

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## Plan would add forces in Afghanistan

BY TARA COPP

*Stars and Stripes*

JERUSALEM — The number of troops that the United States will add to the fight in Afghanistan will depend on how many additional forces NATO supplies to expand the battle against terrorists there, Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Tuesday.

President Donald Trump's administration was close to approving an agreement that would potentially send several thousand additional U.S. forces to Afghanistan, according to reports Monday in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

However, Dunford told reporters traveling with him in Israel that the numbers of U.S. forces to be deployed has not been decided and Trump has not yet been briefed on the Pentagon's new plan for Afghanistan.

The plan will include how many troops are needed to fulfill the NATO-led train-and-advise mission and to strengthen the U.S. counterterrorism effort, Dunford said.

Together, the two missions need about 15,000 troops, he said. There are about 8,400 U.S. forces and 4,900 NATO forces in Afghanistan now. However, Dunford said

the plan could be altered to require more than 15,000 troops.

The plan also would address what additional authorities forces will need to counter Taliban gains made in the last year, Dunford said. He and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis are planning to brief Trump later this week on the plan for Afghanistan.

"We've been talking Afghanistan for weeks," with the principals of Trump's National Security Council, Dunford said. "Now we've gotten to the point where the national security adviser [Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster] will facilitate a meeting with the president."

But Dunford stressed the plan to increase forces in Afghanistan does not mean more U.S. troops, necessarily. Dunford said he hopes to brief Trump this week so when he travels to meet with his NATO defense counterparts next week in Brussels, they can talk about troop contributions from other NATO nations.

"What I would like to be able to do when I go to NATO is say, 'This is the U.S. plan for 2017 and beyond, and this is the requirement identified by the commanders,'" Dunford said. "And start to have conversations to try and generate the forces to meet that

requirement."

The troops would be used to stop the Taliban from making further gains in Afghanistan and would eventually create the conditions necessary to broker a peace negotiation between the Taliban and the Afghan government. U.S. forces have been fighting in Afghanistan for 16 years, most recently along the Pakistan border against pockets of Islamic State militants and in the southern Helmand province against a resurgent Taliban.

Trump is also scheduled to meet with NATO partners at a summit in Brussels on May 25.

The Pentagon confirmed in April that the White House had authorized it to set the number of troops needed for Iraq and Syria in the fight against ISIS. On Tuesday, a senior defense official traveling with Dunford said the Pentagon also had been instructed to determine its force levels in Afghanistan.

The Pentagon announced its latest troop rotations for Afghanistan in April, including 1,500 soldiers from Fort Bragg's 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, and 200 soldiers from 3rd Infantry Division headquarters.

## Cyber chief: US lags in defense from cyberthreats

BY DIANNA CAHN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Russian meddling in elections around the world is not slowing, and the United States does not have full capability to defend its key infrastructure from their rapidly growing cyberthreats, Adm. Michael Rogers, director of the National Security Agency and commander of U.S. Cyber Command, acknowledged Tuesday.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Rogers said there has been no reduction in Russia's cyberattacks in light of its hacking of French elections May 7 and concerns of similar actions in

the upcoming German and British elections.

Prodded by Committee Chairman Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., Rogers agreed that in order to defend against that kind of activity, the U.S. would need a full policy and strategy that integrates government agencies and departments.

"The team is working on that," Rogers said. "I want to make sure we all understand that."

"And the check's in the mail?" McCain retorted.

McCain charged that President Donald Trump's administration missed a self-imposed deadline to deliver a cyber

strategy within 90 days of taking office.

"Our nation remains woefully unprepared to address these threats," he said. "In short, unless the services begin to prioritize and deliver the cyberweapons systems necessary to fight in cyberspace, we are headed down the path to a hollow force."

Rogers said the U.S. watched the Russians hack the French elections and warned authorities before the intrusions were made public when the emails of now-President-elect Emmanuel Macron's campaign were dumped less than two days before the elections.

The attack echoed similar interference in U.S. elections last year after Russia hacked the emails of Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton.

Painting a picture of a new kind of Cold War, Rogers said a force that will be able to combat that threat will have to integrate government efforts, be technically proficient and have a deep cognitive understanding of information warfare.

"As a nation, we need to acclimatize ourselves to the idea that we are in many ways back in a time of disinformation, false news ... manipulation of the media," he said.

# US ship, S. Korean fishing vessel collide

By KIM GAMEL  
*Stars and Stripes*

SEOUL, South Korea — A U.S. warship collided with a South Korean fishing boat Tuesday while operating off the east coast of the divided peninsula, the Navy said. No injuries were reported.

The USS Lake Champlain is part of the Carl Vinson Strike Group, which has been deployed to the region amid ris-

ing tensions with North Korea.

The guided-missile cruiser was conducting routine operations when the collision occurred, according to U.S. Naval Forces Korea. It said the fishing vessel was 60 to 70 feet long.

"No one was injured when the fishing vessel collided with Lake Champlain's port side, amid ship," a press release stated. "Both ships were able to navigate under their own power."

The U.S. Navy and South Korea's coast guard are investigating the incident and a damage assessment for both ships was underway, it said.

South Korea's military said the fishing ship was called the 502 Namyang and the collision occurred in the waters south of Ulleung Island, according to the Yonhap news agency.

The Lake Champlain is a Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser, and is one of sev-

eral ships accompanying the aircraft carrier. The others include guided-missile destroyers the USS Wayne E. Meyer and the USS Michael Murphy.

It's the strike group's second visit to the waters off South Korea in less than three months.

It also participated in drills as part of the annual joint war games known as Foal Eagle.

## Chinese Coast Guard sails close to disputed islands

By MATTHEW M. BURKE  
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA  
*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Four Chinese government vessels — including one with what appeared to be a gun turret — entered Japanese territorial waters near a contested island group Monday, the latest in a series of challenges to Japanese sovereignty in the East China Sea.

The first of the four white-hulled and numbered Chinese Coast Guard vessels entered the 12-nautical-mile zone around Uotsuri, one of the Senkaku Islands, at approximately 9:34 a.m., said a spokesman for the Japan Coast Guard in Naha. The vessels stayed in the zone until about 11:35 a.m.

As of Tuesday afternoon, one Chinese ship remained on patrol in Japan's contiguous zone, which extends 24 nautical miles from shore, the spokesman said.

Japanese officials declined to comment on their response to the incident — one of 43 similar incidents near the Senkakus this year alone.

The Senkakus are an uninhabited island chain in the East China Sea between Okinawa and Taiwan. Their nearby waters are resource-rich and claimed by both Japan and China, which refers to them as the Diaoyu, as

well as by Taiwan.

Boat confrontations and jet interceptions between China and Japan have sharply increased in recent years, spurring concerns that a miscalculation could lead to a conflict invoking the U.S.-Japan security alliance.

The majority view of international maritime law allows warships to enter territorial waters under the principle of "innocent passage" without prior notification, though China has not recognized this principle when U.S. and other ships sail nearby its controlled territories in the South China Sea.

Innocent passage precludes ships from using or practicing with weapons and several other actions that China claims the right to do near the Senkakus.

The United States has long declined to take a position on any future sovereignty settlement regarding the islands. However, President Barack Obama said during a 2014 visit to Japan that the security alliance that calls on the U.S. to defend Japan "covers all territories under Japan's administration, including the Senkaku Islands."

President Donald Trump reaffirmed that commitment in February during meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

## N. Korean islands could be used as launch sites

*Los Angeles Times*

BEIJING — North Korea is building artificial islands in the Yellow Sea and topping them with what appear to be military installations, satellite images reveal.

The development suggests that North Korea has taken a cue from China, which has been stoking regional tensions by building and militarizing several artificial islands in the South China Sea in recent years. The images show that North Korea has been working for at least five years on the islands near the western city of Sohae, about 130 miles from Pyongyang, the capital. Sohae is known as a testing site for intercontinental ballistic missile technology.

As late as 2012, three of the islands, which are scattered around a small peninsula jutting into the Yellow Sea, were rocky, tree-studded specks; two were patches of sand. In Google Earth images from December 2016, all appear to contain features consistent with military installations, such as wide roads and paved, rectangular lots. All are in North Korea's waters, close to the country's shoreline.

Their purpose remains unclear. North Korea could use the islands for ballistic missile launches, anti-aircraft weapons, anti-ship weapons — or even for agriculture, with no military

purpose in mind.

"We can't make definitive statements as to what these islands are being used for," said Ryan Barenklau, chief executive of Strategic Sentinel, a Washington-based intelligence firm that has analyzed the images and wrote about them in the Diplomat, an online magazine.

Military use is likely, he said. Roads on the islands feature wide turns, indicating that they could be used for transporter erector launchers: massive, missile-bearing trucks. Light patches on the rectangular lots could be heat-resistant cement, a sign that they may have been designed as launch pads.

"And they have observation areas, for someone like (the country's leader) Kim Jong Un to observe a missile launch," he said. "Every time we see VIP buildings, that tells us there's most likely a military application, because Kim Jong Un likes to view the operations of whatever they're building."

Some of North Korea's new islands appear to be a part of the Taegyeodo Tideland Reclamation Project, which ended in 2012. North Korean state media said that the area, once part of the Yellow Sea, now contains a fish farm, a duck farm and an oyster farm. The project is "equal to an area of a county," wrote the official Korean Central News Agency.



# Shipshape

## Maintenance crews' work below deck keeps warship on target

By SCOTT WYLAND  
*Stars and Stripes*

Deep below an aircraft carrier's flight deck, where jet fighters zoom off to bomb enemy targets, engineering crews carry out the unglamorous work that's vital to the mission and the ship's survival.

Keeping systems is a mammoth job on a carrier, requiring crews to toil long hours in the ship's cavernous recesses, enduring uncomfortable heat and barely seeing sunlight for weeks.

"If you did not have an engineering department, the ship would not move," Petty Officer 3rd Class Connor Sanders, an electrician, said on the USS George H.W. Bush while it was deployed last month in the Persian Gulf.

Crews fix and maintain electrical, plumbing and other systems and make replacement parts for the ship's myriad metal fittings. They put out fires. And

they ensure that no toxic gases endanger crewmembers, either from the internal systems or from an enemy attack.

The engineering crews are like an orchestra, said Lt. Cmdr. Derek Mason, head of the Bush's engineering department. He's the conductor, making the 250 sailors under him work together to keep the behemoth afloat and mission ready.

"It's a big ship," Mason said. "We have 5,000 people, and you never know what to expect when you wake up in the morning. You have many hands touching one piece of equipment. Everything is susceptible to wear and tear."

His crews oversee high-tech equipment inside the ship that scans for gas leaks as well as biological agents and radioactivity, Mason said. External devices test for airborne poisons that an enemy might unleash.

After the sarin gas attack in Syria in early April, Mason ordered his crewmembers to keep a more vigilant watch on

the external detectors. It was a reminder they're deployed in a dangerous region.

The Bush is nuclear-propelled, with an on-board reactor whose steam generators produce the ship's electricity. Mason's teams handle utilities outside the nuclear section — everything from the water for laundry, showers and restrooms to electrical wiring for the ship's lighting, computers and incinerator.

The department is on call around the clock.

Keeping electricity flowing at all times on the ship is paramount because if the engine's computers go down, the ship will stall, Sanders said. "I look at it as a chain reaction."

Technicians can get so busy dealing with the constant demands that they can become like cavern dwellers who don't go above deck for months.

"I've got to see the sun at least once every couple of weeks," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Kody Kratz, a machinist, who

joked he didn't want to go pale and lose his Hawaiian heritage.

Kratz and Sanders said they work much of the time in 100-degree heat. The heat, Kratz said, provides a sauna to go with the pull-up bar and weights in his work area.

Engineering crews draw little recognition. No one seems to think of them until they need something repaired or a part replaced. Sanders and Kratz shrugged off the lack of kudos.

Helping friends on the ship who depend on their services is rewarding enough, Sanders said.

"I only care that the ship doesn't sink," Kratz said.

Mason believes most people on the carrier appreciate the engineering crews and know the troubles that would arise if they weren't there to fix problems and maintain vital systems.

"That's a ship I wouldn't want to be on," Mason said.

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# Senate confirms pick to lead Air Force

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The Senate has confirmed Heather Wilson as Air Force secretary, making her President Donald Trump's first service secretary nominee to be approved by the GOP-led chamber after fits and starts for several others.

Senators voted 76-22 Monday to approve Wilson, who represented New Mexico in the House before becoming a defense industry consultant.

Her post-congressional work drew scrutiny from several Democrats, who had questioned an arrangement with government laboratories that paid her \$20,000 a month. Wilson denied any impropriety.

Trump's attempts to fill the other two service secretary

jobs have failed so far.

His picks for secretaries of the Army and Navy were forced to withdraw from consideration.

Mark Green, Trump's second choice for Army secretary, stepped aside late last week amid growing criticism over his remarks about Muslims and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans.

The president's first pick to be the Army's top civilian, Vincent Viola, dropped out in early February because of financial entanglements, and about three weeks later Philip B. Bilden, the Navy secretary nominee, withdrew for similar reasons.

The Trump administration has been slow to fill many other senior civilian posts at the Pentagon, leaving Defense

Secretary Jim Mattis short of the support he needs to manage the nation's vast military enterprise.

The Senate Armed Services Committee held confirmation hearings Tuesday for three important financial positions at the Defense Department: comptroller, deputy comptroller and director of cost assessment and program evaluation.

After serving five terms in Congress from New Mexico, Wilson collected nearly half a million dollars in questionable payments from federally funded nuclear labs, the Energy Department's inspector general said in a 2013 report.

Wilson deflected questions about the payments, saying during her Senate confirmation hearing that she'd performed

the work and that the inspector general had found no fault with her.

Wilson served as an Air Force officer in Europe during the 1980s and was on the National Security Council staff under President George H.W. Bush during the fall of the Berlin Wall.

She graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1982 and later earned master's and doctoral degrees as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in England.

Wilson is the first graduate of the academy to hold the service's top civilian post.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., the Republican chairman of the Armed Services Committee, called Wilson a "proven leader."

# Liberal to lead South Korea

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — Two major challengers in South Korea's presidential election conceded defeat Tuesday, paving the way for liberal Moon Jae-in to claim victory in balloting that followed months of political turmoil caused by ousted President Park Geun-hye's corruption scandal.

The concessions by conservative Hong Joon-pyo and centrist Ahn Cheol-soo came after exit polls forecast a Moon victory. That would end a decade of conservative rule in South Korea and set up a sharp departure from recent policy toward nuclear-armed North Korea.

"I will humbly accept the choice of the people," Ahn said. "I lacked (the capability) to satisfy people's ardent wish for change."

The exit poll of about 89,000 voters at 330 polling stations,

jointly commissioned by three major television stations and released just after polls closed, showed Moon receiving 41.4 percent of the vote.

"I hope today will open the door for a new Republic of Korea," Moon told jubilant party members after the release of the exit poll. "I will achieve reforms and national unity, the two missions that our people long for."

Moon, the Democratic Party candidate, has called for engagement with North Korea, saying that the hard-line approach favored by conservative governments did nothing to prevent the North from expanding its nuclear bomb and missile programs and only reduced South Korea's voice in international efforts to deal with its rival.

The winning candidate will be officially sworn in as South Korea's new president after the election commission finishes the vote count and declares the win-

ner Wednesday morning. This forgoes the usual two-month transition because Tuesday's vote was a by-election to choose a successor to Park, whose term was to end in February 2018.

Following months of protests by millions and impeachment by lawmakers, Park was removed from office and arrested in March over corruption allegations. The new South Korean president will still serve out a full, single five-year term.

Moon was chief of staff for the last liberal president, the late Roh Moo-hyun, who sought closer ties with North Korea by setting up large-scale aid shipments to the North and by working on now-stalled joint economic projects.

Hong, an outspoken former provincial governor who pitched himself as a "strongman," described the election as a war between ideologies and questioned Moon's patriotism.

# Satanic monument gets spot at vets park

Associated Press

BELLE PLAINE, Minn. — A veterans memorial park in Minnesota will soon include a satanic monument among its tributes as an unintended consequence of a free speech debate.

The city of Belle Plaine, about 45 miles southwest of Minneapolis, is allowing the monument in its Veterans Memorial Park after the Freedom from Religion Foundation threatened to sue over another statue that features a soldier praying over a grave marked with a cross. The cross was removed once the issue was raised, but more than 100 residents rallied to put it back.

City Administrator Mike Votca said the city knew it had to include everyone, so it created a free speech area for all — as long as the tributes honor veterans.

The memorial from the Satanic Temple in Salem, Mass., features a black cube with inverted pentagrams, a soldier's helmet and a plaque honoring veterans who died in battle.

Doug Mesner is founder of the Satanic Temple and its non-profit group, Reason Alliance. He said the group doesn't worship Satan, but is a nontheistic, religious group.

"It's certainly better to preserve the First Amendment than to preserve your notions of religious supremacy on public grounds. That's certainly not what America was founded on and certainly not what our soldiers fought for," he said.

Some residents of this town of about 6,700 felt the city's initial decision to remove the cross was an insult to veterans who sacrificed their lives, and they accused groups like the Satanic Temple of preying on small towns.

For nearly a month, protesters occupied the park daily and put their own handmade crosses in the ground.

# Yates warned White House about Flynn

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former acting Attorney General Sally Yates says she bluntly warned the Trump White House in January that new national security adviser Michael Flynn "essentially could be blackmailed" by the Russians because he apparently had lied to his bosses about his contacts with Moscow's ambassador in Washington.

The congressional testimony Monday from Yates, an Obama administration holdover fired soon after for other reasons, marked her first public comments about the concerns she raised and filled in basic details about the chain of events that led to Flynn's ouster in February.

Her testimony, coupled with the revelation hours earlier that President Barack Obama himself had warned Donald Trump against hiring Flynn shortly after the November election, made clear that alarms about Flynn had reached the highest levels of the U.S. government months before. Flynn had been an adviser to Trump and an out-

spoken supporter of his presidential candidacy in the 2016 campaign.

Yates, appearing before a Senate panel investigating Russian interference in the election, described discussions with Don McGahn, the Trump White House counsel, in which she warned that Flynn apparently had misled the administration about his communications with Sergey Kislyak, the Russian ambassador.

White House officials, including Vice President Mike Pence, had insisted that Flynn had not discussed U.S.-imposed sanctions with Kislyak during the presidential transition period. But they asked Flynn to resign after news reports indicated he had lied about the nature of the calls.

"We felt like it was critical that we get this information to the White House, in part because the vice president was unknowingly making false statements to the public and because we believed that Gen. Flynn was compromised with respect to the Russians," Yates said.

"To state the obvious," she added later, "you don't want your national security adviser compromised with the Russians."

She said she was briefing the Trump White House so officials could take "the action that they deemed appropriate" and that she believed the Russians already had the same information.

Yates' questioning by a Senate panel investigating Russian interference in the presidential election was just one portion of a politically charged day that began with combative tweets from Trump and continued with disclosures from Obama administration officials about a private Oval Office conversation between Obama and his successor.

Yates, a longtime federal prosecutor, was fired by Trump on Jan. 30 after refusing to defend his travel ban. James Clapper, director of national intelligence under Obama, also testified Monday. He retired when Trump took office.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## No charges for man accused of stealing stew

**NM** ALBUQUERQUE — A New Mexico man arrested for breaking into his mother's house to steal her traditional New Mexican stew won't face charges after all.

Last week, a state district judge dismissed charges against Jonathan Carlos Ray, who was charged in 2015 for the theft of his mother's posole. The judge said the only witnesses to the alleged crime were Ray and his mother.

Police said Ray was arrested after he ignored his mother's orders to stay away from her posole and ran off with the holiday dish.

The complaint said the mother later found her gate and garage broken and a pot of the posole missing.

## Man recorded driving 129 mph on interstate

**NH** BOW — New Hampshire State Police said a 22-year-old man recorded driving 129 mph on Interstate 93 faces a reckless operation charge.

Police stopped Diego Dominguez Salazar, of Nashua, on the highway north of Bow on Sunday, saying a trooper recorded him driving about 70 mph over the speed limit.

Salazar was arrested and was released on personal recognizance.

## Are frozen 'booze pops' food or alcohol?

**SC** FOLLY BEACH — Charleston officials are asking South Carolina regulators to reconsider if frozen ice pops made with alcohol should be treated like beer and liquor instead of food.

The Post and Courier of Charleston reported that a business called Booze Pops is selling frozen alcoholic pops from a van along with nonalcoholic treats for children.

State Department of Revenue spokeswoman Ashley Thomas said current state law defines the treats as food and not alcohol.

The city of Charleston wrote a letter to the state agency saying that by that interpretation, a driver could eat a "booze pop" behind the wheel or other places they could not drink alcohol.

## Goodyear's third airship to be ready in 2018

**OH** AKRON — Goodyear said its newest airship should be ready to fly in the spring of 2018.

The assembly of the Akron-based company's third airship is coming together at its blimp base in northeastern Ohio. Workers are putting together parts of the internal aluminum and carbon fiber inner skeleton.

The Akron Beacon Journal reported that the new airship will be based at Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.'s hangar in Ohio's Portage County. The tire maker retired its last true blimp in March.

The new airships look like the original blimps and still use helium, but they aren't technically blimps because a fixed structure holds the balloon in place.

## Graffiti found on revered mountain investigated

**HI** HILO — Authorities are asking for the public's help in finding out who painted graffiti on rocks within a protected area on one of Hawaii's most revered mountains.

The Hawaii Department of

Land and Natural Resources said the rocks were defaced in the Mauna Kea Ice Age Reserve, an area on Mauna Kea's southern slope protected by the state. The department said the graffiti was found on April 28. Graffiti also was found on other parts of Mauna Kea property.

## Woman riding horse killed by lightning strike

**CO** SEDALIA — A 37-year-old woman was killed by a lightning strike as she rode her horse on a trail.

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office said the woman was riding along the trail along Rainbow Creek Road with a 15-year-old girl when lightning hit them Sunday.

The office said the woman was pronounced dead at the scene along with her horse.

The girl was taken in serious condition to a nearby hospital.

The office did not release the names of the woman or the girl.

## University to debut new 'body farm'

**MI** MARQUETTE — Northern Michigan University is planning a new forensic anthropology major that will include what school officials call the world's first cold-weather "body farm."

Body farms are research centers where the human body's decomposition is studied in various environments.

There are currently eight "body farms" across the globe, but all of those are in moderate to warm climates, and relatively little is known about how a human body decomposes in cold weather.

The Michigan Public Radio Network reported the forensic anthropology major will begin this fall.

## Group that skipped on bar bill pays up

**WI** GREENFIELD — A group that skipped out on their bar tab has returned to pay up after the suburban Milwaukee bar shamed them on Facebook.

The three men and two women, all in their 20s, reportedly left without paying a \$105 bill Friday night at The Brass Tap in Greenfield.

The bar posted a warning on Facebook for the group to "come back in and pay or prepare to be prosecuted."

Local TV picked up fuzzy surveillance photos.

On Sunday morning, four of the five members of the group returned to bar and paid up.

Police said one of the five was working but will come in later to pay his share.

## Student will see big changes during 3 days

**NC** JACKSONVILLE — Life is arriving fast for a North Carolina university student who becomes a graduate, Marine Corps officer and a newlywed within three days.

The Daily News of Jacksonville reported that Isaiah Levia's big changes are lined up this weekend.

Levia takes his commission as a Marine Corps officer Saturday, the same day his finance graduates from Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville.

The next day, Levia graduates from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The day after that, the Richlands native is marrying his sweetheart, Audrey Marovitch.

From wire reports

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# Cubs have rough start to title defense

Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs made it look so easy last season it was almost hard to envision the difficulties they are experiencing this year.

Yet here are the defending champions, third in the NL Central after getting swept at home by the AL East-leading New York Yankees in a weekend series that ended with a record-setting marathon. The two teams played 18 innings on Sunday and set a major league mark by combining for 48 strikeouts.

The Cubs haven't hit the way they would like. They haven't pitched the way they hoped. And at 16-15 entering Tuesday, they are way off the pace they set a year ago when they jumped out to a 25-6 start and ran away with the division.

"It's hard to go 25-6 on an annual basis," manager Joe Maddon said. "I'm with these guys. Conversationally and watching them, [looking] in their eyes — they're engaged. There's no haziness, no fuzziness, no lack of engagement on their part. Teams have played pretty well against us, too."

Even so, it was a bit jarring

to see the Cubs looking up ever so slightly at Cincinnati and St. Louis in the division after Sunday's loss, which dropped them to 7-9 at Wrigley Field. Chicago spent all but one day in first place last season on the way to 103 wins and its first championship since 1908.

The Cubs can take some comfort in this: There were only three games separating first and last in the NL Central and the 2015 team also got off to a 16-15 start and wound up breaking out with 97 wins and a trip to the NLCS.

But there clearly is work to do.

While reigning NL MVP Kris Bryant is off to a strong start with a .302 average, six homers and 16 RBIs through Sunday, some key pieces of the lineup were struggling. Ben Zobrist, Addison Russell, Anthony Rizzo, Willson Contreras and Kyle Schwarber were all hitting .230 or below. The Cubs were 16th in the majors in batting average, though they were seventh in runs and on-base percentage.

As for the pitching, Chicago brought the starters along slowly in spring training coming off the championship run. Even so,

Maddon had no real explanation for the inconsistencies on a staff led by 2016 NL Cy Young Award runner-up Jon Lester, 2015 winner Jake Arrieta and Kyle Hendricks.

Other than a slight drop in Hendricks' velocity, he sees no major change in their pitches. Mentally and physically, he said, his rotation is in good shape.

Lester (1-1, 3.27 ERA) and Hendricks (2-1, 3.51) appear to be rounding into form after some rough patches, though Arrieta (4-1, 4.63) had struggled heading into Monday's start at Colorado. The back end of the rotation has also been an issue with John Lackey (5.14 ERA) and Brett Anderson (8.18 ERA), who has a lower back strain.

"They need to get in a groove, you know, and I think the whole team needs to get in a groove right now," catcher Miguel Montero said.

It would help if the Cubs weren't getting clubbed early in games. Opponents have pounded them in the first inning to the tune of a major league-leading 41 runs and 11 homers through 31 games.

That's taxing a strong bull-

pen that had worked more innings than any other in the majors through Sunday as well as a lineup that too often is being asked to wipe out an early deficit.

"As a pitcher you want the lead, and that's the same with position players," Rizzo said. "You always want to be within striking distance of the lead and we usually are. Playing from behind is good for us to come together as a team, but at the same time we also want to just boat race and score runs right from the get-go. A win's a win no matter how it comes and every day is different."

The Cubs have played tough and high-profile series to start the season, including visits to St. Louis and Boston and home dates against the Dodgers and the red-hot Yankees.

"We've had a good, tough schedule travel-wise and I think we've shown up every day and played," Rizzo said. "Played really well, and we've just got to keep battling. We have a tough division, the good thing is it's the first year in a while a team hasn't just ran away in the first month. It's going to be a long process."

## New 10-day DL gives teams more flexibility

Associated Press

Baseball's new 10-day disabled list seems to be quite a hit so far.

The 15-day DL timetable was reduced to 10 this season, and already the effects are fairly clear. Through April 30, there were 177 instances of a player going on the 10-day DL, according to Major League Baseball. Last season, there were only 149 placements onto the 15-day DL through April 30.

"I think it's a much better deal," San Francisco manager Bruce Bochy said Sunday. "It makes it easier to DL these guys who are in that 7-to-10 day area. It certainly allows you to be creative, too. If you want to send a pitcher down and get some help, you can do that, too."

Keeping an injured player active is a waste of a roster spot, but in the past, teams might have been hesitant to use the DL if there was a good chance the player could return in under 15 days. Now that the

DL requires only a 10-day absence, it's a bit more palatable.

Those 177 DL placements through April 30 took up a total of 3,587 days — that does not count days spent on the DL before opening day. That's an average of about 20 days per DL placement, so in many cases, there won't be any real difference between a 15-day DL and a 10-day DL.

"Love it," Cincinnati manager Bryan Price said. "Now we can make some decisions that don't handicap teams as much. I think it's a great idea. It serves the player and the team in a positive way."

Here are a few more developments from around baseball:

**Sluggers.** The Nationals owe much of their success in recent years to a pitching staff anchored by Stephen Strasburg and Max Scherzer, but this season, Washington has been on another level offensively. It leads the majors with 194 runs, 31 more

than second-place Cincinnati. The gap between the Nationals and Reds is as large as the gap between Cincinnati and 19th-ranked Baltimore, which has 132 runs.

Washington has been led, predictably, by Bryce Harper, who looks poised to make another run at the MVP if he can stay healthy. The big surprise for the Nats has been the hitting of Ryan Zimmerman, who has been a mainstay on the team for over a decade but who hadn't posted great numbers with the bat in quite some time. His .435 average leads the majors by a wide margin, and he also tops the National League in home runs (13), RBIs (34) and hits (47).

**Bouncing back.** While Toronto and San Francisco have struggled to improve after poor starts, the St. Louis Cardinals have dug themselves out of an early hole. After starting 3-9, the Cardinals have won 13 of 18 and are only a half-game behind first-place Cincinnati in the NL Central.



# Capitals whip Penguins, force Game 7

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Washington Capitals are well aware of their franchise's inglorious past, one filled with unmet expectations and gut-wrenching collapses.

And they don't care. It's not 1992. It's not 1996, 2009 or 2016 for that matter.

The Capitals have spent the better part of the season insisting this time things will be different, that they're not burdened by the weight of the team's history of playoff flame-outs, one most of the guys in red, white and blue had nothing to do with.

Backed up to the precipice against a rival that's tormented them for decades, the Capitals finally punched back. Hard.

Andre Burakovsky scored twice, Nicklas Backstrom got his sixth of the playoffs and Washington beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 5-2 on Monday night to force a Game 7 in their seesawing NHL Eastern Conference semifinal series.

This is the fourth time the two teams will meet in a win-

ner-take-all. The Penguins have won each of the previous three. Not that it bothers the Capitals.

"I haven't been here forever but, one, I've never been in a Game 7," said Washington forward T.J. Oshie, who opened the scoring with a first-period power-play goal. "Two, I've never been past the second round. I know how much it would mean to me and I imagine it would be the same to every guy in this locker room."

The Capitals are as close as they've been to their first appearance in the conference finals in 19 years after rallying from a 3-1 series deficit by sprinting by Pittsburgh in the third period at home in Game 5 and then delivering a masterful performance 48 hours later in a city that's often been a burial ground for once-promising seasons.

A year ago, Washington trailed Pittsburgh 3-1 in the second round, won Game 5 at home only to fall in overtime of Game 6. Intent on not repeating history yet again, the

Capitals jumped on the defending Stanley Cup champions early and didn't relent until the things were well in hand and a once raucous arena was largely empty.

"Since Game 3 we've had a sense of calmness about what we're doing," Washington coach Barry Trotz said. "We're having fun now. The fun part has been the obstacle."

Jake Guentzel picked up his playoff-leading ninth goal and Evgeni Malkin added another 52 seconds later late in the third period to make the score look slightly better, but the Penguins were never in it. The Capitals controlled play throughout. Marc-Andre Fleury finished with 21 saves and received little help in front him.

"I think we were probably guilty of making a few mistakes early on and then probably chasing our mistakes after that," said Pittsburgh captain Sidney Crosby, who had an assist in 20 minutes but was largely a non-factor in his second game back after missing Game 4 with a concussion.

Pittsburgh coach Mike Sullivan tinkered with his line combinations, reuniting the "HBK" line (Carl Hagelin, Nick Bonino and Phil Kessel) that played an instrumental part in the team's Cup run last spring. Sullivan also moved rookie Guentzel alongside Malkin and put Conor Sheary with Crosby.

None of it worked as Washington pushed the Penguins around.

Pittsburgh's first shot in the opening 17 minutes was a 136-foot flip by Brian Dumoulin that made its way to Braden Holtby, who easily stopped it for the first of his 16 saves. By then the Capitals already had a 1-0 lead on Oshie's fourth of the playoffs, and this time, there would be no response by the Penguins.

Pittsburgh had trouble executing even the simplest of plays. Defenseman Ron Hainsey went to boards to retrieve a loose puck in the Penguins end only to get checked by Burakovsky, who skated away with the puck and stuffed a shot past Fleury 6:36 into the second.

## Splash Brothers help Warriors complete sweep of Jazz

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — The Splash Brothers — Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson — provided the fast start, and the Golden State Warriors made it a quick finish to the second round.

They're four wins from another NBA Finals appearance, and so far nobody can slow them down.

Curry scored 30 points, Thompson 21, and the Warriors completed a sweep of the Utah Jazz in their second round NBA playoff series with a 121-95 victory Monday night.

"We have a lot of talent," Curry said. "We never know who is going to have a hot night."

"We try to move the ball, use each other to create open shots and when we do that, the ball is

hopping and a lot of good things happen."

The defending Western Conference champions have won both their series in four games and now await the winner of the Rockets-Spurs series that is tied at 2-2.

The Warriors kept pace with defending champion Cleveland in what has appeared like an inevitable third straight NBA Finals matchup. Both teams are 8-0 thus far.

"Steph was Steph and we fed off him," Warriors interim head coach Mike Brown said.

Brown said before the game he hoped his team would get out to a fast start and the Warriors did exactly that. Golden State led 39-17 at the end of the first quarter after an onslaught from Thompson and Curry. They combined to shoot 6-for-8

in the opening period.

Thompson finished with 21, Kevin Durant scored 18 and Draymond Green posted his third career postseason triple-double with 17 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists.

Gordon Hayward led the Jazz with 25 points and Shelvin Mack chipped in 18.

"The most important thing was we imposed our will on the game and we had the game at our pace," Green said.

Curry entered the game averaging 26.7 points in the playoffs, but Thompson had struggled against the Jazz. That ended Monday.

Thompson rebounded from a six-point effort in Game 3 with back-to-back jumpers out the gate. Curry then drained consecutive threes and the rout was on.

The Jazz started 3-for-16 from the field as Golden State hit from all areas and finished shooting 57.1 percent in the first quarter.

Curry picked up right where he left off after an 11-point fourth quarter in Game 3 with a 14-point first quarter. He, Thompson and Green combined for 29 points in that first 12 minutes.

The Jazz tried to put off their vacation. They used a 14-0 run early in the second quarter, sparked by the suddenly active Dante Exum and Derrick Favors, to cut the lead to 10 points. Utah closed the half with a 12-2 run to trail 60-52 at halftime, but every time the Jazz made a significant run the rest of the way, the Warriors answered and pushed the lead back to double digits.

# Big first inning propels O's past Nats

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The Baltimore Orioles went deep early and often to beat a team that knows all too well about pounding the opposition into submission.

Trey Mancini capped a three-homer binge in the first inning against Gio Gonzalez (3-1), and the Orioles beat the Washington Nationals 6-4 on Monday night for their season-high fifth straight victory.

The Nationals own the most potent offense in the majors, but on this night they were no match for the power-laden Orioles. Joey Rickard hit a lead-off homer and Mark Trumbo added a solo shot before Mancini connected with a runner on to make it 4-0, and Washington never recovered.

"The only thing that beat

us tonight was the long ball," Gonzalez said. "If they take it, they're strikes. The only one that was not a strike was Trumbo."

And that one?

"Fastball over Trumbo's head," Gonzalez lamented. "Maybe throw it at the backstop, they'll swing at those."

After the Orioles let a six-run cushion shrink to three, Brad Brach worked the ninth for his eighth save. After Brach gave up a one-out RBI double to former Oriole Matt Wieters, pinch-runner Trea Turner strayed too far from second base on a groundout to first and the game ended with a rundown in which Adam Lind was tagged out between third and home.

"It was a miscommunication," Washington manager Dusty Baker said.

Kevin Gausman (2-3) allowed two runs over seven innings. He retired the first 10 batters and struck out eight in his longest outing of the year.

"It was just good to go out there and feel like myself," Gausman said. "Good command of the fastball, and being able to throw it anywhere I wanted to."

Caleb Joseph had a career high-tying four hits for the Orioles. Baltimore (21-10) owns the second-best record in the majors behind the AL East-leading New York Yankees.

Bryce Harper homered and drove in two runs for the Nationals, who lead the majors in runs, hits and batting average.

The Orioles now hold a 37-24 advantage over their neighboring rivals in the so-called "Beltway Series," which began

in 2006.

Gonzalez came in with a National League-leading 1.64 ERA for the team with the best record in the NL. None of that mattered to Baltimore, which took the lead for good when Rickard sent the left-hander's fourth pitch into the left-field seats.

"Early, he was not hitting his spots," Baker said of Gonzalez. "He was supposed to throw one ball away and it was in. Another pitch was supposed to be in and it got away. He settled down after the number of home runs they hit in that inning."

Gonzalez made it through the sixth and gave up six runs — one fewer than his previous six starts combined. His poor outing upped his ERA to 2.64 and dropped his career record against Baltimore to 1-6.

## Exhausted Yankees whip Reds after pulling all-nighter

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Brett Gardner and Matt Holliday homered, Masahiro Tanaka won his fifth consecutive start and the New York Yankees shook off a long game and a short night's sleep, beating the Cincinnati Reds 10-4 on Monday for their sixth victory in a row.

The Yankees have the best record in the majors at 21-9 and are 12 games over .500 for the first time since the end of the 2015 season.

Their biggest challenge was overcoming the fatigue from an 18-inning, 5-4 win at Wrigley Field early Monday. The Yankees didn't land in the Cincinnati area until 5:08 a.m., and the sun was up when some of them finally fell asleep. Players sipped caffeinated drinks and yawned in the clubhouse pregame.

Tanaka (5-1) gave them what they needed after their all-nighter, going seven innings on 112 pitches to rest the bullpen. He allowed four runs — Joey Votto drove in three with a

single and a homer — while ending the Reds' five-game winning streak. Gary Sanchez got New York going with his bases-loaded single in the first off Rookie Davis (1-2), a former Yankees prospect.

**Blue Jays 4, Indians 2:** Marcus Stroman (3-2) pitched six shutout innings, Kevin Pillar made a sensational catch in center field and host Toronto topped Cleveland in a playoff rematch.

Ryan Goins hit a two-run homer and Justin Smoak added a two-run single as the Blue Jays beat the team that eliminated them from last year's AL Championship Series.

**Athletics 3, Angels 2 (11):** Jed Lowrie hit his second home run of the game with two outs in the 11th inning and host Oakland beat Los Angeles for its third straight walk-off win.

Lowrie got Oakland on the board with a solo shot in the fourth inning and ended it with a drive to right field off Deolis Guerra (2-2).

**Royals 7, Rays 3:** Nate Karns (2-2) struck out 10 while

pitching into the seventh inning, Eric Hosmer had three hits and visiting Kansas City busted out of an offensive slump to beat Tampa Bay.

Kansas City matched its best run output of the year and set a season high with 13 hits. Drew Butera homered and drove in his first two runs of the season, helping the Royals win for the fourth time in 17 games.

**Mets 4, Giants 3:** Neil Walker hit a game-ending single with two outs in the ninth inning, and host New York put turmoil aside to beat reeling San Francisco.

Michael Conforto scored for New York's first walk-off win this season, giving the Mets their seventh victory in 10 games. Jeurys Familia (1-0) needed just five pitches in a perfect ninth, finishing a five-hitter started by Jacob deGrom.

**Cardinals 9, Marlins 4:** Cardinals ace Carlos Martinez drove in four runs, compensating for the two homers he gave up to Marcell Ozuna and leading visiting St. Louis

over Miami for its season-best fourth straight win.

Martinez (2-3) came into the game hitless this year. He hit a two-out, three-run double off Adam Conley (2-3) in the second inning and singled home a run in the fourth.

**Padres 5, Rangers 1:** Trevor Cahill and three relievers held visiting Texas to two hits, and Ryan Schimpf, Austin Hedges and Cory Spangenberg homered to help San Diego snap a four-game losing streak.

Cahill (3-2) allowed one hit in 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> scoreless innings to win his third straight decision over four starts. The right-hander struck out seven and walked five.

**Dodgers 12, Pirates 1:** Chris Taylor hit a grand slam during a six-run first inning, Alex Wood (3-0) and a pair of Los Angeles relievers combined for 17 strikeouts and host Los Angeles rolled over Pittsburgh.

Yasiel Puig added a solo homer in the first as the Dodgers jumped all over Trevor Williams (1-2).