europe missile crisis when the U.S. and the Soviet Union both deployed intermediate-range missiles on the continent during the 1980s.

Such weapons take a shorter time to reach their targets compared with intercontinental ballistic missiles, and their deployment was seen as particularly destabilizing, leaving no time for decision-makers and raising the likelihood of a global nuclear conflict over a false launch warning.

Putin has warned the U.S. against deploying new missiles in Europe, saying Russia will retaliate by fielding new fast weapons that will take just as little time to reach their targets.

Guaido says he’s on his way home to Venezuela after trip

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela — Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido said Monday that he is on his way home.

Guaido tweeted that he was heading back to Venezuela, though details about his exact whereabouts remained a mystery as rumors swept Caracas ahead of planned anti-government protests.

The leader of the National

Assembly, who has declared himself interim president of Venezuela, said the goal of his return is to intensify internal pressure on the government of President Nicolas Maduro.

In the last week, Guaido visited several Latin American countries that support his campaign against Maduro, who was re-elected last year in a vote that the opposition and dozens of foreign nations say was invalid.

“I’m heading home,” Guaido tweeted Monday morning.

Several hundred supporters of Guaido have gathered in a Caracas plaza, heeding his call to turn out for his expected return to Venezuela.

More demonstrators on Monday were walking toward the plaza in the Las Mercedes district of the Venezuelan capital. Some carried national flags.

The crowd initially appeared

smaller than those of previous opposition rallies, which have drawn tens of thousands of people.

Guaido says the goal of his return is to intensify pressure on Maduro to resign so a transitional government can take over and prepare Venezuela for free and fair elections.

Maduro says he is the target of a U.S.-backed plot to overthrow him.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

State stocking over 100K rainbow trout

OH COLUMBUS — State officials said more than 100,000 rainbow trout will be stocked this spring in 66 Ohio public lakes, with trout releases for anglers to take place through May 19.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources said in a statement that the first rainbow trout release is scheduled Friday at Adams Lake in southern Ohio's Adams County.

The releases around the state are subject to the areas remaining ice-free and accessible to anglers.

'Nuisance' wild turkeys rounded up

UT MENDON — Utah state wildlife officials have corralled more than 500 wild turkeys this winter in Cache County that are a nuisance to homeowners and have moved them to a rural area known as the Book Cliffs near Vernal.

KSL-TV reported that the wild turkeys leave waste and sometimes destroy property.

In the small northern Utah town of Mendon, outside Logan, Randall McBride, of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, said hundreds of turkeys come at a time looking for food. The city left grazing areas near town in hopes of keeping them out, but they still came.

Arts center features Dairy Queen exhibit

TX GALVESTON — A fast-food favorite in Texas has gotten some artsy attention.

A wood-carved array of Dairy Queen items was on display at the Galveston Arts Cen-

ter in an exhibit called "Thank You, Please Drive Through."

The Galveston County Daily News reported the show was to run through Monday.

Galveston native Camp Bosworth, who now lives in Marfa, created the exhibit that includes a 5-foot-long carved banana split.

Center Executive Director Lisa Simmons-Shaw said the exhibit has been a big hit and attracted "a whole new crowd of visitors."

Police: Woman left toddler on roadside

MD DENTON — A woman on Maryland's Eastern Shore has been charged with abandoning an 18-month-old child on the side of a road.

Maryland State Police on Friday announced charges including child abuse, neglect of a minor and driving under the influence against Elizabeth Newnam, 29, of Easton.

Police said a motorist found the child Thursday night along the side of Maryland Route 328 in Denton. The motorist reported seeing Newnam standing outside her car and throwing something into a field. The motorist thought Newnam's car had been hit by a deer and turned around to help.

According to police, Newnam drove off when the motorist approached. The motorist then saw an injured child abandoned near where Newnam had been standing.

Pilot wins best conch honker in contest

FL KEY WEST — A man who flies air ambulances for a Florida sheriff can also honk the 1958 song "Tequila" using a pink-lined conch shell.

David Masterson's unique music skills earned him this year's best honker among men in the Conch Shell Blowing Contest in Key West.

An aviation director for the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, Masterson said he began blowing the shell for fun when he lived on a boat.

Taxiing plane strikes wing of second plane

NJ NEWARK — Authorities said a plane taxiing at Newark Liberty Airport struck the wing of another plane but no one was injured.

The airport said in a message on Twitter that the Southwest Airlines plane was taxiing shortly after 7 a.m. Saturday when it struck wings with a parked airliner at the airport's Terminal A gate.

The airport said there were no injuries, and passengers were to be rebooked.

News 12 New Jersey reported that Southwest Airlines Flight 6 bound for Fort Lauderdale, Fla., began to taxi following de-icing when its left wing grazed a parked plane being de-iced prior to a trip to Nashville, Tenn.

School bus driver cited after crash

NC CHARLOTTE — Authorities in North Carolina said the driver of a school bus has been cited after the vehicle crashed into a building with students aboard.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg police said in a statement Friday that Lashandra Chere Williams, 35, was cited for failure to maintain lane control.

According to police, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools bus left its lane and struck a car stopped in a turn lane Thursday. The bus ran off the street and crashed into a

condominium.

Police said two students were taken to a local hospital as a precautionary measure, but no serious injuries were reported.

Big Sexy found after leaving photo shoot

NY NEW YORK — Big Sexy the cat went on a five-week romp around New York City, bolting from a photo shoot for a bare-chested firefighter charity calendar.

The big black feline was found Friday on Staten Island after disappearing from a lower Manhattan firehouse.

The lost pet showed up in the backyard of a woman whose firefighter husband was a 9/11 first responder who died of cancer last year.

The firefighters called the cat Big Sexy, but its real name is Buddy.

Officials use highway sign humor for safety

OH COLUMBUS — The Ohio Department of Transportation is working to encourage drivers to stay safe and to smile.

The Blade in Toledo reported that transportation officials are inserting humor into their digital roadway signs, with messages such as "Camp in Ohio state parks, not the left lane" and "Visiting in-laws? Slow down, get there late."

Department spokesman Matt Bruning, who has authored a few of the messages, said officials are simply trying to humanize what the agency does.

The signs display the humorous messages on off-peak hours and on weekends. An informal committee brainstorms ideas for the signs, and citizens can make suggestions online at zerodeaths.ohio.gov.

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Logano holds off Keselowski in Vegas

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Joey Logano and Brad Keselowski were side by side off the fourth turn, two teammates fighting for the last burst of speed on the final lap at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

Logano barely managed to block Keselowski's move, and the defending NASCAR Cup Series champion hung on for his first win in his title defense season.

"That was more intense than I wanted it to be," Logano said.

Logano held off Keselowski on Sunday for his first Cup victory in Vegas, driving his Team Penske Ford to his 22nd career win.

"There's been plenty of times here when we've led a lot of laps here, but we've never won, and that's the most important stat to have," Logano said. "Something happens at the end, and Brad becomes the fastest car and he wins. I looked in the mirror, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, this is happening again.'"

But after narrowly answering Keselowski's last-lap passing attempt, Logano cel-

ebrated his victory in NASCAR's first race under its full new rules package designed to foster tight racing and excitement.

"What a great race," Logano said. "Brad and I were so evenly matched, and you just can't pull away (under the new rules). My heart is still running."

Excitement is exactly what NASCAR got on the final lap, although the quality of the 266 laps before that sharply divided drivers and observers — no surprise in a sport that rarely agrees on much of anything.

The Vegas race featured no cautions, which meant the thrilling restarts expected under the new rules were limited to a couple of wild laps after the two segment breaks.

"There towards the end, the way this drafting package, these rules work, it was intense," Logano said. "You can't get away. You're constantly looking around. Mentally, I'm exhausted right now. ... It proves you don't need crashes to have an exciting race. There's so much strategy that goes into driving these race cars now. I thought it was as entertaining as can be. I don't really know what to say if you don't like that."

Keselowski drove up from 19th to take the lead with 27 laps left, but his hopes for back-to-back victories were dashed when Logano passed him while getting held up by lapped traffic.

"I'd like to have one more lap," said Keselowski, who won the playoff race in Vegas last September. "It was a good battle, and we were both fighting really hard at the top. It seemed like it came down to what the lapped cars were going to do."

Kyle Busch finished third, unable to recover from a mid-race speeding penalty in the hometown driver's quest for the third three-race weekend sweep in NASCAR history. As you might expect, Busch wasn't a fan of the new rules' effects on his racing.

"The cars don't have any speed," Busch said. "You're wide open just trying to catch a draft. You couldn't maneuver. You're always trying to figure out which way to go."

Pole-sitter Kevin Harvick was fourth, and Kurt Busch finished fifth for the Las Vegas native's first top-five finish at his home track since 2005. Fords took five of the top seven spots.

Bosa set to follow father, brother into NFL

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Nick Bosa found himself in the news again last week when Zion Williamson sprained his right knee in the opening minute against North Carolina.

The sight of his left shoe tearing apart and Williamson grabbing his right knee unleashed feverish debate over whether Duke's freakish freshman forward should ever again play for Mike Krzyzewski's Blue Devils.

Many wondered if he should just turn his attention to the pros like Bosa did six months ago when he got hurt in Ohio State's third game of the season. Instead of rehabbing for a return to the Buckeyes, Bosa began training for the combine, the draft and a career in the NFL.

Bosa figures to get drafted higher than his father, John, who went 16th overall to Miami in 1987, and maybe even higher than big brother, Joey, the third overall pick by the Char-

gers in 2016.

Williamson is the consensus top pick in the NBA draft this summer.

So, Bosa was asked at the NFL scouting combine Saturday what advice he'd give Williamson, who missed his third straight game Saturday with a mild knee sprain.

"I mean, just lean on the people that you love and go with your gut," Bosa said. "I faced a pretty serious injury. I had surgery that took me out for the rest of the year, so kind of the choice was made for me."

Bosa dealt with something much more serious than Williamson did — a torn bilateral core muscle, an excruciating injury that occurs when the rectus abdominus or adductor muscles are torn off the pubic bone. Surgeons fix it by inserting a mesh cone into the tear to plug the hole formed in the muscle.

"It's literally the muscle used to breathe, to cough, to go to the bathroom," Bosa said.

Bosa got tangled up with Horned Frogs left tackle Austin Meyers on a third down pass rush on Sept. 14 in Arlington, Texas, and stayed on the turf.

"I know what a serious injury is," Bosa said. "I knew my season was in jeopardy and I had a doctor confirm that."

Bosa had gotten off to a terrific start, collecting a team-high 14 tackles, including six for loss, and four sacks when he got hurt.

"It was the year that I been waiting for my whole career," he said. "I kind of split reps my freshman and sophomore year. Coming in I was going to be the guy. ... It just got torn away from me. It's something that I'll always think back to."

That first night was the toughest, he said.

"When I got home from that TCU game I was lying in bed, I could barely get up," Bosa said. "It was one of the darkest moments of my life so far."

"So, for me to just talk to my

family and let them bring me up and just know that my life is still good and I still have amazing blessings and a bright future, that's what helped me get through it."

Five days later, he underwent surgery and in mid-October, Bosa had decided he wouldn't return.

He moved in with Joey in Los Angeles and after the Chargers' season was over, the brothers returned to their hometown of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Bosa said he's finally back to 100 percent and wouldn't hold back during his testing at the combine nor skip any drills.

Bosa said that while he was told the injury likely came about because of the enormous torque his body experiences playing football, he's not worried that he'll reinjure himself.

"This is one of the injuries that once you get it fixed, it's pretty guaranteed to be good," Bosa said.

College hoops roundup

No. 9 Michigan stay in hunt for Big Ten title

Associated Press

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Playing with intensity and emotion after being cut down to size in defeat, Michigan used a strong performance from its relentless starting lineup to remain in the hunt for the Big Ten title.

Ignas Brazdeikis scored 21 points, Jon Teske had 11 points and 10 rebounds, and No. 9 Michigan pulled away from 17th-ranked Maryland in a 69-62 victory Sunday.

The Wolverines (26-4, 15-4) clinched a double-bye in the conference tournament and still have a chance to overtake first-place Purdue. Michigan, the defending Big Ten Tournament champion, must win its finale at Michigan State and hope the Boilermakers lose at least one of their last two.

“The regular-season championship is a prize for most programs that have any history in this [conference],” coach John Beilein said. “That’s the prize. Michigan, we haven’t won it that many times.”

After losing at Penn State on Feb. 12 and at home against Michigan State a week earlier, the Wolverines found their roots with a big win at Maryland.

“This was as focused as we’ve been,” Beilein said. “We’ve only lost four games, but we’ve had some times this year that we really got pruned. And being a farm boy, when you get pruned you grow back stronger.”

Creighton 66, No. 10 Marquette 60: Martin Krampelj scored 19 points and Ty-Shon Alexander added 14 to pace the visiting Bluejays past the Golden Eagles.

Creighton (16-13, 7-9 Big East) outscored Marquette 16-3 down the stretch until a three-pointer in the closing seconds by Markus Howard, who finished with 33 points.

Marquette (23-6, 12-4) committed 22 turnovers, which

Creighton turned into 18 points.

It was only the second home loss for Marquette in 18 games at the new Fiserv Forum.

No. 25 Washington 62, Stanford 61: Jaylen Nowell scored 13 points but missed the front end of a 1-and-1 during a nervous finish for the visiting Huskies, who still held off the Cardinal for a weekend split in the Bay Area.

Stanford star KZ Okpala missed an off-balance three-pointer at the buzzer and Washington secured the loose ball.

Noah Dickerson added 12 points for the Huskies (23-6, 14-2 Pac-12).

Arizona State 74, Oregon State 71: Luguentz Dort had 20 points with four three-pointers as the visiting Sun Devils came back in the second half to beat the Beavers.

Zylan Cheatham added 12 points and 10 rebounds, while Remy Martin and Rob Edwards scored 13 points apiece, for Arizona State (20-9, 11-6 Pac-12).

The victory secured the Sun Devils a first-round bye and the No. 2 seed at the Pac-12 tourney.

Ethan Thompson had 20 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists and Tres Tinkle scored 24 for Oregon State (17-11, 9-7).

Louisville 75, Notre Dame 61: Jordan Nwora scored 20 points, Malik Williams added 16 and matched a career-high with 13 rebounds, and the host Cardinals snapped a three-game losing streak.

Louisville (19-11, 10-7 Atlantic Coast Conference) rebounded the Fighting Irish 49-30 and created chances resulting in a 46-26 advantage inside and 48 percent shooting.

The Cardinals went 2-6 last month, including the recent slide that knocked them from the AP Top 25.

NBA roundup

Harden, Rockets top struggling Celtics

Associated Press

BOSTON — James Harden had 42 points before fouling out late in the fourth quarter and the Houston Rockets held on to beat the Boston Celtics 115-104 on Sunday for their fifth straight victory.

Harden made six three-pointers and scored 40 or more points for the 24th time this season. Houston entered the day in fifth place in the Western Conference standings, a game behind of fourth-place Oklahoma City.

Eric Gordon added 32 points and had eight three-pointers.

Boston has lost five of last six. Kyrie Irving led the Celtics with 24 points, nine rebounds and six assists. Al Horford finished with 19 points.

Pistons 112, Raptors 107 (OT): Blake Griffin scored 14 of his 27 points in the first quarter and host Detroit outlasted Toronto.

Detroit took advantage of Toronto resting star forward Kawhi Leonard less than 48 hours after he made the go-ahead shot in the closing seconds in a victory over Portland.

Thunder 99, Grizzlies 95: Russell Westbrook scored 12 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter and Oklahoma City overcame a 13-point deficit in the final seven minutes to beat visiting Memphis.

Dennis Schroder added 17 points and a career-high 11 rebounds, and Steven Adams had 13 points and 22 rebounds to help the Thunder snap a four-game losing streak.

Paul George, the NBA’s No. 2 scorer, missed his third straight game because of a sore right shoulder. Oklahoma City stepped up late without its defensive leader, holding the Grizzlies to 6-for-21 shooting in the fourth quarter.

Hawks 123, Bulls 118: Alex Len scored a season-high 28 points and Atlanta beat host Chicago, two days after the

Bulls outlasted the Hawks 168-161 in quadruple overtime in Atlanta

Trae Young scored 18 before getting ejected early in the third quarter for taunting Chicago’s Kris Dunn for his second technical foul. Lauri Markkanen led Chicago with 19 points.

Clippers 128, Knicks 107: Rookie Landry Shamet scored all of his 21 points on three-pointers, Danilo Gallinari added 20 and Los Angeles sent visiting New York to its 50th loss of the season.

Shamet and Gallinari combined for 27 of the Clippers’ 38 points in the first quarter when they raced to a 38-20 lead.

Shamet scored 18 points in the opening 12 minutes. He tied the franchise record for threes in a quarter (six) and a half (seven), and set a franchise rookie record for threes in a single game.

Trail Blazers 118, Hornets 108: Rodney Hood scored 27 points, Jusuf Nurkic added 26 points and 15 rebounds and Portland beat host Charlotte.

Damian Lillard had 23 points to help the Trail Blazers win for the sixth time in seven games. Jeremy Lamb had 23 points, and Kemba Walker added 18 points and a season-high 12 assists for the Hornets.

Cavaliers 107, Magic 93: Jordan Clarkson scored 18 points, Kevin Love had 16 points and 14 rebounds and Cleveland pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat visiting Orlando.

Nikola Vucevic scored 28 points for Orlando.

Wizards 135, Timberwolves 121: Bobby Portis had 26 points and 12 rebounds and Bradley Beal and Jabari Parker each scored 22 points to help host Washington beat Minnesota.

Karl-Anthony Towns led Minnesota with 28 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists.

NHL roundup

Ovechkin's shootout 'goal' sends Caps past Rangers

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Alex Ovechkin is so good he scored Sunday's winning shootout goal without putting the puck in the net.

Ovechkin finished Washington's fourth straight victory with one unusual play, and Braden Holtby made 22 saves in the Capitals' 3-2 victory over the New York Rangers.

The 33-year-old Ovechkin was skating to his right in the fourth round of the tiebreaker when Rangers goalie Alexandar Georgiev threw his stick at the puck, knocking it away from the star winger. Ovechkin was credited with the goal after a review.

"I know 100 percent it's a goal," Ovechkin said. "I was surprised of the first reaction of the referees. It was nice we have replay."

Carl Hagelin and Andre Burakovsky scored in the first period for Washington, which moved two points ahead of the Islanders for first place in the Metropolitan Division. The Islanders lost at home to Philadelphia later Sunday.

Holtby said he knew it was over right after Ovechkin's play in the shootout.

"Once it happened, I thought it was going to be a goal," he said. "Right away, I thought they'd call it instantly. I'm not sure what the delay was. It's a rule, he would have had a wide-open net if he didn't do that. They made the right call and we came out with a big win."

The Rangers lost their fourth in a row, including all three on their homestand.

Georgiev made 37 saves, including 20 in the second period. He stopped Ovechkin on a breakaway in overtime.

"It's tough to explain," Georgiev said of the shootout winner. "He faked the shot, I went down. As he was moving laterally, I kind of threw my leg and the stick at the same time. It's a tough call."

"That's the referee's call to see what happened. I feel like I had my pad on the ice at the moment he was about to shoot, so it's not like the empty net was there. Tough call."

Flyers 4, Islanders 1: Brian Elliott stopped 29 shots and visiting Philadelphia knocked New York out of first place in the Metropolitan Division.

Travis Konecny, Travis Sanheim, Scott Laughton and Sean Couturier scored for Philadelphia. The Flyers are 4-0-1 in their past five games and moved within five points of the final wild card in the Eastern Conference.

Sharks 5, Blackhawks 2: Joe Thornton set up Marcus Sorensen for a tiebreaking goal early in the third period and Melker Karlsson tacked on two insurance goals that sent host San Jose past Chicago.

Tomas Hertl and Timo Meier also scored to help the Sharks move within three points of Calgary for first place in the Pacific Division. The Flames have a game in hand.

Chicago's Patrick Kane failed to record a point in back-to-back games for just the second time this season for the Blackhawks, who trail Western Conference wild-card leaders Dallas and Minnesota by eight points. Cam Ward made 29 saves.

Golden Knights 3, Canucks 0: Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 19 shots and earned his second straight 3-0 shutout for host Vegas.

Max Pacioretty, Ryan Carpenter and Reilly Smith scored for the Golden Knights, who won their fourth straight.

Ducks 2, Avalanche 1: Jakob Silfverberg had a goal and an assist and host Anaheim snapped a five-game losing streak.

Silfverberg, who signed a \$26.5 million, five-year extension Saturday, leads the team in goals with 17 and became the ninth player to score 100 goals with Anaheim.

Senators 3, Panthers 2: Rudolfs Balcers scored the tiebreaking goal in the second period and visiting Ottawa snapped a seven-game losing streak.

Florida has lost four straight.

Jets 5, Blue Jackets 2: Blake Wheeler scored three of his four goals in the third period and Connor Hellebuyck had 40 saves as visiting Winnipeg won its second straight.

Wheeler's goal with 2:13 left off Patrik Laine's feed sealed the game, and he added an empty-netter with 34 seconds left for the Jets, who stayed in first place in the Central Division despite being outshot by Columbus 42-26.

The Blue Jackets lost their second straight and stayed below the wild-card line in the Eastern Conference.

Predators 3, Wild 2 (SO): Ryan Johansen scored in the fourth round of the shootout as visiting Nashville stopped Minnesota's winning streak at five games.

Filip Forsberg and Nick Bonino scored for the Predators, who are 5-6-1 in their past 12 games.

Eric Fehr and Jason Zucker scored for the Wild, who still moved into a tie with Dallas for the first wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

Sports briefs

Giants CEO to take leave after video of altercation

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — San Francisco Giants President and CEO Larry Baer was granted a leave of absence from the team Monday following the release of a video showing him in a physical altercation with his wife.

The Giants board of directors released a statement that said Baer had made a request that was accepted to take personal time away from the team in response to the video released by TMZ last week showing the altercation in a San Francisco park between Baer and his wife, Pam.

"Mr. Baer has acknowledged that his behavior was unacceptable, apologized to the organization and is committed to taking steps to make sure that this never happens again," the statement said.

The Giants executive team, including president of baseball operations Farhan Zaidi, will manage the day-to-day operations.

Mitchell wins Honda Classic

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Keith Mitchell made a 15-foot birdie putt on the final hole Sunday to win The Honda Classic for his first PGA Tour victory to earn a trip to the Masters.

Mitchell closed with a 3-under 67 to finish at 9-under 271 at PGA National, one stroke ahead of Brooks Koepka and Rickie Fowler.

"I was trying to focus on what was going on," Mitchell said. "My mind started wandering there a little bit at the end ... and then I hit a great putt."

Mitchell was one shot behind going into the final round, bogeyed the opening two holes and fell as many as four shots behind before slowly getting back into the mix, and then pouring it on with four birdies on his last seven holes.

All he had to do was hold off Koepka, the reigning PGA Tour player of the year and three-time major champion, and the always popular Fowler. Koepka finished with two birdies on the last three holes for a 66, while Fowler made three birdies over his last four holes, including a 45-foot putt on No. 17, for a 67.