

STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, May 16, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Trump said frustrated by aides' rush on Iran

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has been on high alert in response to what military and intelligence officials have deemed specific and credible threats from Iran against U.S. personnel in the Middle East.

President Donald Trump, though, is frustrated with some of his top advisers, who he thinks could rush the U.S. into a military confrontation with Iran and shatter his long-standing pledge to withdraw from costly foreign wars, according to several U.S. officials. Trump prefers a diplomatic approach to resolving tensions and wants to speak directly with Iran's leaders.

Disagreements over assessing and responding to recent intelligence — which includes a directive from Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, that some American officials

interpret as a threat to U.S. personnel in the Middle East — are fraying alliances with foreign allies, according to officials in the U.S. and in Europe. Trump grew angry last week and over the weekend about what he sees as warlike planning that is getting ahead of his own thinking, said a senior administration official with knowledge of conversations Trump had regarding national security adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

"They are getting way out ahead of themselves, and Trump is annoyed," the official said.

Bolton, who advocated regime change in Iran before joining the White House last year, is "just in a different place" from Trump, although the president has been a fierce critic of Iran since long before he hired Bolton. Trump "wants to talk to the Iranians; he wants

a deal" and is open to negotiation with the Iranian government, the official said.

"He is not comfortable with all this 'regime change' talk," which to his ears echoes the discussion of removing Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before the 2003 U.S. invasion, said the official, who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private deliberations.

National Security Council spokesman Garrett Marquis said, "This reporting doesn't accurately reflect reality."

Trump is not inclined to respond forcefully unless there is a "big move" from the Iranians, a senior White House official said. Still, the president is willing to respond forcefully if there are American deaths or a dramatic escalation, the official said.

Trump denied any "infighting" related to his Middle East

policies in a tweet Wednesday. "There is no infighting whatsoever," Trump said. "Different opinions are expressed, and I make a decisive and final decision — it is a very simple process. All sides, views and policies are covered. I'm sure that Iran will want to talk soon."

Pentagon and intelligence officials said three distinct Iranian actions have triggered alarms: information suggesting an Iranian threat against U.S. diplomatic facilities in Iraq, U.S. concerns that Iran could be preparing to mount rocket or missile launchers on small ships in the Persian Gulf, and a directive from Khamenei to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and regular Iranian military units that some U.S. officials have interpreted as a potential threat to U.S. military and diplomatic personnel.

Marines may begin move from Okinawa to Guam in 2024

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The transfer of Marines from Okinawa to Guam could begin as early as October 2024 and take 18 months to complete, according to a report by Japan's Kyodo News service that cites a Marine Corps official on the U.S. Pacific island territory.

The Marine Corps' Asia-Pacific realignment calls for 4,100 Okinawa-based Marines to be relocated to Guam along with 900 others from elsewhere around the globe.

About 2,700 more Okinawa-based Marines will be sent to Hawaii, while 800 will go to the U.S. mainland. Another 1,300 are to make up most of a 2,500-person rotational force

in Australia.

It is unclear how many Marines will be left on Okinawa once the realignment is complete. Marine Corps officials had yet to answer queries by Thursday afternoon in Japan.

Approximately 1,700 of the Marines moving to Guam would be permanently stationed there, while about 3,300 would be rotated in and out, according to Marine officials citing the plan of record. The move had been scheduled to begin sometime between 2022 and 2026.

"The transfer of the III Marine Expeditionary Force is expected to begin during the first half of the fiscal year that begins in October 2024," Kyodo reported Tuesday, citing Marine Corps Activity Guam

spokesman 1st Lt. Brett Lazaro. "Approximately 2,400 dependents will be accompanying the 5,000 Marines. Guam currently hosts around 7,800 U.S. servicemembers."

Lazaro did not return calls or emails seeking comment this week by Stars and Stripes. A spokeswoman for Headquarters Marine Corps declined to confirm specifics or comment on the Kyodo report when reached Tuesday.

"Per U.S.-Government of Japan statements, the Marine Corps is committed to commencing the relocation of the force by the end of the first half of the 2020's," headquarters spokeswoman Capt. Karoline Foote wrote in a statement to Stars and Stripes on Saturday. "However, we are currently too

far from the commencement of relocation to provide a specific movement timeline."

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller, in testimony May 1 before the Senate Committee on Appropriations, said it has not been decided how to move Marines from Guam to fight if war breaks out in the region.

Sen. Brian Schatz, D-Hawaii, asked if the realignment to Guam made sense.

"The plan as it is currently designed, I think, is worthy of possibly a review," Neller said. "That's my personal and professional opinion."

Marine officials are "continually" reviewing all of the plans "as situations develop and new information becomes available," Foote said.

US trains with France in Bay of Bengal

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A U.S. Navy destroyer on Thursday maneuvered in the Indian Ocean with five other vessels from France, Japan and Australia, according to the 7th Fleet.

The USS William P. Lawrence joined the French aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle in the Bay of Bengal for a series of drills with Japan's helicopter carrier JS Izumo and its destroyer JS Murasame and Australia's frigate HMAS Toowoomba and its subma-

rine HMAS Collins, 7th Fleet officials said in a statement Thursday.

The exercise — named “La Perouse” after 18th-century French naval officer and explorer Jean-Francois de La Perouse, comte de La Pérouse — involved sailing in formation, live-fire drills, “communications, search and rescue, damage control and personnel transfers,” according to the statement.

“La Perouse is an opportunity to develop strong links, work habits and mutual knowledge essential for best practices between our navies operating in

the same regions of interest,” Rear Adm. Olivier Lebas, commander of the French carrier strike group, said in the statement. “These exercises reflect our common involvement in maritime security in the Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific area.”

The de Gaulle set sail in March for an extended deployment to the Indo-Pacific to “reaffirm France’s presence in these areas,” the French Ministry of Defense said in February.

“La Perouse shows that our maritime forces can work together well anywhere in the Indo-Pacific,” 7th Fleet com-

mander Vice Adm. Phil Sawyer said in the statement. “It reflects our shared values, traditions and bonds as like-minded sea services.”

U.S. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said during a press briefing from Manila, Philippines, on Thursday it’s important to work with partner nations to preserve international access to the Indo-Pacific.

“Opportunities to work together, exercise together, be present together — those I think are things that we’re constantly looking for,” he said.

US Coast Guard cutter visits Philippines after exercises

BY CHRISTIAN LOPEZ

Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter Bertholf, on loan to the Navy’s 7th Fleet and busy across the western Pacific, joined Philippine coast guard vessels for training and maneuvers Tuesday in the South China Sea.

The Bertholf and Philippine vessels BRP Batangas and BRP Kalanggaman practiced search and rescue scenarios and other procedures near Scarborough Shoal in disputed waters off the western coast of the Philippines, the Navy said in a statement Wednesday.

Chinese coast guard vessels stood off and observed the U.S.-Philippine exercises but did not interfere, according to a report

Thursday by NHK, the public broadcasting service in Japan.

China and the Philippines have contending territorial claims in that part of the world. The exercise this week is at least the third time in the past two months that Philippine and U.S. maritime forces have operated together in the area.

“The United States is a Pacific nation,” Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, Coast Guard Pacific Area commander who oversees the cutter, said in the Navy statement. “We have deep and long-standing ties with our partners in the region and, more importantly, we share a strong commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, governed by a rules-based international system that pro-

motes peace, security, prosperity and sovereignty of all nations.”

The U.S.-Philippine exercises afforded the Bertholf an “excellent opportunity to compare techniques and maintain proficiency while further building upon friendly relations amongst both coast guards and professional mariners,” Capt. John Driscoll, Bertholf’s commander, said in the statement.

Following the exercise, the cutter, normally based in Alameda, Calif., made a port call at Manila, its first to the Philippine capital in seven years. The crew took part in professional exchanges as well as community relation events, according to the Navy.

Navy helicopter rescues skier with a broken ankle

The Bellingham (Wash.) Herald

A search and rescue helicopter crew plucked an injured skier from near the top of Mount Baker in Washington State on Monday afternoon, U.S. Navy officials said Tuesday.

A 21-year-old man who was with a group of skiers broke his ankle near the Roman Wall on the 10,781-foot volcano’s western face, said Michael Welding,

public affairs officer at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station.

His injury occurred at the 10,000-foot level, Welding said in an email.

“When the SAR helicopter arrived on scene, they immediately spotted several skiers pointing out the injured skier,” Welding said of the airlift operation. “The injured skier was hoisted on board the SAR helicopter and transported to

Peace Health St. Joseph Medical Center in Bellingham by approximately 4 p.m.”

No other information about the man was available.

Welding said the Navy maintains search and rescue teams with three MH-60 Seahawk helicopters to support its EA-18 Growler electronic warfare aircraft at Whidbey Island. Those helicopters are available for civilian rescue when not per-

forming military missions.

Just last week, its crew was summoned to help with the rescue of two people who fell from a cliff at Larrabee State Park, but the injured people went by boat instead.

Mount Baker is popular among climbers in the late spring and summer months, and injuries are not uncommon.

Navy SEAL pleads guilty in hazing death

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Va. — Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Adam Matthews on Thursday pleaded guilty to reduced charges in the 2017 strangulation death of a Green Beret in Mali during an incident that he described as a “tragic” accident.

Matthews is one of four special operators charged in the June 4, 2017, death of Army Staff Sgt. Logan Melgar near Bamako, Mali. He accepted a deal from prosecutors to avoid murder charges during a court-martial at Naval Station Norfolk, Va., and agreed to plead guilty to charges that he conspired to commit an assault and bat-

tery, unlawful entry and obstructed justice by lying to investigators about who was involved in Melgar’s death.

The judge overseeing the case, Navy Capt. Michael J. Luken, will sentence Matthews after he hears testimony during a sentencing trial that was slated to begin Thursday afternoon. Matthews faces a maximum sentence of one year in prison, reduction in rank to E-1 and a punitive discharge.

In exchange for his plea, Matthews agreed to testify in cases against the three other special operators charged in the incident — Navy SEAL Chief Petty Officer Tony DeDolph, Marine Raiders Gunnery Sgt. Mario Madera-Rodriguez and Staff Sgt. Kevin Maxwell Jr.

Those individuals’ cases have yet to go to trial and they face charges similar to those against Matthews, including murder charges.

Prosecutors contend Matthews and the others broke into Melgar’s room and bound him with duct tape and DeDolph strangled him with a chokehold.

Matthews told Luken on Thursday that the group had not intended to kill Melgar, but they wanted to “remediate” him for perceived performance issues and a “slight” from the previous night, accusing him of abandoning two Marines in an area of Bamako with which they were unfamiliar.

Matthews said Melgar’s death was “tragic, but completely unintended.” He said he was “truly sorry.”

Reimbursement sought for Taliban’s travel

CQ Roll Call

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration asked Congress earlier this year for funds to reimburse Afghanistan’s Taliban for expenses the insurgent group incurs attending peace talks, according to a spokesman for the chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense.

The money would cover the Taliban’s costs for expenses such as transportation, lodging, food and supplies, Kevin Spicer, spokesman for Indiana Democrat Peter J. Visclosky, said in a statement to CQ Roll Call.

“The Defense Department requested fiscal 2020 funding to support certain reconciliation activities, including logistic support for members of the Taliban and, in

March 2019, they sent a notification letter to the committee on using fiscal year 2019 funds for similar activities,” Spicer said.

The Pentagon’s request to funnel U.S. funds to the Taliban “would implicate provisions of law concerning material support to terrorists, the Taliban’s ongoing offensive operations against U.S. servicemembers, and their continuing lack of acknowledgement of the government of Afghanistan or the rights of women in Afghan society,” Spicer said.

Consequently, Visclosky’s panel on Wednesday approved a \$690.2 billion defense spending bill for fiscal 2020 that bars any funds for reimbursing the Taliban.

Under the request, the U.S. government would funnel funds to a violent group that

once harbored Osama bin Laden — a fighting force U.S. troops have been combating for more than 18 years.

The Taliban is a well-funded organization, too. And much of its money has been earned from a drug trade that is killing record numbers of Americans. The group may net at least \$800 million a year from opium trafficking and related activities.

Afghanistan’s opium trade has, in turn, contributed to a surge in opioid-related deaths in the United States that hit nearly 48,000 in 2017, according to federal statistics.

Steve Ellis, executive vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, said the request for reimbursing the Taliban is like “life imitating The Onion.”

More immigrants in military being denied citizenship

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Immigrants serving in the U.S. military are being denied citizenship at a higher rate than foreign-born civilians, according to new government data that has revealed the impact of stricter Trump administration immigration policies on servicemembers.

According to the same data, the actual number of servicemembers applying for U.S. citizenship has also plummeted since President Donald Trump took office, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services reported in its quarterly naturalization statistics.

“The U.S. has had a long-standing tra-

dition of immigrants come to the U.S. and have military service provide a path to citizenship,” said retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Paul Eaton, a senior adviser to the liberal veterans advocacy group VoteVets.org. “To have this turnaround, where they are actually taking a back seat to the civilian population, strikes me as a bizarre turn of events.”

According to the most recent USCIS data available, the agency denied 16.6% of military applications for citizenship, compared with an 11.2% civilian denial rate in the first quarter of fiscal year 2019, a period that covers October to December 2018.

The fiscal year 2019 data is the eighth quarterly report of military naturalization

rates since Trump took office. In six of the last eight reports, civilians had a higher rate of approval for citizenship than military applicants did, reversing the previous trend.

Attorneys for servicemembers seeking to become citizens said new military immigration policies announced by the administration in 2017 and Trump’s overall anti-immigrant rhetoric are to blame.

“I think people are disheartened right now by the immigration climate,” said Elizabeth Ricci, an attorney who is representing immigrant servicemembers. “We talk about a wall all the time. This is an invisible wall.”

Mo. Senate sets abortion restrictions

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — Missouri's Republican-led Senate has passed a wide-ranging bill to ban abortions at eight weeks of pregnancy, acting only hours after Alabama's governor signed a near-total abortion ban into law.

The Missouri bill needs another vote of approval in the GOP-led House before it can go to Republican Gov. Mike Parson, who voiced support for an earlier version Wednesday.

It includes exceptions for medical emergencies, but not for pregnancies caused by rape or incest. Doctors would face five to 15 years in prison for violating the eight-week cutoff. Women who receive abortions wouldn't be prosecuted.

Republican Senate handler Sen. Andrew Koenig described it on Thursday as "one of the

strongest" abortion bills yet passed in the U.S.

Missouri joins a movement of GOP-dominated state legislatures emboldened by the possibility that a more conservative Supreme Court could overturn its landmark ruling legalizing the procedure. Its senators voted hours after Alabama's governor signed the most stringent abortion ban in the nation on Wednesday, making performing an abortion a felony in nearly all cases.

Outnumbered Missouri Senate Democrats launched into an attack on the bill before Republican supporters had a chance to bring it up for debate on the Senate floor.

"So much of this bill is just shaming women into some kind of complacency that says we are vessels of pregnancy rather than understanding that

women's lives all hold different stories," St. Louis-area Democratic Sen. Jill Schupp said.

Missouri is among a growing number of states where abortion opponents are working with renewed enthusiasm following President Donald Trump's appointment of more conservative high court justices.

Missouri's bill also includes an outright ban on abortions except in cases of medical emergencies. But unlike Alabama's, it would kick in only if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. If courts don't allow Missouri's proposed eight-week ban to take effect, it includes a ladder of less-restrictive time limits ranging from 14 to 20 weeks. *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion up until viability, which is usually at 22 to 24 weeks.

"This is not a piece of legislation that is designed for a

challenge," Missouri's Republican House Speaker Elijah Haahr said. "This is the type of legislation that is designed to withstand a challenge and to actually save lives in our state."

Republicans and Democrats worked for hours to reach a compromise on the bill, which included an expansion of tax credits for donations to pregnancy resource centers, and waters down other provisions. The approved version bans abortions based on race, sex or a "prenatal diagnosis, test, or screening indicating Down Syndrome or the potential of Down Syndrome." It also requires that both parents be notified for a minor to get an abortion, unless a parent lacks legal or physical custody.

Stringent abortion bill inked by Ala. governor

Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama's Republican governor has signed the most stringent abortion legislation in the nation, making performing an abortion a felony in nearly all cases.

"To the bill's many supporters, this legislation stands as a powerful testament to Alabamians' deeply held belief that every life is precious and that every life is a sacred gift from God," Gov. Kay Ivey said in a statement after signing it into law on Wednesday.

The law's sponsors want to give conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court a chance to gut abortion rights nationwide.

Democrats and abortion rights advocates criticized the legislation as a slap in the face to women.

"It just completely disregards women and the value of women and their voice. We have once again silenced women on a very personal issue," said Sen.

Linda Coleman-Madison, a Birmingham Democrat.

The abortion ban would go into effect in six months if it isn't blocked by legal challenges.

Coleman-Madison said she hopes the measure awakens a "sleeping giant" of female voters in the state.

But Republican pollster Chris Kratzer noted that there is no congressional district and likely no legislative district in Alabama with enough swing voters to put Republicans at serious risk.

The legislation Alabama senators passed Tuesday would make performing an abortion at any stage of pregnancy a felony punishable by 10 to 99 years or life in prison for the provider. There is no exception for pregnancies resulting from rape and incest.

The only exception would be when the woman's health is at serious risk. Women seeking or undergoing abortions wouldn't be punished.

DHS asks Pentagon for tents to detain 7,500 migrants

By ROSE L. THAYER

Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — The Defense Department could soon begin erecting tents to detain at least 7,500 migrants, should acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan sign off on another assistance request from the Department of Homeland Security.

The request from Homeland Security, which is under review, was submitted May 9 to the Pentagon. It asks the Defense Department to work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement to construct temporary facilities at six locations to detain, house and care for a minimum of 7,500 single adult migrants, said Maj. Chris Mitchell, a Pentagon spokesman.

In addition to erecting the tents, Homeland Security is asking the Pentagon to provide contracting support to ICE for "wraparound services" such as food, water, electricity, re-

stroom facilities, laundry and medical support, Mitchell said.

"DOD will not provide detention or custodial support for detained aliens at these ICE detention facilities. ICE is responsible for detention or custodial support," he said.

The request comes as Homeland Security officials describe a historic flow of migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border that has overwhelmed their resources. Customs and Border Protection has apprehended more than 460,000 people in fiscal year 2019 at the southern U.S. border, surpassing yearly totals since 2009, Border Patrol Chief Carla L. Provost told Congress last week.

The Pentagon is already providing Homeland Security with more than 4,300 active-duty troops and National Guard members to conduct surveillance, build barriers, conduct logistical and aviation support, and provide medical and legal assistance.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man after house fire: 'Dog saved my life'

MS GREENWOOD — A man in the Mississippi Delta said he and his son are still alive because their dog alerted them that their house was on fire.

Elmo Proctor told the Greenwood Commonwealth that the family's pit bull, named AP, pushed open a door and woke him by barking as the rental home filled with smoke.

Proctor and his son, Quincy Wilkins, were able to leave the home quickly. But, Proctor said he went back in to lead AP to safety.

"That dog saved my life," he said.

Police: Boy, 5, took crack to preschool

PA PHILADELPHIA — Police are investigating after a 5-year-old boy took about two dozen vials of crack cocaine into a preschool at a Roman Catholic church.

Police said the boy told a teacher's aide at St. Cyprian Children's Center that the person who handed him the bag told him to hide it.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia told WTXF-TV that the teacher's aide took the bag, which she suspected held drugs and informed an administrator, and they called 911.

Police warn of 'zombie raccoons' danger

IL RIVERSIDE — The warning about "zombie raccoons" may sound like something out of a bad television show, but a suburban Chicago police department said they present serious dangers to family pets.

The critters are called zom-

bies because those carrying the distemper virus often stagger on their hind legs and bare their teeth.

The department issued its warning after fielding calls about raccoons acting oddly and said anyone who sees such an animal should call police.

Fence reinstalled to protect crabs

DE PICKERING BEACH — A fence was reinstalled along a Delaware beach to keep horseshoe crabs out of a deadly marsh.

Delaware State News reported the 350-foot fence was put up for the second time, having successfully saved what's estimated to be thousands of crabs during its pilot run last year.

The crabs climb across the beach for mating season, but a sandy space seems to be causing navigation issues. The crabs end up lost and hunker down in the marsh's wet sand to survive, but the sand quickly dries and the creatures are baked to death.

Man gets 130 years on drug, gun charges

LA LEESVILLE — A 53-year-old Louisiana man was sentenced to 130 years in prison on two drug and two gun charges.

News agencies reported that Cassetti DeWayne Brown, of Leesville, was sentenced for offenses in June and October 2017.

The judge said four sentences are to be served one after another — three for 35 years each and one for 25. KALB-TV reported that two others are to be served concurrently.

Brown was acquitted on two charges but convicted on six others.

Couple face charges after 35 dogs found

NV LAS VEGAS — A Las Vegas man and woman face five felony animal torture and abuse charges after authorities investigating the discovery of three dog corpses in a box outside an animal shelter found 35 Chihuahuas at the couple's home.

KTNV-TV reported that employees alerted police who traced the box and a vehicle seen on video when a woman left it in February at the Animal Foundation.

Officers arrested Brian Savage, 64, on May 2 and Camilla Kepler, 46, on May 10.

Animal Foundation officials said the dogs from the house are getting medical and behavioral care with a goal of putting them up for adoption.

Real gun to return to show after accident

WY CODY — A street gunfighter show in Wyoming will use a real firearm for the first time since an actor mistakenly wounded bystanders with live ammunition three years ago.

Actors stage the Wild Bunch gunfighter show for tourists visiting Cody. This year's show will take place Monday through Saturday starting June 3.

Organizer Kenny Martin told the Cody Enterprise this year's shows will begin when a woman shoots a real shotgun into the air. The shotgun will be loaded with blanks.

Actors in the show have been using prop guns with blocked barrels since 2017. In 2016, an actor mistakenly loaded live ammunition in a real gun. He wounded three spectators when he fired the gun during the act.

Zoo's new tiger kills its new parrot

NE LINCOLN — Officials with the Lincoln Children's Zoo said one of the attraction's new tigers killed its nearly new parrot.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports that the incident happened when a green-winged macaw, which the zoo acquired in November, flew into the zoo's tiger habitat, which opened to the public last week.

Zoo officials said the bird was being trained as part of a planned public presentation to fly from the zoo's Secret Jungle to its outdoor theater when it detoured into the Sumatran tiger habitat.

Zoo spokesman Ryan Gross said a tiger "knocked it down." The bird later died at the zoo's veterinary clinic.

Frat suspended for mistreatment of dog

NY HEMPSTEAD — A fraternity in New York was suspended from hosting events on campus after officials viewed a video showing a small dog being held upside down and sprayed in the mouth with a liquid from what appears to be a beer keg.

Newsday reported that Alpha Epsilon Pi sanctioned its Hempstead chapter at Hofstra University on Long Island with a "cease and desist" order following the incident.

The university called the behavior "unacceptable" and said the chapter has been "placed on interim suspension pending an investigation."

The 10-month-old spaniel is owned by a fraternity member and is in the possession of the Nassau County SPCA.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES®

On a mission to provide credible reporting and daily news to America's military, wherever they serve.

Mobile apps available: www.stripes.com/apps.

Sharks get past Blues in OT

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Timo Meier handed a big win to Erik Karlsson and the San Jose Sharks.

Karlsson scored 5:23 into overtime after the officials missed a hand pass by Meier, and the Sharks rallied to beat the St. Louis Blues 5-4 on Wednesday night to take a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference final.

"I think we deserved to win this game," Karlsson said. "At the end of the day I think neither team drew the shortest stick on any of the calls out there so it was a fair game."

But it was the final sequence that likely will live on long after the series is over, possibly sparking a discussion about the NHL's replay rules.

Meier used his right hand to knock a loose puck toward the front of the net. Gustav Nyquist then passed it over to Karlsson, who beat Jordan Binnington for his second goal of the game.

"Quick play and I'm not going to comment on the officiating," Sharks coach Peter DeBoer said. "We found a way to win a game. I thought we had a great chance just before that, Timo Meier going in. It was a game of momentum swings and those quick plays happen all over the ice. Some get called, some get missed. We found a way to win."

Binnington and the Blues complained immediately. They felt the play should have been blown dead when Nyquist got the puck, but it continued.

The officials huddled while Karlsson and the Sharks celebrated, but the goal stood.

"It's a non-reviewable play," NHL Officiating Supervisor Kay Whitmore told a pool reporter. "You can read between the lines. You can figure out what you want. You watched the video. But it's just non-reviewable. I know that sounds like a cop-out answer, but that's the truth."

Blues coach Craig Berube bristled when asked about what happened.

"No explanation (from the officials)," Berube said. "What do you guys think? ... There's no reason to ask me. I have nothing to say about it."

Game 4 of the best-of-seven series is Friday night in St. Louis.

"Well, yeah, it was a hand pass, but we're going to try and move forward and the league is going to take care of it like they've done so far in the playoffs," Blues forward David Perron said. "It's unacceptable but it's OK."

Meier was not available after the game.

The Blues led 4-3 before Logan Couture tied it with 61 seconds left in regulation. Joe Thornton scored twice for San Jose, and Martin Jones made 28 saves.

Perron had two goals for St. Louis, and Vladimir Tarasenko and Alexander Steen also scored. Colton Parayko had three assists, and Binnington made 27 stops.

The Blues trailed 2-0 after one and 3-1 in the second before rallying.

Jets send LB Lee to Chiefs for draft pick

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Adam Gase needed just a few hours as the Jets' acting general manager to pull off a big deal.

Two people with direct knowledge of the trade told The Associated Press that New York agreed Wednesday night to send linebacker Darron Lee to the Kansas City Chiefs for a sixth-round draft pick.

The deal is pending a physical, according to the people who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because neither team had announced the move.

It came just hours after the Jets fired general manager Mike Maccagnan and installed Gase as the acting GM while the team begins a search for a replacement.

Lee was New York's first-round pick in 2016, but was mostly disappointing in his three seasons with the Jets. He was suspended by the NFL for the final four games of last season after violating the league's substance abuse policy. Lee's spot on the Jets' roster was uncertain after New York signed C.J. Mosley to anchor the inside linebacker position with Avery Williamson.

Lee had been the subject of trade rumors all offseason, especially after the Jets recently declined his fifth-year contract option for 2020. Many believed he would be dealt during the NFL draft. Less than three weeks later, Gase made it happen.

In other NFL news:

■ Outside linebacker Nate Orchard has signed with the Miami Dolphins, his fifth team since he came into the NFL in 2015.

Miami also signed guard Kyle Fuller, who played in nine games for Houston in 2017, and center Tony Adams.

Kane leads US over Britain

Associated Press

KOSICE, Slovakia — Patrick Kane scored a goal and had two assists to become the United States' all-time leading scorer at the world hockey championship in 6-3 win over Britain on Wednesday.

The three-time Stanley Cup champion and two-time Olympian finished the game with 36 points, surpassing the 33 points U.S. Hockey Hall of Famer Mark Johnson had in the tournament. Johnson led the Americans with 11 goals when they won Olympic gold in 1980.

"It's special when you think of all the great American players, all the kids that grow up in the USA, dreaming of playing hockey, dreaming of playing for their country," Kane said. "I've really enjoyed this tournament."

The Americans won bronze

last year at the world championship in Denmark, where Kane had a tournament-high 20 points and was named MVP. Kane first appeared at the world championship in 2008, when the U.S. was eliminated by a quarterfinals loss to Finland.

Kane has helped the U.S. win three straight games in Group A since opening with a loss to the host Slovaks. The Americans have preliminary-round games remaining against Denmark, Germany and Canada.

The British team, which returned to the top division for the first time in 25 years, had a relatively strong showing after losing to Germany by two goals and getting routed by Canada and Denmark. Mike Hammond scored late in the first period to pull Britain into a 1-all tie. The British team scored in each of the three periods against the U.S. after having only one goal

and giving up 20 goals in the previous three games.

Switzerland stayed undefeated in Group B as Andreas Ambuhl scored twice in a 4-1 win over Norway. The Swiss close the preliminary round against Sweden, Russia and the Czech Republic.

Germany scored twice over the final 1:52 against Slovakia, rallying to win 3-2 to remain the only unbeaten team in Group A.

Leon Draisaitl scored the game-winning goal with 27.4 seconds left after Markus Eisenschmid pulled the Germans into a 2-all tie late in the third period.

Alex Ovechkin put the Russians ahead by four goals in the first period against Italy and they went on to win 10-0 in Bratislava, extending a first-place tie with Switzerland in Group B.

Lopez rallies Bucks past Raptors in 4th

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Down for most of the game, clearly rusty at times after nearly a full week off, the Milwaukee Bucks looked very much like a team in trouble.

Until the fourth quarter.

The team with the NBA's best record this season found its stride at the perfect time.

Brook Lopez scored 13 of his career playoff-high 29 points in the fourth quarter, Giannis Antetokounmpo added 24 points and the Bucks closed the game on a 10-0 run to beat the Toronto Raptors 108-100 in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference finals on Wednesday night.

Milwaukee forced Toronto to miss its final eight shots and outscored the Raptors 32-17 in the fourth.

"I think it speaks a little bit to the character of the group," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "They just stick with it. I think it's become a little bit of a theme in

the playoffs: I think eventually, hopefully, we feel like if we stick with what we're doing good things will happen for us."

Lopez had a dunk with 2:20 left to put the Bucks ahead for good, added a three-pointer on the next Milwaukee possession to push the lead to four and the Bucks — after trailing for the overwhelming majority of the game — did just enough in the final minutes to grab the series lead.

"I think this game definitely made us better," Antetokounmpo said.

Malcolm Brogdon scored 15 and Nikola Mirotic had 13 for Milwaukee, which closed the game on a 10-0 run.

"We just did a great job of sticking with what we've been doing all postseason long," Lopez said.

Kawhi Leonard scored 31 points and Kyle Lowry added 30 for the Raptors, who led by as many as 13 early and took an 83-76 lead into the final quarter.

Lowry was 5-for-7 in the fourth — and his teammates were 0-for-15.

"Fourth quarter killed us, 32-17," Lowry said. "They outplayed us in that fourth quarter. They got a little bit more aggressive. They made some big shots, made some big plays. It sucks when you lose like that."

Lopez added 11 rebounds for the Bucks, who had three players post double-doubles. Antetokounmpo had 14 rebounds and Khriston Middleton finished with 11 points and 10 rebounds for Milwaukee, which is now 9-1 in this postseason.

The Bucks trailed for 37 of the game's 48 minutes.

Didn't matter. They stayed just close enough until they could finish with a serious kick.

"The way guys competed and just got after it ... stands out to me," Budenholzer said.

MLS roundup

Atlanta wins fifth straight on Martinez' PK

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Josef Martinez scored in the 29th minute and Atlanta United won its fifth consecutive game by shutout, beating the Vancouver Whitecaps 1-0 Wednesday night.

Atlanta (6-3-2) snapped the Whitecaps' (3-6-3) two-game winning streak.

Atlanta keeper Brad Guzan had two saves and picked up his sixth shutout of the season.

Maxime Crepeau stopped five shots for the Whitecaps.

Martinez scored the game's only goal on a penalty kick. The kick was called after Vancouver winger Lass Bangoura ran into Atlanta's Gonzalo Martinez.

Officials reviewed the play and determined it was a foul in the penalty area.

Josef Martinez stepped up to take the kick, sending the ball past Crepeau on the right side for his fifth goal of the season. He led the league with 31 goals in 34 games last year.

Timbers 1, Dynamo 1: Brian Fernandez scored 12 minutes after entering as a second-half

substitute in his MLS debut, and Portland gained a tie at Houston.

The Timbers (3-6-2) became the second MLS team this season to get a point on the road against the Dynamo. Houston (6-2-2) has not lost to Portland in nine home games — with five ties.

Fernandez, who signed the largest contract in club history last week, was left alone along the right side for a long cross from Sebastian Blanco, and calmly sent it past Joe Willis in the 77th minute.

Mauro Manotas put Houston in front in the 40th minute by heading in a corner kick for his team-leading sixth goal of the season. It was his seventh goal in seven regular-season games against Portland.

United 0, Toronto FC 0: Toronto FC launched a club-record 35 shots in a scoreless tie against visiting D.C. United.

With star striker Jozy Altidore sidelined by a heel injury, Toronto (5-4-2) was unable to find the right final touch. It set an MLS record for most shots

in a game without scoring.

Jordan Hamilton, subbing for Altidore, had nine shots and hit the crossbar. Spanish playmaker Alejandro Pozuelo had seven shots, 134 touches — the most by a D.C. player was 56 — and was credited with creating 11 chances.

D.C. United (7-3-3) defended tenaciously as Toronto finished with the third-largest shot total in MLS history — and the most seen in a league game since 1998.

D.C. goalkeeper Bill Hamid posted his seventh shutout of the season.

Sounders 2, Orlando City SC 1: Raul Ruidiaz and Handwalla Bwana scored to lead the host Seattle Sounders to a 2-1 win over Orlando City SC.

The Sounders (7-1-4) stretched their unbeaten streak to five games.

Chris Mueller scored for Orlando City (3-6-3).

Ruidiaz scored his third goal of the season in the 19th minute. Bwana converted a feed from Nico Lodeiro in the 68th minute.

Mueller scored his third goal of the season in the 75th minute.

Seattle's Jordan Morris left the game five minutes in the second half with an injury. There was no immediate word on his injury.

Timbers 1, Dynamo 1: Brian Fernandez scored 12 minutes after entering as a second-half substitute in his MLS debut, and Portland tied at Houston.

The Timbers (3-6-2) became the second MLS team this season to get a point on the road against the Dynamo. Houston (6-2-2) has not lost to Portland in nine home games — with five ties.

Fernandez, who signed the largest contract in club history last week, was left alone along the right side for a long cross from Sebastian Blanco, and calmly sent it past Joe Willis in the 77th minute.

Mauro Manotas put Houston in front in the 40th minute by heading in a corner kick for his team-leading sixth goal of the season.

Braves' rookie Riley goes deep in debut

Associated Press

ATLANTA — When Austin Riley connected with the pitch, his father was watching from the concourse at SunTrust Park.

Mike Riley knew it was good contact, but he couldn't tell how far the ball went.

Then he looked toward the outfield.

"As soon as I saw the outfielders not move," the elder Riley said, "I knew it was gone."

Austin Riley homered in his big league debut Wednesday night, leading Atlanta to a 4-0 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals and signaling the arrival of another top prospect for the Baby Braves.

"He's got lights-out power," said Hall of Famer Chipper Jones, who played his entire career with the Braves and was at the game. "I think he's a 40-homer guy before it's all said and done in the big leagues."

Mike Soroka turned in another strong start with three-hit ball over seven scoreless innings, but this night belonged to the 22-year-old Riley. He was called up from Triple-A Gwinnett before the game after Ender Inciarte went on the injured list with a sore back.

Riley, who started in left field and batted sixth, struck out swinging against Michael

Wacha in the first at-bat of what the Braves hope will be a long major league career.

Then, leading off the fourth, Riley showed why he was leading the International League with 15 homers and 39 RBIs.

Riley launched a high fastball deep into the left-field seats, a 438-foot drive that gave the Braves a 2-0 lead and sent his parents and a group of about 40 family and friends — many of whom hastily made the drive from his native Mississippi — into a delirious celebration.

"I'm speechless," Riley said, struggling to find the words. "That second at-bat, I figured he was going to challenge me a little bit. I was able to put a good swing on it."

Riley hit another drive to the edge of the warning track his next time up, and handled a couple of chances without any problem in left. Normally a third baseman, he figures to mostly play left field at least during his initial stint in the big leagues. Josh Donaldson is locked in at third base for 2019 with a one-year, \$23 million deal.

After taking over as a defensive replacement for Riley, Charlie Culberson sealed the victory with a two-run homer in the eighth.

It was quite a showing for Atlanta's kids.

Even younger than Riley, the 21-year-old Soroka (4-1) lowered his ERA to 0.98 in six starts. The right-hander has yet to allow more than one earned run in any of his appearances, and this was his best one yet.

Soroka escaped a bases-loaded jam in the third, getting Paul Goldschmidt to ground into an inning-ending double play. He stared down another trouble spot in the sixth when the Cardinals put runners at second and third, fanning Jose Martinez to snuff out the threat.

"What I like about this kid is he doesn't panic. He just goes pitch to pitch," Braves manager Brian Snitker said. "That's a great trait for a young pitcher to have."

In the eighth, Dan Winkler walked the first two St. Louis hitters on eight pitches, but Luke Jackson worked out of the jam — this time, it was Paul DeJong hitting into a double play — and finished up for his fifth save in six chances.

Wacha (3-1) surrendered only four hits and one earned run over five innings.

"Anytime you've got somebody new coming in there, you don't really have too much video on that guy," Wacha said. "Obviously, I didn't want to make that pitch where he ended up hitting the homer, but he didn't miss a mistake."

MLB roundup

Puig rallies Reds past Cubs with single in 10th

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Yasiel Puig got a chance to redeem his rough night and came through with his biggest moment yet in Cincinnati.

The struggling outfielder hit an RBI single with the bases loaded in the 10th inning Wednesday night, rallying the Reds to a 6-5 victory over the Chicago Cubs. He tossed his bat away in celebration and got soaked with ice water by teammates.

"I finally made contact," Puig said. "That was amazing."

The Cubs' stingy bullpen let a solid start by Yu Darvish go to waste. Darvish fanned 11 and Addison Russell hit a two-run homer — his first since returning from a 40-game suspension for domestic violence — to help the Cubs to a 5-3 lead.

Blue Jays 4, Giants 3: Edwin Jackson became the first player in major league history to play for 14 teams when he made his Toronto debut and pitched five innings against host San Francisco.

Jackson had been tied with Octavio Dotel for most teams. Jackson agreed last month to a minor league contract with the A's and was 1-0 with a 6.75 ERA in three minor league starts.

Yankees 5-3; Orioles 3-1: Gleyber Torres hit three home runs during a doubleheader sweep, including a solo shot in the nightcap, and Domingo German became the majors' first eight-game winner as host New York topped Baltimore twice.

Twins 8, Angels 7: Reliever Mike Morin hit former teammate Mike Trout with a bases-loaded pitch that forced in a run in the ninth inning before

retiring Shohei Ohtani to end the game on a groundout and preserve host Minnesota's win.

Astros 5, Tigers 1: Justin Verlander allowed two hits in seven impressive innings against his former team, and Houston beat host Detroit for its eighth straight win.

Rangers 6, Royals 1: Ronald Guzman and Willie Calhoun hit two-run homers in Texas' win over host Kansas City.

Nationals 5, Mets 1: Patrick Corbin struck out 11 in eight strong innings and Victor Robles homered in host Washington's win over New York.

Diamondbacks 11, Pirates 1: Zack Greinke pitched shut-out ball into the eighth inning before exiting with abdominal tightness and Arizona routed Chris Archer and visiting Pittsburgh.

Diamondbacks manager

Torey Lovullo said Greinke would get an MRI on Friday.

Brewers 5, Phillies 2: Gio Gonzalez continued to make the most of his second stint in Milwaukee, allowing one run while pitching into the sixth inning in a win over host Philadelphia.

Rays 1, Marlins 0: Seven pitchers combined on a seven-hitter, and Tampa Bay shut out host Miami for the second straight game.

Red Sox 6, Rockies 5: J.D. Martinez homered in his third straight game, rookie Michael Chavis singled home the winning run in the 10th inning and host Boston recovered after blowing a five-run lead to beat Colorado.

Dodgers 2, Padres 0: Kenta Maeda struck out 12 batters and drove in both runs as host Los Angeles beat San Diego.