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US, North Korea still hopeful for talks

By KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — President Donald Trump and North Korea suggested Friday that future nuclear negotiations still could be possible despite the surprise U.S. decision to scrap next month's summit plans.

Trump said Friday that the U.S. is now "talking to" North Korea, and said "everybody plays games." Trump had previously welcomed a statement by the North that it remains willing to hold talks "at any time."

"Very good news to receive the warm and productive statement from North Korea," he wrote in a tweet. "We will soon see where it will lead, hopefully to long and enduring prosperity and peace."

"Only time (and talent) will tell!" he added. Trump announced Thursday that he was canceling the June 12 summit with the North in Singapore, citing "tremendous anger and open hostility."

He insisted his so-called "maximum pressure" policy of tough economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure against Pyongyang will continue and warned that the U.S. military was prepared to react if necessary.

But the president adopted a warmer tone after the North's outreach on Friday, saying it was even possible the summit could take place June 12 as planned. "They very much want to do it, we'd like to do it," he told reporters at the White House.

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis echoed Trump's comments later at the Pentagon, telling reporters he remains optimistic about the potential for a historic summit between the two nations.

North Korea expressed regret about the decision in a statement on the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

"We have inwardly highly appreciated President Trump for having made the bold decision, which any other U.S. presidents dared not, and made efforts for such a crucial event as the summit," Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye Gwan was quoted as saying.

"His sudden and unilateral announcement to cancel the summit is something unexpected to us, and we cannot but feel great regret for it," he added.

Kim, who was a leading negotiator for an aid-for-disarmament deal that collapsed under former President George W. Bush's administration, said the summit would

have been a good starting place for negotiations. He said the North Koreans remain "unchanged in our goal" of peace and stability and are willing to "offer the U.S. side time and opportunity."

"We would like to make known to the U.S. side once again that we have the intent to sit with the U.S. side to solve problem regardless of ways at any time," he said.

The mix of flattery and regret signaled an apologetic tone that contrasted with the harsh rhetoric issued the day before against Vice President Mike Pence, which appeared to be the trigger for Trump's decision.

Mattis said the Pentagon would continue to follow American diplomats' lead on North Korea, signaling the U.S. military was not seeking to raise tensions between the nations as negotiations continue. The defense chief said the U.S. would not increase its military training operations on the peninsula after Trump called off the meeting, at least temporarily, Thursday.

"We are not changing anything right now. It is steady as she goes," Mattis said. "The diplomats are in the lead and in charge, and we give them our best wishes to have a fruitful way forward."

Former McCain commander pleads guilty, will retire

By CLAUDIA GRISALES

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The commander of the USS John S. McCain when it collided with a commercial tanker last year in the Straits of Singapore pleaded guilty Friday to dereliction of duty and acknowledged his role in the deaths of 10 sailors.

Cmdr. Alfredo Sanchez appeared somber and tearful during a special court-martial at the Washington Navy Yard for the criminal charge under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Sanchez pleaded guilty as part of an agreement reached earlier this year and has yet to be sentenced, but could face a

letter of reprimand and forfeiture of a portion of his pay for three months.

Sanchez, who has spent more than 20 years in the service, said he will retire as part of the agreement.

"I failed to set" the appropriate crew needed for the crash, Sanchez said. "I should have directed more rigorous training."

A day earlier, Chief Petty Officer Jeffery D. Butler, who was charged with training and use of a navigational system on the McCain, pleaded guilty to dereliction of duty and also acknowledged his role in the deaths.

Friday's hearing, which was

attended by several relatives of the sailors who died Aug. 21, is one of a series of courts-martial resulting from the McCain collision. For about two hours, relatives read searing and emotional victim impact statements.

"This is a tragedy that should have never happened," said Karen Doyon, mother of Petty Officer 3rd Class Dustin Doyon, 26, of Connecticut.

In January, Navy officials said Sanchez had been charged with negligent homicide, dereliction of duty and hazarding a vessel.

A charge sheet released Wednesday said Sanchez was facing "a dereliction in the performance of duties through

neglect resulting in death." The charge sheet went on to say that Sanchez knew of his duties as commanding officer and was derelict in the performance of those duties.

"He negligently failed to ensure the safe navigation of the said vessel," the charge sheet said, "as it was his duty to do as Commanding Officer to ensure a proper watch was set for transiting a high-density contact environment; take proper action and control of the vessel during system casualty; follow operational Standing Orders during a conceived system casualty, and that such dereliction of duty contributing to the death" of the 10 sailors.

Lava from Hawaii volcano enters ocean from 3 flows

Associated Press

HONOLULU — Lava entered the ocean from a third flow, marking the third week of a Hawaii volcano eruption that has opened up nearly two dozen vents in rural communities, destroyed dozens of buildings and shot miles-high plumes of ash into the sky.

Low lava fountains were erupting from a nearly continuous 2-mile-long portion of the series of fissures that have opened up in the ground, scientists said Thursday. The fountains were feeding channelized lava flows down to the coast. The easternmost channel split, creating three ocean entries Wednesday.

Since the eruption began on May 3, Hawaii County has ordered about 2,000 people to evacuate from Leilani Estates and surrounding

neighborhoods.

Hawaii officials have said they may need to evacuate 1,000 more people if lava crosses key highways and isolates communities in the mostly rural part of the island where the Kilauea volcano is erupting.

A blocked highway would cut people off from the only route to grocery stores, schools and hospitals.

The U.S. Marine Corps said Thursday that it has sent two CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters from a base near Honolulu to help if more evacuations become necessary. Each helicopter can carry 50 passengers.

The volcano has opened more than 20 vents in the ground that have released lava, sulfur dioxide and steam. The lava has been pouring down the flank of the volcano and into the ocean miles away.

Minot AFB security leader fired over lost gun, ammo

Associated Press

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. — A security group commander at North Dakota's Minot Air Force Base was relieved of his command Wednesday after explosives and a machine gun were lost in separate incidents.

Col. Jason Beers of the 91st Security Forces Group was ousted because the Air Force had lost trust and confidence in him, said Col. Colin Connor, commander of the 91st Missile Wing.

The Minot base, home to about 4,800 active-duty military personnel, is one of the nation's two B-52 bomber bases and the command center for about 150 Minuteman III missiles, housed underground in hardened silos across 8,500 square miles of northwestern and north-central North Dakota.

It was learned that an M240 machine gun was missing May 16 during a routine weapons inventory earlier this month.

Separately, the military last week called off a search for a container of ammunition for an automatic grenade launcher. Authorities said the explosives fell off a Humvee on May 1 on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation near Parshall, in the northwestern part of the state.

The military said the base is taking inventory of all its weapons due to the loss of the gun.

The North Dakota base has been under scrutiny for years following a 2007 mishap in which a B-52 bomber mistakenly was armed with six nuclear-tipped cruise missiles in Minot and was flown to Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

Other lapses at the base followed the bomber flight, including two crashes of vehicles carrying missile parts within a year of each other, the theft of a launch code device, the discovery of missile crewmembers sleeping on the job and failed inspections.

Iran tied to Taliban attacks after US scraps nuke deal

Bloomberg

Iran is ramping up support to the Taliban in retaliation against President Donald Trump's decision to scrap a historic nuclear deal, Afghan officials said, and the battle for a strategic Afghan city points to that blowback.

Tehran directly supported a Taliban offensive last week against the western city of Farah that's situated near the border between the two nations, Afghan government and police officials said. Fighters from the insurgent group crossed over from Iran, where they had been trained and armed, Farid Bakhtawar, the head of the provincial council of Farah, told Bloomberg.

"Iran is involved in the recent violence and was actually leading the May 15 battle," Fazl Ahmad Sherzad, the police chief of Farah province, said by phone on Wednesday. "They have been directly funding and providing arms to the Taliban as Iran sees Farah as part of its strategic interest."

The assault Farah that killed hundreds points to Tehran's work to undermine Trump's push to bolster security in the war-torn country and ultimately extract the U.S. from its longest war. Along with Iran, Washington points to Russian and Pakistani support for the group it has been battling since 2001, which Moscow and Islamabad have continually denied.

"Trump's decision to pull out of the Iran deal poses a clear and present danger to U.S. war efforts in Afghanistan," Michael Kugelman, a senior associate for South Asia at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, said in an email. It "gives Tehran a strong incentive to ramp up its military support to the Taliban."

Iran's embassy in the Afghan capital didn't answer calls or messages seeking comment.

Iranian support also gives the Taliban less incentive to engage in negotiations, which many in Washington and Kabul see as necessary to end the 17-year conflict.

China aircraft carrier pilots complete first night missions

Associated Press

BEIJING — Chinese navy pilots aboard the country's sole operating aircraft carrier have completed their first nighttime takeoffs and landings, state media reported Friday.

The missions were hailed by state media as a major step forward in the combat ability of the Liaoning, which was bought as a mostly empty hull from Ukraine and was commissioned in 2012 along with

its flight wing.

In a video released late Thursday, J-15 fighter jets were shown taking off and landing in the darkness, their afterburners glowing. Nighttime missions on aircraft carriers are considered far more difficult and dangerous than those in the daytime.

China said this month that its second carrier, the first built entirely in China, had completed five days of sea trials.

Trump addresses Naval Academy graduates

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Maryland — President Donald Trump stressed the United States' military might as he addressed graduates at the United States Naval Academy Friday, saying the "best way to prevent war is to be fully prepared for war."

Trump spoke to the 2018

graduating class in Annapolis, stressing U.S. military preparedness a day after he canceled a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"Our country has regained the respect that we used to have long ago," said Trump, who did not mention North Korea in his remarks. "Yes, they are respecting us again.

America is back," he said.

Trump drew a mixed response as he spoke to 1,042 newly commissioned ensigns and second lieutenants, drawing applause and silence at times as he emphasized his efforts to boost federal defense spending. Said Trump: "we have begun the great rebuilding of the U.S. military."

"We know that the best way to prevent war is to be fully prepared for war and hopefully we never have to use all of this beautiful new powerful new equipment," Trump said.

At the conclusion of his remarks, Trump said that he planned to remain at the graduation to shake each graduate's hand.

'Extremely severe' cyclone to make landfall in Oman

Associated Press

SALALAH, Oman — Cyclone Mekunu neared the Arabian Peninsula on Friday as its outer bands dumped heavy rain and bent palm trees in Oman, a sign of the approaching storm's power after earlier thrashing the Yemeni island of Socotra.

At least 40 people were reported missing on Socotra, where flash floods washed away thousands of animals and cut power lines on the isle in the Arabian Sea. Officials feared some may be dead.

The cyclone was expected to make landfall early Saturday near Salalah, Oman's third-largest city and home to some 200,000 people close to the sultanate's border with war-ravaged Yemen.

Conditions quickly deteriorated in Salalah after sunrise Friday, with winds and rain beginning to pick up. Streets emptied across the city. Standing water covered roads and caused at least one car to hydroplane and flip over.

Later, a municipal worker on a loader used its bucket to tear into a road median to drain a flooded street.

Omani forecasters warned Salalah and the surrounding area would get at least 7.87 inches of rain, over twice the amount of rain this city typically gets in a year. Authorities worry about flash flooding in the area's valleys and potential mudslides down its nearby cloud-shrouded mountains.

As torrential rains poured down, local authorities opened

schools to shelter those whose homes are at risk. About 600 people, mostly laborers, huddled at the West Salalah School, some sleeping on mattresses on the floors of classrooms, where math and English lesson posters hung on the walls.

India's Meteorological Department said the storm had maximum sustained winds of 99-106 miles per hour, with gusts of up to 118 mph.

On Socotra, authorities relocated over 230 families to sturdier buildings and other areas, including those more inland and in the island's mountains, Yemeni security officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Flash floods engulfed Socotra streets, cutting electricity and communication lines, they said. At least 40 people were missing, they added. Some humanitarian aid from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates arrived just hours after the cyclone receded.

The officials said heavy rains pummeled Yemen's easternmost province of al-Mahra, along the nation's border with Oman.

Socotra Gov. Ramzy Mahrous said one ship sank and two others ran aground in the storm, initially saying authorities believed 17 people were missing.

"We consider them dead," the governor said. Yemen's self-exiled President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi issued a statement ordering troops under his command on the island to help citizens, deliver supplies and reopen roads.

Lava from volcano in Hawaii enters ocean from 3 flows

Associated Press

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Lava has destroyed 50 buildings, including about two dozen homes. One person was seriously injured after being hit by a flying piece of lava.

There continues to be intermittent explosions at the summit that have been sending plumes of ash into the sky. On Wednesday, the volcano belched a plume that reached about 7,000 feet, scientists said. Right before the explosion, there was a 3.9 magnitude earthquake at the summit.

"We are kind of in this steady state," said Wendy Stovall, a scientist at the U.S. Geological Survey. There's no indication about whether lava volume will increase or decrease, she said. The continued explosions are expected to "last a little while longer."

Weinstein arrested on rape, other charges

The Washington Post

Harvey Weinstein was arrested and charged with rape and other abuse charges Friday, months after allegations of sexual violence and harassment toppled the once-powerful Hollywood mogul.

Weinstein, 66, was charged with rape, criminal sex act, sexual abuse and sexual misconduct for cases involving two women, according to the New York Police Department.

After his arraignment on Friday morning Weinstein posted \$1 million bail and surrendered his passport. He will wear an electronic monitoring device at all times, and face other travel restrictions.

Weinstein's attorney, Benjamin Brafman, said to reporters on Friday that he plans to

plead not guilty — and his legal team will fight to dismiss the charges. "These charges, we believe that they are constitutionally flawed," he said. "We believe that at the end of the process Mr. Weinstein will be exonerated."

"Today's charges reflect significant progress in this active, ongoing investigation," Cyrus R. Vance Jr., the Manhattan district attorney, said in a statement after the arraignment. "I thank the brave survivors who have come forward, and my office's prosecutors who have worked tirelessly on this investigation." Vance also urged other survivors to contact them.

Weinstein was charged with three felonies — rape in the first degree, rape in the third degree and a criminal sexual

act in the first degree — "for forcible sexual acts against two women in 2013 and 2004, respectively," Vance's office said Friday morning.

In the complaint, a New York Police detective stated that in 2004, Weinstein forced a woman to engage in oral sex with him, physically shoving her head downward. The detective also said that in 2013, Weinstein kept a woman in a room against her will "and engaged in sexual intercourse with informant by forcible compulsion," even though she had "clearly expressed her lack of consent to the act."

Weinstein made no comment as he walked into the 1st Precinct police station in Manhattan at about 7:30 a.m., to surrender to authorities. About an hour later, he left the police

station in handcuffs, to be driven to court.

The disgraced producer's walk into the courthouse was a grim inversion of the red carpets he'd walk at the height of his power. Handcuffed and silent, he ignored a lineup of reporters snapping photos and shouting questions.

His arrest came months after Vance's office reportedly launched an investigation into allegations of sexual assault. Police officials said the arrest and charges stemmed from a joint investigation between the NYPD and the Manhattan District Attorney's office.

Weinstein's state of mind on Friday was, according to his attorney, "As well as can be expected when you are accused of a crime that you vehemently deny having committed."

Student opens fire at Ind. school

Associated Press

NOBLESVILLE, Ind. — A male student opened fire at a suburban Indianapolis middle school Friday morning, wounding another student and a teacher before being taken into custody, authorities said.

Seventh-grader Ethan Stonebraker said the science teacher likely prevented even more injuries by confronting the shooter, who he said pulled out a gun and opened fire after walking in late while the class was taking a test.

"Our science teacher immediately ran at him, swatted a gun out of his hand and tackled him to the ground," Stonebraker said. "If it weren't for him, more of us would have been injured for sure."

The attack at Noblesville West Middle School happened at about 9 a.m., police Chief Kevin Jowitt said at a news conference. He said investigators believe the suspect acted alone, though he didn't release the boy's name or the names of the victims, who were taken to hospitals in Indianapolis.

Indiana University Health spokeswoman Danielle Sirilla said the teacher was taken to IU Health Methodist Hospital, and the wounded student was taken to Riley Hospital for Children. She didn't know the seriousness of their injuries.

After the attack, students were bused to the Noblesville High School gym, where

their families could retrieve them.

Eighth-grader Chris Navarro said he was inside an auditorium when he counted hearing 16 gunshots about a minute before the bell rang for the change in classes.

"The speaker came on and said we were on lockdown and people rushed in and we went to the back of the room. I went into this little room in the back with three other people," he said calmly standing between his parents as they picked him up.

Erica Higgins, who was among the worried parents who rushed to get their kids, told WTHR-TV that she learned of the shooting from a relative who called her at home.

"I just want to get my arms around my boy," she said. Higgins said her son was shaken up but knew little about what happened.

Gov. Eric Holcomb, who was returning from a trip to Europe on Friday, issued a statement saying he and other state leaders were getting updates about the situation and that 100 state police officers had been made available to work with local law enforcement.

Noblesville, which is about 20 miles northeast of Indianapolis, is home to about 50,000 people. The middle school has about 1,300 students from grades six through eight. The school's academic year was scheduled to end next Friday.

Police: 2 shot at Okla. restaurant during dinner

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — A man armed with a pistol walked into an Oklahoma City restaurant at the dinner hour and opened fire, wounding two customers before being shot dead by a handgun-carrying civilian in the parking lot, police said.

The shooting happened at about 6:30 p.m. Thursday at Louie's On The Lake, a restaurant on Lake Hefner.

A woman and a female juvenile were undergoing surgery for gunshot wounds but apparently "are going to survive," said Capt. Bo Matthews, a police spokesman. A man suffered a broken arm while trying to escape the shooting.

A family member told KOCO-TV that her daughter and 12-year-old granddaughter were shot while entering the restaurant for the girl's birthday dinner. Authorities have not identified the injured patrons.

The dead suspect's identity also was not immediately known, Matthews said.

"We have no reason to believe this is a terrorist type of incident," Matthews said. The motive was unclear otherwise, and the investigation at the scene was expected to extend into the early morning hours as law enforcement personnel interview about 100 eyewitnesses, he said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Man threatened officer with fireworks

ME JAY — Police in Maine said a man who threatened to launch fireworks at a police officer who was warning him to stop setting off fireworks has been charged with terrorizing.

Jay Police Chief Richard Caton says the 35-year-old man did not have a permit to use the fireworks he was setting off on May 18. The Sun-Journal reported the suspect was asked to stop by responding Officer Dylan Rider, who had received a noise complaint about the fireworks.

Rider said the man approached him in his cruiser and said it looked like the suspect was going to light and launch a firework directly at the officer.

Bone recovered from shipwreck not pirate's

MA YARMOUTH — A bone fragment recovered from a Cape Cod shipwreck is not from infamous pirate Samuel "Black Sam" Bellamy after all.

The Whydah Pirate Museum in Yarmouth announced Thursday that DNA testing determined the bone was from a male with general ties to the Eastern Mediterranean area but was not Bellamy.

The museum had enlisted forensic scientists to extract DNA from the bone fragment and compare it with DNA from a living Bellamy descendant.

The Whydah sank in 1717. Bellamy's body was among 40 never found or identified.

The wreck was discovered in 1984. Most of its treasure is thought to be on the ocean floor.

Forbes has listed Bellamy as the highest-earning pirate, plundering about \$120 million worth of treasure.

Man jailed for money laundering wants gold

RI PROVIDENCE — A Rhode Island man serving a 660-year prison sentence for laundering money for a Colombian drug cartel wants the federal government to give back millions of dollars' worth of gold bars, jewelry and cash it had seized during his arrest in 1991.

The Providence Journal reported Stephen Saccoccia and his wife, Donna, are challenging the federal order that forced them to pay nearly \$140 million for their crimes.

Stephen Saccoccia argues he legally obtained certain assets the government seized to pay back the debt, including dozens of gold bars buried in the couple's backyard and valuables stowed in safe deposit boxes in Europe.

Shop's foam rubber gold bars fool burglar

MI GRAND RAPIDS — Fake promotional gold bars apparently appeared so much like the real thing that someone broke into a western Michigan flooring shop to take them.

WXMI-TV reported Old to Gold Hardwood Floors owner Rowdy Lapham arrived at work Monday to find his store burglarized. Foam rubber gold bars with the company's logo were strewn about.

A rock was used to break through a window around 2 a.m. Sunday. The burglar was seen on surveillance video roaming through the shop.

Employee Nick Butler told WZZM-TV the thief may have seen the stack of bars and "thought, wow, someone forgot to put these gold bars away."

The squeezable bars are for stress relief. Butler said the company's motto is stress-free flooring.

Police: Man delivers pot to wrong car, is arrested

OH NORWALK — Police said a man who delivered a bag of marijuana to the wrong car in an Ohio store parking lot faces drug trafficking charges.

The Sandusky Register reported Anthony Damante, 18, was arrested Tuesday in Norwalk.

Police said a woman went into a store Friday afternoon to buy lottery tickets, returned to her car and found a strange smelling sandwich bag marked "Sour Kush" on the front seat, prompting a call to police.

A police report said officers used surveillance camera footage to determine that another woman in the lot gave Damante money and went inside the store while Damante put the 40 grams of pot into the unwitting woman's unlocked car.

Prank could get seniors barred from graduation

IA FORT MADISON — Some southeast Iowa high school students may be banned from graduating next month after a senior prank that officials said crossed the line and became criminal.

The Fort Madison Police Department said 19 Fort Madison High School seniors broke into the school Sunday.

School officials on Monday discovered the school covered in toilet paper, Vaseline and posters, some featuring obscenities. Students also threw water balloons inside the building, tied the front doors shut with rope and burned toilet paper rolls outside.

The students were identified through video surveillance and were given 13-day suspensions.

School Board President Tim Wondra said students were warned in advance that a "se-

nior prank" would result in losing permission to attend graduation.

Prisons embrace drones to watch over inmates

SC COLUMBIA — After spending years fighting to keep drones from flying over prisons, South Carolina corrections officials now plan to use the small unmanned aircraft to help keep a remote eye on inmates.

State Corrections Director Bryan Stirling gave reporters a glimpse Thursday at new drones that can be used to monitor a prison and the area outside, where contraband like cellphones and drugs can be launched over walls.

Stirling said the drones will be used at times over some of South Carolina's 21 prisons, allowing additional eyes that can monitor facilities while not having to be on site.

Prison officials pushed for years to have drones prevented from flying over prisons, and lawmakers passed a ban on the aircraft this year. The drones were used to drop contraband over fences.

Man burns down garage in attempt to kill weeds

OH SPRINGFIELD — Authorities said an Ohio homeowner trying to kill troublesome weeds with a torch burned down his garage.

The Springfield News-Sun reported Springfield Township firefighters in central Ohio were called to a home around 4 a.m. Thursday for a detached garage engulfed in flames.

No one was injured.

Fire officials learned the man had been trying to eliminate weeds around the garage. They're calling the blaze an accident.

From wire reports

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Close finishes provide lessons at Indy

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Takuma Sato learned a tough, painful lesson from his spectacular final-lap crash at the 2012 Indianapolis 500.

Eventually, it paid dividends.

The Japanese driver believes he might not be the defending Indy winner heading into Sunday's race had it not been for the ill-fated passing attempt that sent him spinning hard into the first-turn wall and gave Dario Franchitti his third and final race victory six years ago.

"It helped me a lot mentally, physically and technically," Sato said. "You don't understand the challenge of winning unless you are there. Last year, I attacked it (passing Helio Castroneves) in a very different way from how I tried to pass Dario."

Not all drivers are as fortunate as Sato, and for them the continual stories, constant questions and countless replays never seem to go away.

Michael Andretti has held

the distinction of leading more laps at Indianapolis than any non-winner of the race for years. His father, Mario, kept coming close after his 1969 victory but never got a second 500 win. Michael's son, Marco, was in position to end the Andretti curse in 2006 — until Sam Hornish Jr. passed him in the front straightaway and won in the third-closest finish in race history.

Scott Goodyear had three chances in the 1990s and all ended in frustration.

In 1992, he started last and finished second to Al Unser Jr. in the race's closest finish (0.043 seconds). In 1995, he had the lead with 10 laps to go when officials ruled Goodyear passed the pace car on a restart and assessed a penalty. When he refused to stop, he was black-flagged and finished 14th. Two years later, Goodyear was passed by teammate Arie Luyendyk with six laps to go and missed again on an even later restart because the flag-

man waved the green while the yellow lights remained on.

Perhaps nobody has reflected more on his close call than JR Hildebrand, who crashed on the final turn of the 2011 race while trying to avoid a slower car and skidded across the finish line in second place. He was named the race's rookie of the year, not much of a consolation prize.

Since then, the 29-year-old from California has started six 500s, led only six laps and never finished higher than sixth. Each year he returns and the reminders are all around. Hildebrand has learned how to cope.

He doesn't watch the replays much. He clears his head, and when the questions begin, he answers every one honestly, as does Marco Andretti.

"I think the next year, I was so bound and determined because I was focused on winning this thing as soon as possible," Hildebrand said before qualifying 27th for Dreyer & Rein-

bold. "That's still probably the wrong attitude to have but what I've learned is that you really have to focus on all the little things."

Even for winners, like Sato, the thought of the one that got away tends to linger longer than a victory celebration.

Just ask Castroneves, who won his first two races on Indy's 2.5-mile oval in 2001 and 2002 before finishing second to teammate Gil de Ferran in 2003.

Over his next 14 starts here, the Brazilian for Team Penske has five top-five finishes — one victory and three seconds, including last year to Sato. He is starting eighth Sunday as he again tries to become the fourth member of the four-time winners club.

"It sucks, that's the feeling because so few people are able to win the race," Castroneves said, referring to second place. "When you're that close for 500 miles and when you're so close to winning it, it just sucks."

Gordon comes off bench, leads Rockets past Warriors

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Chris Paul's grit and veteran leadership have pushed the Golden State Warriors to the brink of elimination.

Now the Houston Rockets must wait to see if his injured leg is strong enough to help them take one last step to the NBA Finals.

Eric Gordon came off the bench to score 24 points and his steal on Golden State's last possession secured a 98-94 victory Thursday night that gave the Rockets a 3-2 lead in the Western Conference finals. The victory came with a cost, as Paul had to leave the game in the final minute with a right hamstring injury that could keep him out of Game 6.

"His spirits aren't great," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "He wanted to be out there, and for sure he's worried ... we'll see

tomorrow how it goes."

Paul was receiving treatment after the game and did not speak to reporters.

The Rockets head to Oakland, Calif., for Game 6 on Saturday night a win away from knocking off the defending champions and advancing to the NBA Finals for the first time since winning back-to-back titles in 1994-95.

Kevin Durant scored 29 points for the Warriors, who lost in Game 5 of a playoff series for just the second time since 2015. Just like Cleveland in the East, a run of three straight trips to the championship round is on the verge of ending.

"We haven't been in this position before ... so it's a chapter we need to figure out and finish the story," Stephen Curry said.

The Rockets won a second consecutive defensive struggle between the two potent offens-

es, leaving the Warriors a loss from missing the NBA Finals for the first time since 2014.

Draymond Green made a three-pointer with just over minute left to get Golden State within one. Harden, who was 0-for-11 on threes, missed his last one with less than 30 seconds left, giving the Warriors the ball back.

Curry missed a floater and Trevor Ariza grabbed the rebound and was fouled with 10 seconds left. But he made just one of two free throws to give the Warriors another chance.

But Gordon came up with his steal when Green lost control in the lane and added two free throws with 2.4 seconds left to put it away.

Green was asked what was supposed to happen on the play.

"We was supposed to score," he said. "I lost the ball ... not

much more to it than that."

Harden scoffed at a reporter who questioned him about his struggles from long range in the last two games, where he's gone a combined 3 for 22.

"Who cares," he said. "I'm just missing shots, but we're winning."

Klay Thompson shook off a knee injury that had his status for this game in question to score 23 points and Curry added 22. A bruised left knee kept Andre Iguodala out for the second consecutive game, and Kevon Looney started in his place.

After losing Game 1 of the series, the Rockets made the best of home-court advantage this time, thrilling a sellout crowd that included Justin Timberlake, Houston Texans star J.J. Watt and rapper Travis Scott.

It's Houston's second straight win in the series.

President posthumously pardons boxer

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump has granted a rare posthumous pardon to boxing's first black heavyweight champion, clearing Jack Johnson's name more than 100 years after what many see as his racially charged conviction.

"I am taking this very righteous step, I believe, to correct a wrong that occurred in our history and to honor a truly legendary boxing champion," Trump said Thursday during an Oval Office ceremony. He was joined by WBC heavyweight champion Deontay Wilder, retired heavyweight titleholder Lennox Lewis and actor Sylvester Stallone, whom Trump credited with championing the pardon.

Trump said Johnson had served 10 months in prison "for what many view as a racially motivated injustice."

"It's my honor to do it. It's about time," the president said.

Johnson, a prominent athlete who crossed over into popular culture decades ago with biographies, dramas and documentaries, was convicted in 1913 by an all-white jury for violating the Mann Act for traveling with his white girlfriend. That law made it illegal to transport women across state lines for "immoral" purposes.

Trump had tweeted in late April that Stallone, a longtime friend, had brought Johnson's story to his attention in a phone call.

"His trials and tribulations were great, his life complex and controversial. Others have looked at this over the years, most thought it would be done, but yes, I am considering a Full Pardon!" Trump wrote then.

The Oval Office ceremony was a celebratory scene, bringing together boxing greats past, present and fictional. The guests brought with them a colorful boxing championship belt, which sat front and center on the president's Reso-

lute Desk as he spoke. At one point, Trump jokingly asked Lewis whether he could "take Deontay in a fight" if he really started working out.

Lewis said Johnson had been an inspiration to him personally, while Stallone said Johnson had served as the basis of the character Apollo Creed in his "Rocky" films.

"This has been a long time coming," he said.

Trump has a personal history with the sport, and hosted matches in the 1990s at his hotels.

After Johnson's conviction, he spent seven years as a fugitive, but eventually returned to the U.S. and turned himself in. He served about a year in federal prison and was released in 1921. He died in 1946 in an auto crash.

His great-great niece, Linda E. Haywood, had pressed Trump for a posthumous pardon, and Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid,

D-Nev., had promoted Johnson's case for years.

The son of former slaves, Johnson defeated Tommy Burns for the heavyweight title in 1908 at a time when blacks and whites rarely entered the same ring. He then beat a series of "great white hopes," culminating in 1910 with the undefeated former champion, James J. Jeffries.

McCain previously told The Associated Press that Johnson "was a boxing legend and pioneer whose career and reputation were ruined by a racially charged conviction more than a century ago."

McCain, who is often at odds with Trump, praised him late Thursday for the pardon.

"I applaud President Trump for issuing a posthumous pardon of boxing legend Jack Johnson, whose reputation was ruined by a racially charged conviction over a century ago," he said in a statement he tweeted.

Seahawks' Baldwin: Owners 'missed it' on anthem

Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Doug Baldwin had harsh words for the comments made by President Donald Trump regarding the NFL's new national anthem policy on Thursday, as players began to process the new mandate from the league's owners.

Baldwin has been a leading voice from the players' perspective for why there were protests last season even though Baldwin never participated in kneeling or sitting on the sidelines during "The Star-Spangled Banner."

He spoke passionately after the Seahawks concluded their offseason workout and sounded offended by the president's comments to "Fox & Friends" in an interview that aired Thursday saying, "maybe you shouldn't be in the country" if

you don't stand for the anthem.

"He's an idiot. Plain and simple," Baldwin said. "I respect the man because he's a human being first and foremost, but he's just being divisive, which is not surprising. It is what it is. But for him to say anybody who doesn't follow his viewpoints or his constituents' viewpoints should be kicked out of the country is not very empathetic. It's not very American-like, actually, to me. It's not very patriotic. It's not what this country was founded upon. It's kind of ironic to me the President of the United States is contradicting what our country is really built on."

Baldwin was among a handful of players that have expressed frustration and disappointment with the NFL mandating players must stand for the national anthem if they're on the field, though they now have the op-

tion of remaining in the locker room for the playing of the anthem and carry on the campaigns against social injustice.

Even normally reserved Seattle quarterback Russell Wilson agreed with the sentiment that the owners' decision was a message to players to essentially be quiet.

"Pretty much. I think that's part of it. It seems that way," Wilson said. "But I think a policy right or wrong is not going to fix our problems."

The new policy allows teams to adopt their own workplace rules, which many players interpreted as a backhanded way of subjecting them to fines, suspensions or loss of jobs should they carry on with the protests.

"If you're asking my opinion, I think that in conjunction with the NFL, the way that things were going, I felt on the Players

Coalition side of things we were coming to an amicable agreement and relationship and working toward initiatives and causes that we wanted to see as players addressed, I thought that you would see the demonstrations and the issues within the NFL dissipate," Baldwin said.

"But again, when you stoke the fire and inflame a gap that was really dissipating at the time, diffusing, you cause more problems. That's why I say I think the NFL missed it."

Others around the league didn't see the policy as a potential issue.

"I'm really not too worried about it. I would expect that everybody's gonna be out there with their hand over their heart, showing respect to the flag and to the country," New Orleans quarterback Drew Brees said.

Astros' Morton still unbeaten this season

By STEVE HERRICK
Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Charlie Morton remained unbeaten this season — and knew where to place the credit for his latest victory.

Morton (7-0) pitched six solid innings, and Alex Bregman and Jake Marisnick hit three-run homers as the Houston Astros defeated the Cleveland Indians 8-2.

"I felt like I was along for the ride," Morton said. "It was just one of those days for me. They picked me up all night."

The right-hander allowed two runs and five hits while extending his career-best winning streak to 10 games. Morton, who moved into a tie with the Indians' Corey Kluber and the New York Yankees' Luis Severino for the AL lead in wins, hasn't lost since Sept.

9, 2017, against Oakland. He walked three and struck out five.

Morton fell behind after Michael Brantley's two-run single in the third, but his offense gave him plenty of support. Houston scored three runs in the fifth and added five in the sixth to put the game away.

"It was an absolute team win," said Morton. "It's pretty fun to be a part of this special team."

The defending World Series champions have won four straight and taken three of four from Cleveland this season.

"These guys are really good," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "Even last year, before they won the World Series, the way they played the game really stood out. They're fun to play, not because you think you're going to push

them around, but because they play so well."

Mike Clevinger (3-2) opened with four scoreless innings, but couldn't hold a 2-0 lead in the fifth. Bregman capped the inning with his fifth homer over the 19-foot high wall in left field that put Houston ahead. He added an RBI double in the sixth.

Marisnick, recalled from the minors Wednesday, homered to straightaway center in the sixth off Neil Ramirez. Marisnick was sent to Triple-A Fresno on May 15 and called up when outfielder Josh Reddick went on the 10-day disabled list with a leg infection. Marisnick, batting .141 going into the game, singled in the fifth but was picked off first by Clevinger.

Houston's go-ahead rally came with two outs in the

fifth. Clevinger hit Tony Kemp with an 0-2 pitch and George Springer drew a four-pitch walk. Pitching coach Carl Willis visited Clevinger, but Bregman then jumped on a hanging breaking pitch and Houston had the lead.

Clevinger allowed five runs in 5¹/₃ innings. The right-hander was pulled with two on in the sixth, but pinch-hitter Max Stassi's single off Tyler Olson drove in a run before Marisnick homered.

Brantley singled up the middle in the third to give Cleveland a 2-0 lead. Roberto Perez led off with a single and took third on Francisco Lindor's double.

Brantley is second in the AL in batting with a .335 average and extended his hitting streak to 13 games. He began the season on the disabled list following ankle surgery in October.

Orioles Bundy strikes out 14 White Sox in 2-hitter

By MATT CARLSON
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Backed by a bunch of runs right away, Dylan Bundy dominated.

Bundy struck out a career-high 14 and pitched a two-hitter for his second complete game in the majors, leading the Baltimore Orioles over the Chicago White Sox 9-3 on Thursday.

"Man, it was fun," Bundy said. "Our offense gave us a pretty big lead today early, so just trying to attack the hitters with fastballs early in the count and try to get ahead as best I could."

Adam Jones and Trey Mancini hit solo home runs as Baltimore jumped ahead 9-0 after three innings. Jones and Manny Machado each had three hits, and catcher Chance Sisco drove in three runs for the Orioles, who won for only the third time in nine games.

Jose Rondon hit a three-run homer with two outs in the fourth for the first hit off

Bundy. It was Rondon's second career homer and second in two days.

Earlier in the day, White Sox catcher Wellington Castillo was suspended for 80 games by Major League Baseball following a positive test for a performance-enhancing substance. The commissioner's office cited use of Erythropoietin (EPO).

Castillo, 31, was signed in the offseason by the rebuilding White Sox to help guide their young pitching staff. Barring rainouts, Castillo would be able to return on Aug. 24.

Bundy (3-6) had been roughed up in losing four of five previous starts, but again sparked in an afternoon contest. The 25-year-old right-hander improved to 2-1 with 1.32 ERA in five day games.

Omar Narvaez's single in the seventh was the only other hit off Bundy, who walked one and hit a batter. His other complete game was last Aug. 29 against Seattle.

Trout, Pujols homer as Angels beat Jays

Associated Press

TORONTO — Mike Trout and Albert Pujols hit solo home runs, and Shohei Ohtani doubled twice as the Los Angeles Angels beat the Toronto Blue Jays 8-1 Thursday.

Nick Tropeano (2-3) pitched a season-high 7¹/₃ innings to snap a five-start winless streak.

Ohtani also walked twice and scored two runs. Martin Maldonado had two hits and three RBIs.

The Angels scored more than three runs for the third time in their past 12 and posted their biggest output since an 8-0 victory at Colorado on May 9.

Tropeano (2-3) allowed one run and four hits, walked a season-low one and struck out six. The victory was his first since April 12 at Kansas City.

Reds 5, Pirates 4: Eugenio Suarez hit a grand slam off Ivan Nova and Jesse Winker added a

solo shot for host Cincinnati.

Nova dropped his sixth consecutive start against the Reds.

Cincinnati took two of three in the series. Pittsburgh has lost five of six.

Athletics 4, Mariners 3: Stephen Piscotty and host Oakland tagged Felix Hernandez early, ending Seattle's five-game winning streak.

Oakland helped itself by turning a team record-tying five double plays, and stopped a five-game home skid. The A's scored four times in the first inning, two on Piscotty's double off Hernandez (5-4). Hernandez settled down and retired 16 of the last 17 batters he faced in going six innings.

Rays 6, Red Sox 3: Blake Snell threw six scoreless innings, Wilson Ramos drove in two runs, and host Tampa Bay avoided a three-game sweep.

Snell (6-3) allowed three hits, walked two and struck out eight.