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Smarting bases prep for hurricane season

McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — More than 150 members of the North Carolina National Guard gathered in Raleigh this month with the damage from Hurricane Florence in 2018 still on their minds.

On a 40-foot map of the state, they began moving North Carolina's guard units around like chess pieces to set the order of battle for the next major storm.

"We go through the timetable of a major hurricane hitting," said North Carolina National Guard spokesman Army Lt. Col. Matt DeVivo. The units looked at preparedness five days out. Then two days out. Then landfall, to see "what will be mobilized, what we lack in

capability" and what worked last time, he said.

Last year's hurricanes were particularly destructive for some of the military's most critical bases. In response, active, reserve and National Guard forces have looked at lessons learned to better prepare for this year's hurricane season, which starts Saturday, even as they wait for federal funding to fix all the damage from last year.

As part of its review, the North Carolina National Guard also looked for capability gaps. This year there is an obvious one. Almost one-third of North Carolina's 12,000-strong National Guard will not be on hand to respond to a storm because a major component, the 30th Ar-

mored Brigade Combat Team, is on standby to deploy overseas. Instead, North Carolina has set agreements with other states to fill in guard personnel if needed, DeVivo said.

North Carolina units that participated in the May exercise were the Charlotte-based 145th Air National Guard and 130th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade; the Greensboro-based 113th Sustainment Brigade; Fayetteville's 139th Regional Training Brigade; and Raleigh's 60th Troop Command and 449th Aviation Brigade.

In Florida, last year's Category 5 Hurricane Michael directly hit Tyndall Air Force Base, damaging more than 700 buildings and forcing the relocation of 11,000 personnel and

46 aircraft. Rebuilding efforts are estimated to cost more than \$4.7 billion.

At Tyndall, many buildings remain as damaged as they were after last year's storm, and any new repairs ceased as of May 1 due to budget disagreements between the White House and Congress. Before funds ran out, the Air Force had prioritized addressing "mold removal, temporary roofs, replacing HVAC systems and other life, health, and safety issues" at critical facilities.

It also has tried to fortify those repairs so the buildings can weather this year's storm season and last through base reconstruction, which is expected to take between three and five years.

Marine's tale reflects growing GI heatstroke problem

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

Bryant Scott was a big, fit Marine. A machine-gunner, marathon runner, weightlifter, perfect PT-test scorer. He planned on becoming an officer and making the Corps his career.

But during a hot July day in 2016 on a Camp Pendleton, Calif., land navigation course, the 28-year-old collapsed. Another Marine found him unconscious in a dry riverbed near the last checkpoint. He dragged him under a bridge, opened his shirt, dumped his own canteen water over him and called for help. By the time Scott got to the hospital, his core temperature was 109 degrees.

He was in a coma for two weeks. His liver had to be replaced with someone else's. He lost 65 pounds of muscle and

didn't have the strength to lift his arms.

"My recovery was a lonely road," Scott said. "My mental recovery took almost twice as long. I'd had a pretty bright future."

Scott suffered severe exertional heatstroke, defined by a core body temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, when heat, humidity and exertion overwhelm and crash the body's thermoregulatory system.

Scott was one of 115 servicemembers hospitalized for heatstroke in 2016, according to military records. It is a life-threatening emergency that if not treated rapidly can lead to death, even in elite athletes. Two years later, that number was 166 troops.

Incidents of heatstroke and less serious heat exhaustion among servicemembers have increased steadily in recent

years, though some experts say the numbers still may be grossly underreported.

Each year, heatstroke is responsible for "two to three fatalities and hundreds of serious illnesses," said Maj. Gen. Paul Benenati, Army Training and Doctrine Command deputy chief of staff. He wrote in a memo last year that unusually high temperatures in 2017 "especially challenged TRADOC leaders" and highlighted flaws in the Army's required reporting, which hampered prevention efforts.

Heat illness risk could be minimized with "careful planning, quality training, active leadership," Benenati's memo said.

But an annual report in April found that incident rates of heatstroke diagnoses in active-duty troops increased steadily between 2014 and 2018 — with 578 heatstroke diagnoses last

year.

Most heat illness victims will recover and return to duty, O'Connor said, "but there are significant lost duty days." Returning to full duty can take up to four months, he said.

The Navy's latest guidance, which highlights heat illness risks and calls for more acclimation time, also advises sailors to avoid a range of products before strenuous activities, including stimulants, alcohol, energy drinks and pre-workout or weight loss products. The guidance came following multiple sailor deaths following fitness tests earlier this year.

Marines, who are largely based at posts in warmer southern latitudes and have been known to push training limits, have the highest rate of heat illnesses, military studies have found.

Navy looks at future of catapult system

By WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — The Navy will “continue to work” with President Donald Trump regarding his repeated calls to abandon a catapult system being developed for Gerald R. Ford-class carriers, the Navy’s highest-ranking officer said Tuesday.

“We’re going to have to continue to work with the president on this,” Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson told Stars and Stripes after an all-hands call at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Trump took another opportunity on Memorial Day to disparage the new electromagnetic catapult system used to launch aircraft from a carrier’s deck, new-generation technology designed to replace the steam-operated system that had been used for decades.

“We’re spending all that money on elec-

tric and nobody knows what it’s going to be like in bad conditions,” Trump told about 1,000 sailors and Marines aboard the USS Wasp, moored at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan. “So, I think I’m going to put an order — when we build a new aircraft carrier, we’re going to use steam.”

Trump has frequently offered the critique, although it remains unclear why this somewhat esoteric technology has drawn his disdain.

“The technology for electromagnetic catapults is proven,” Richardson said. “It went through some, you know — we had to invent it. It’s working on [the USS] Gerald R. Ford. We’ve launched a number of aircraft, so we’ll continue to work closely on what’s the best decision for the future.”

Richardson also vigorously pushed back on one questioner’s assertion during the all-hands call that the Navy’s newest ships were faulty.

“What I’ve noticed is that we have been getting quite a few new ships recently but they’re not functioning nearly as well as they are intended to, so ...,” a sailor said before the CNO jumped in with a question of his own.

“What ships are those?” Richardson said, to the laughter of the roughly 1,000 sailors assembled at Bloch Arena.

Richardson acknowledged the Navy has to “wring out the problems” in the first ships of any new class, citing the USS Gerald R. Ford and some of the early littoral combat ships.

The Navy’s full shipbuilding program, however, “is delivering generally quality ships,” he said.

Richardson, who is in his fourth year as CNO and is expected to retire after a change of command this summer, has guided the Navy’s first steps toward becoming a fleet of 355 ships.

Navy looks into patches worn during Trump visit

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy said Tuesday that it is evaluating whether sailors aboard the USS Wasp violated Defense Department policy by sporting unofficial uniform patches with the phrase “Make Aircrew Great Again” during a Memorial Day visit by President Donald Trump.

The red, circular patch fea-

tured a finger-pointing cartoon figure similar in appearance to Trump with words reminiscent of his campaign slogan “Make America Great Again.” Photographs of several Navy airmen aboard the warship in Japan wearing the patches circulated Tuesday on Twitter, where they were first posted by a Wall Street Journal reporter traveling with the president.

“Navy leadership is currently reviewing this instance

to ensure that the wearing of the patch does not violate DOD policy or regulations,” Lt. Samuel Boyle, a Navy spokesman at the Pentagon, wrote in a single-sentence email Tuesday afternoon.

Troops across the military services have long worn unofficial insignia, known as morale patches. Often boasting humorous themes, the patches are widely available for purchase online and in military supply

stores. Though such patches are officially barred by uniform regulations, they can be approved by troops’ chains of command.

It was not clear Tuesday whether the “Make Aircrew Great Again” patches had been approved by the sailors’ commanders. It was also unclear where the sailors had obtained the patches.

Marine accused of theft, assault following Tokyo incident

By HANA KUSUMOTO
AND SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The U.S. military has confirmed Japanese media reports that a Marine is facing theft and assault accusations following a weekend incident in Tokyo.

Lance Cpl. Kahsai Hill, 21, was taken into custody Saturday by Tokyo Metropolitan Police on suspicion of robbery result-

ing in bodily injury after he allegedly punched a taxi driver in the face after not paying his approximately \$7.40 fare, according to Kyodo News agency.

The incident happened about 5:45 a.m. in front of a Shinjuku hotel, the report said.

Hill is also suspected of causing serious injuries to a 19-year-old female member of the Japan Self-Defense Force after allegedly strangling her

and breaking her jaw in a fast-food restaurant that he entered while running away, according to investigators quoted by Kyodo.

Tokyo Metropolitan Police officials declined to comment on the case Wednesday.

“We are aware of an alleged theft and assault by Lance Corporal Kahsai Hill with 3rd Marine Division in Tokyo, on May 25th,” III Marine Expedition-

ary Force spokesman 1st Lt. Jose Uriarte said in an email Wednesday.

“The Marine Corps expects its members to act in a professional manner at all times and does not tolerate criminal behavior,” he said.

“We are cooperating fully with local authorities in their investigations and are unable to share further information at this time.”

Kansas City area hit as tornadoes move east

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A vicious storm tore through the Kansas City area, spawning tornadoes that downed trees and power lines, damaged homes and injured at least a dozen people in the latest barrage of severe weather that saw tornado warnings as far east as New York City.

The latest round of damaging weather in the central U.S. came a day after violent storms killed one person and injured at least 130 in Indiana and Ohio.

Mark Duffin, 48, learned from his wife and a television report that the tornado was headed toward his home in Linwood, Kan. The next thing he knew, the house's walls were coming down. Duffin told the Kansas

City Star that he grabbed a mattress, followed his 13-year-old to the basement and protected the two of them with the mattress as the home crashed down around them.

"I'm just glad I found my two dogs alive," he said. "Wife's alive, family's alive, I'm alive. So, that's it."

At least a dozen people were admitted to the hospital in Lawrence, Kan., which is home to the University of Kansas, hospital spokesman Janice Early said. Damage also was reported in the towns of Bonner Springs and Pleasant Grove.

The Douglas County, Kan., emergency management agency said on Facebook that 15 people were hurt, including three seriously, during the storms, which spawned

a twister that struck a neighborhood just outside of Lawrence.

Tuesday marked the 12th consecutive day that at least eight tornadoes were reported to the National Weather Service. The last such stretch was in 1980. The weather service website showed at least 27 reports of tornadoes on Tuesday, most in Kansas and Missouri but also in Pennsylvania and Illinois.

After several quiet years, the past couple of weeks have seen an explosion of tornado activity with no end to the pattern in sight.

Tornadoes also were confirmed in eastern Pennsylvania and the weather service issued a tornado warning for parts of New York City and northern New Jersey.

Military families in Ohio displaced by tornado

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

A dozen homes at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base are uninhabitable after a tornado ripped through the area on Memorial Day, base officials said.

Roughly 150 homes in the Prairies at Wright Field housing area were damaged, according to a news release from the base. During the past two days, base officials and the privatized housing contractor have inspected all units to identify structural damage.

"Displaced families were directed to temporary lodging facilities to ensure they had a safe place to stay during recovery operations," according to the news release. Of the 12 homes damaged, three were vacant. The holiday weekend brought severe

weather to much of the Midwest, including the southwest Ohio base, home to the 88th Air Base Wing, Air Force Materiel Command and the Defense Department's National Air and Space Intelligence Center. In all, eight tornadoes touched down in the region surrounding Wright-Patterson on Monday and Tuesday, according to the National Weather Service, which sent teams to the area Wednesday to access damage. About 8,000 servicemembers and 22,000 civilians work on the 8,000-acre base.

Officials at Wright-Patterson are also continuing to access damage and determine the cost of clearing debris and repairing structures across the base, said Marie Vanover, a base spokeswoman.

"We will continue to work with the privatized housing contractor to removed roofing and structural debris and develop a

long-term recovery plan for the housing area," she said.

One injury was reported on base, according to the Wright-Patterson release. About 12 miles west in the city of Dayton, officials said in a tweet that three injuries were reported, which was "miraculous with the amount of damage" the city sustained.

At the airfield at Wright-Patterson, operations were suspended to allow for removal of 331 pounds of debris, according to the news release. Flight operations were cleared to resume Tuesday afternoon.

"There was no impact to personnel readiness," Vanover said.

Beyond that, just a few other base facilities received minimal damage, she said.

No personnel were displaced from offices, and no equipment or aircraft were destroyed.

Arkansas River still rising with more rainfall expected

Associated Press

FORT SMITH, Ark. — The Arkansas River neared a historic crest Wednesday in Arkansas' second-largest city, but officials said the levee system was "performing admirably" from the rush of water coming downstream from rain-soaked Oklahoma and Kansas.

Still, the river was nearly twice the level it was 10 days ago, widespread flooding persisted in Fort Smith, and heavy rainfall was expected to make matters worse. Forecasters said flash flooding could be severe as the excess water has nowhere to drain.

"Just because the river has crested

doesn't mean we're out of danger," said Col. Bob Dixon, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Dixon said the levee system will be strained as the water moves downstream into Arkansas, and record crests are predicted at several sites along the river. Two levees have already been topped in rural areas of Arkansas.

Dixon said the water in Fort Smith should begin receding, which he said would likely take weeks, not days. The river was at about 40 feet on Wednesday, breaking the previous record crest of 38 feet that was set in 1945.

At least one death has been blamed on

the flooding. About 45 homes in Sebastian County have been affected by flooding, but that number is expected to rise to "several hundred," according to the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management.

The rush of water is coming as the Army Corps of Engineers releases water from a hydroelectric dam northwest of Tulsa, Okla., to 275,000 cubic feet per second to help drain the swollen Keystone Lake reservoir.

The reservoir drains a watershed of more than 22,000 square miles in areas of northeastern Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas, where up to 20 inches of rain has fallen in the past month.

Mueller: Probe didn't exonerate Trump

BY ERIC TUCKER, MICHAEL BALSAMO
AND CHAD DAY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Special counsel Robert Mueller said Wednesday he was legally barred from charging President Donald Trump with a crime but pointedly emphasized that his Russia report did not exonerate the president. If he could have cleared Trump of obstruction of justice he “would have said so,” Mueller said.

The special counsel's remarks, his first in public since being tasked two years ago with investigating Russian interference to help Trump win the 2016 presidential election, stood as a strong rebuttal to Trump's repeated claims that he was exonerated and that the inquiry was a “witch hunt” that found no crime.

Mueller made clear he was barred from indicting a sitting president and that it was Congress' job to hold the president accountable for any wrongdoing.

“If we had had confidence that the president clearly did not commit a crime, we would have said so,” Mueller said. “We did not however make a determination as to whether the president did commit a crime.”

Under pressure to testify before Congress, Mueller did not rule it out. But he seemed to warn lawmakers that they won't be pulling more detail out of him. His report is “my testimony,” Mueller said, and he won't go beyond what is written.

He strongly indicated that Congress is the proper venue, not the criminal justice system, for deciding whether action should be taken against the president in connection with allegations that Trump and aides obstructed the investigation.

Trump, who has repeatedly and falsely claimed that Mueller's report cleared him of obstruction of justice, modified that contention somewhat shortly after the special counsel's remarks. He tweeted, “There was insufficient evidence and therefore, in

our Country, a person is innocent. The case is closed!”

Mueller's comments, one month after his report on Russian efforts to help Trump win the presidency, appeared intended to both justify the legitimacy of his investigation against complaints by the president and to explain his decision to not reach a conclusion on whether Trump had obstructed justice.

Indicting Trump, he said firmly, was “not an option” in light of a Justice Department legal opinion that says a sitting president cannot be charged. But, he said, the absence of a conclusion should not be mistaken for an exoneration of the president.

“The opinion says the Constitution requires a process other than the criminal justice system to formally accuse a sitting president of wrongdoing,” Mueller said, referring to the Justice Department legal opinion. That would shift the next move, if any, to Congress, and the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

SEAL lawyers want case dismissed for misconduct

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Lawyers for a Navy SEAL accused of killing an Islamic State prisoner in Iraq in 2017 want the case thrown out because of alleged prosecutorial misconduct that included withholding evidence and conducting surveillance on the defense.

Attorneys for Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher planned to ask a military court Wednesday in San Diego to dismiss the case or remove the prosecutor and, possibly, have the judge himself step aside.

“Gallagher's case has been irreparably corrupted by a government campaign of outrageous and illegal conduct,” attorney Tim Parlatore said in the opening salvo of his motion to dismiss the charges. “This prosecution threatens to make an unequivocal farce of our justice system.”

The motion comes with Gallagher's trial less than two weeks away and amid mounting pressure from the defense after lawyers discovered

prosecutors planted tracking software in emails sent to the defense team and a journalist that may have violated attorney-client privilege and other constitutional rights.

The Navy has said it did nothing wrong and has no plans to remove the prosecutor. A spokesman wouldn't comment on the motions.

Among the evidence apparently kept from the defense were results of a polygraph exam Gallagher was given weeks before his arrest on charges that he fatally stabbed an injured teenage militant and picked off civilians from a sniper's perch.

Gallagher knew at the time he was under investigation and denied committing any war crimes during the test, Parlatore said in court papers. Gallagher was told he passed the exam.

Parlatore said he knows about the exam only because his client told him about it and investigation documents showed efforts to schedule the test.

Okinawa governor asks Futenma to be shut down

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Okinawa Gov. Denny Tamaki has appealed to U.S. officials to shutter Marine Corps Air Station Futenma despite construction delays at its replacement facility and warned of civil unrest should the United States fail to take action.

Tamaki wrote Friday to U.S. Ambassador to Japan William Hagerty, Naha Consul General Robert Koepcke, U.S. Forces Japan commander Air Force Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider and III Marine Expeditionary Force commander Lt. Gen. Eric Smith, a prefectural spokesman told Stars and Stripes on Wednesday. The letters were released to the public Monday.

“The United States and residents of Okinawa share a history of having fiercely confronted one another across the fence when Okinawa was under U.S. administration,” Tamaki wrote. “If the U.S. continues to

use [MCAS Futenma], it may give rise to anti-base protests against all U.S. military bases in Okinawa, or even an overall anti-U.S. movement like what was seen in the past.

“If that happens, such movements would have a significant impact on the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements as well as the Japan-U.S. Alliance including operation of Kadena Air Base and White Beach Naval Facility.”

Tamaki was referring to a turbulent time before Okinawa reverted to Japanese control in 1972, when public sentiment over the U.S. presence on Okinawa occasionally led to violent clashes between locals and the U.S. military.

Notably, the Koza riot of Dec. 20, 1970, involved thousands of locals and hundreds of military police, according to the Japan Times. Approximately 60 Americans were injured, 80 vehicles burned outside Kadena's Gate No. 2 and several buildings on base were razed.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Jewish boys aid man with swastika tattoo

MA BOSTON — Massachusetts authorities said a group of Jewish teens played a key role in saving the life of a drowning man with a tattoo of a swastika.

NBC Boston reported it happened the night of May 23 as the four youths — students at an Orthodox Jewish high school in suburban Brookline — spotted a man partially submerged in Chestnut Hill Reservoir.

Boston College police officer Carl Mascioli said two of the teens ran to his patrol car to alert him. Mascioli pulled the man from the water and noticed the Nazi symbol on his hand.

He said the unidentified students told him they don't regret helping the man despite his anti-Semitic tattoo.

Officials said the man is expected to make a full recovery.

Police: Pedestrian was intentionally hit

SD RAPID CITY — Police said an intoxicated driver intentionally struck and killed a pedestrian in a Walmart parking lot in Rapid City.

The 48-year-old woman is being held on possible charges of first-degree murder and driving under the influence.

Authorities said the crash happened shortly before 1 p.m. Sunday. First responders found the victim unresponsive in the parking lot. The victim was taken to Rapid City Regional Hospital and pronounced dead.

Police said the driver struck a tree after hitting the pedestrian. Witnesses told investigators the driver intentionally struck the victim.

French government cites Degas house

LA NEW ORLEANS — The French government has added a New Orleans house where the French painter Edgar Degas lived briefly to a network of houses of famous French people.

Degas House Museum owner David Villarrubia said the bed and breakfast will be able to display a large red medallion showing it is part of the "Maisons des Illustres." Degas visited relatives there for 4½ months in 1872-73.

Villarrubia said he expects the medallion in July. He was notified late last year.

He said the network includes 236 houses, but only four are outside France and its territories, with only one other in the U.S.

Illegal fireworks are blamed for brush fire

MA FALMOUTH — Authorities in Massachusetts said an illegal Memorial Day weekend fireworks display is likely to blame for a brush fire that scorched five acres on Cape Cod.

Firefighters in Falmouth said the unauthorized display Saturday night appears to have sparked the blaze. No injuries were reported.

Crews responding to the scene near the Beagle Club found three large, separate fires burning in the wooded area around 11 p.m.

Mailman cleans veterans' headstones

FL JACKSONVILLE — A north Florida mailman spends his Sundays cleaning veterans' headstones at run-down cemeteries.

On Memorial Day weekend, Clarence Hollowell, 60, was at the Old City Cemetery in Springfield near Jacksonville. He cleaned the headstones of Capt. S.L. Tibbitts and 1st Lt. Joseph H. Huau. Once he finishes, he writes their names on a sheet of paper and does some detective work to learn about them.

Hollowell told The Florida Times-Union he comes from a military family and served in the Army. He said he's cleaned some 600 graves, using a plastic scraper, a soft bristled brush and a special solution he orders online.

Man charged after cockfighting alleged

ID NAMPA — An Idaho man was charged with 10 counts of animal cruelty for training roosters for cockfighting.

The Idaho Statesman reported that police arrested Carlos Angel, 23, of Nampa, last week on allegations that he was training and mutilating roosters for the purposes of cockfighting.

Angel was charged with 10 counts of misdemeanor animal cruelty after 10 roosters were seized from his property on May 3, according to a news release from the Canyon County Sheriff's Office. Angel was booked into the Canyon County jail and has since posted bond.

Officials said they've received information that illegal cockfights have been going on in the county and surrounding areas.

Ex-treasurer charged with defrauding town

KS KANSAS CITY — A former town treasurer has been charged in federal court with defrauding her small northeast Kansas community

and is accused of spending taxpayer dollars at a casino.

Prosecutors last week filed felony charges of wire fraud and filing a false tax return against former Fontana Treasurer Deborah Sell. She is accused of using city funds to pay personal expenses.

Prosecutors allege Sell defrauded the city for more than two years before leaving the treasurer's job in September 2017.

She is accused of using a city debit card to withdraw cash from an ATM at a Kansas City-area casino in 2017 and failing to report more than \$94,000 in income on her 2017 federal tax return.

Campus used in facial recognition research

CO DENVER — More than 1,700 people walking on a University of Colorado campus were unknowingly photographed as part of a facial recognition research project.

The Denver Post reported Monday that professor Terrance Boulton had set up a long-range surveillance camera in an office window at the Colorado Springs campus, capturing more than 16,000 images of passers-by during the spring semesters of 2012 and 2013. Boulton said the images were collected to create a dataset as part of an effort to enhance facial recognition technology.

The dataset was made publicly available online in 2016, but it was taken down in April. Boulton said he waited five years to release the dataset online to protect student privacy.

University spokesman Jared Verner said a panel reviewed the research protocol for the project.

From wire reports

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Reigning Warriors are ready for Raptors

Associated Press

The first NBA game was in Toronto. And now, the NBA Finals are headed there.

Finally.

The NBA Finals are set after the Toronto Raptors won the Eastern Conference championship on Saturday night and earned the right to play the Western Conference champion Golden State Warriors. For the Raptors, it'll be the first time on this stage; for the Warriors, it'll be an 11th trip to the finals and fifth in a row, as they look for a fourth crown in the last five seasons.

Game 1 is Thursday night in Toronto, which will become the first city outside the U.S. to play host to a finals game — a milestone that comes just about 73 years after Toronto was the site of the first game in NBA history.

The Raptors weren't around then: Toronto's first NBA team was called the Huskies, a club that went 22-38 in its only season. The Raptors have been around since 1995, and in their 24th season they're finally going to play for a ring.

"They're the champions," Raptors star Kawhi Leonard said of the Warriors. "We've got to go in, have the mental focus, enjoy the moment and take the challenge."

While it is the first finals trip for the

Raptors franchise, many players on the team have been there. Leonard and Danny Green got there with San Antonio in 2013 and 2014, with Leonard winning MVP of the series against Miami five years ago. Serge Ibaka was with Oklahoma City for its appearance in 2012 and Raptors reserve Patrick McCaw was part of the Warriors for their title runs in each of the past two seasons.

"We're not satisfied," Raptors President Masai Ujiri said. "We want to win the championship."

For the Warriors, this has almost become an annual rite.

Stephen Curry, Klay Thompson, Draymond Green, Andre Iguodala and Shaun Livingston have been part of each of these five runs to the finals by Golden State. Kevin Durant is going to his third in a row and fourth overall; if he wins Finals MVP — that would seem unlikely at this point, because he isn't expected to play in Game 1 and it's unknown if he'll actually appear in the series at all because of a calf injury — he would join Michael Jordan and Shaquille O'Neal as the only players to win that trophy in three consecutive seasons.

By the time Game 1 rolls around, the Warriors will have been off for 10 days. They scrimmaged Saturday to break up the monotony.

"I think we try and be smart with it," Iguodala said. "We got a few guys just trying to get back from injury and it's given us some time to get that rest and take advantage of it."

For Leonard, it'll be the first trip to the finals since he was MVP of the series in 2014.

And it only continues to prove that his first year in Toronto was a success.

Traded to the Raptors last summer by San Antonio — DeMar DeRozan was the big piece the Spurs got — Leonard, his health and whether he'd fit in in Toronto was one of the major storylines entering this season.

Asked and answered. Leonard has averaged 31.2 points and 8.8 rebounds in the playoffs, had a 27-point, 17-rebound, seven-assist effort in the win over Milwaukee that clinched the East on Saturday, and had perhaps the biggest moment of this postseason when his buzzer-beater hit the rim four times before dropping to beat Philadelphia in Game 7 of the second round.

The Raptors swept the season series, though there are plenty of reasons not to make too big a deal out of that. For starters, the teams haven't played since Dec. 12. And neither team was at full strength in either of those games.

Hurt Durant travels with team to Toronto

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Kevin Durant is traveling with the Golden State Warriors to Toronto for the first two games of the NBA Finals, leaving open the chance he could be ready to return from a strained right calf in time for Game 2.

Durant, the two-time reigning Finals MVP who has missed the past five games since getting hurt in Game 5 of the Western Conference semifinals against Houston, has already been ruled out for Game 1 on Thursday night.

As of Tuesday, when Golden State held an optional practice before flying, he had yet to do any full-speed work on the court. He has done some shooting, coach Steve Kerr said.

"If he did anything on the court, it would have been pretty light," Kerr said.

Warriors spokesman Raymond Ridder confirmed Durant was on the two-time defending champions' team plane that took off early afternoon West Coast time and landed late in Canada.

There will be two full days off before Game 2 on Sunday, giving Durant time to get further on-court work done that the Warriors would need to see before he is medically cleared.

"We'll see where it goes from here," Kerr said Monday. "This is where the fact that there's a lot of days in between games during the finals helps us, so we'll see."

Durant didn't travel to Houston for Game 6 of that round or to Portland for the two road games against the Trail Blazers in the Western Conference finals. He remained in the Bay Area to rehab, and the Warriors are unbeaten without him.

An impending free agent this summer, he was hurt May 8 when he landed awkwardly on his right foot following a baseline jumper late in the third quarter of a 104-99 victory over the Rockets at Oracle Arena. Durant is averaging 34.2 points per game this postseason.

Kerr said Durant has been spending countless hours rehabbing to recover — hoping to get back soon to what he loves most.

"You get that fear of missing out on stuff, like practices and shootarounds and new game plans and stuff like that. That's what I miss the most, obviously, grinding on the court individually and with my team. But that's out of my hands. Out of my control," Durant said Friday.

"My task is to try to conquer this, and I think that's the journey (we're) on as bas-

ketball players. So I'm pretty much down for anything but I'm excited that I'm making progress."

Center DeMarcus Cousins, out with a torn left quadriceps muscle he injured in Game 2 of the first round against the Clippers, hadn't been ruled out for Game 1 though Kerr mentioned the magnitude of coming back on the finals stage after so much missed time.

Cousins — in his first career postseason — scrimmaged Saturday and again Monday, a sign of progress he is closer to being ready.

"I feel better each and every day. That's my whole goal, to make sure I get better with each day that comes," Cousins said last week. "Hopefully, that opportunity comes, and I'm able to get on the floor and help my teammates and try to help them win a championship."

Unflappable Rask key to Bruins' success

Associated Press

BOSTON — Tuukka Rask first caught coach Bruce Cassidy's attention as a hot-headed minor leaguer who was throwing milk crates onto the ice when things didn't go his way.

These days, the Bruins goalie is much more likely to shrug off a mistake than break his stick over a crossbar.

"I just think he's been real calm for a while now, on and off the ice, really even-keeled," Cassidy said Tuesday, a day after Boston beat St. Louis 4-2 in Game 1 of the Stanley Cup Final. "He's gotten upset ... but he always gets it right back. That's typically Tuukka."

The Bruins are three wins away from their second NHL title this decade, and Rask is a big reason why. After a so-so regular season that had backup Jaroslav Halak challenging for his job — and many fans calling for the team to make the change — the unflappable Finn

has gotten better even when the strain of the playoffs seems to be wearing everyone else down.

He has given up three or more goals just three times this postseason, and he finished off the last two rounds with shutouts that have dropped his goals-against average to 1.85. He is well on his way to becoming the first goalie to win the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP since 2012.

For a different view of the goalie, Cassidy suggested viewing Rask's viral hissy fit after losing a 2009 AHL game in a shootout on a goal that he thought hit the crossbar. Rask took his stick to the net like an ax, then flung it across the rink as he skated off; when he got to the tunnel, he found a milk crate that also found its way back to the ice.

Rask doesn't do that anymore. He has matured and he also realized it was fruitless.

"It doesn't do anything" to lose your temper, he said Tuesday, his arms crossed and his shoulders in what seemed like a permanent shrug.

Instead, he has been able to put mistakes or bad luck behind him, and Cassidy said that was the turning point after St. Louis opened a 2-0 lead in the opener.

"You want to have that to not let games get away from you," the coach said. "There's always, in games every night, where things can get away from you. Typically, you need your goalie to make the next save when it is 2-0."

Rask did that.

And he also made every save after. (Though there weren't that many: The Blues were outshot 18-3 in the second period, and 38-20 overall.)

Although Rask won the 2014 Vezina Trophy and is the career leader in save percentage and goals-against average among active goalies, Bruins fans have

resisted embracing him.

He was in net when the Bruins blew a 3-0 lead to the Philadelphia Flyers in the 2010 playoffs, and when the Bruins won it all the next season he was Tim Thomas' backup. Thomas was gone and Rask was the starter two years later when they went back to the Cup Final, but the Bruins lost to the Chicago Blackhawks after Rask allowed two goals in the last 76 seconds of the sixth and clinching game.

The next year, Rask was the league's top goalie.

But the Bruins hadn't been able to sniff much playoff success again until this year. Although the regular season was one of his worst — his goals-against average was 2.48, his second-highest as a regular — he played in only 46 games. He said the rest is paying off now.

"I think there's a big difference when you play 45 or 65 games," he said.

Federer, Wawrinka win in straight sets at French Open

Associated Press

PARIS — Roger Federer might be getting up there in years, but he still keeps winning tennis matches.

Joking that he's "so super old," the 37-year-old Federer returned to the French Open's third round with a predictably straightforward 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 victory over 144th-ranked Oscar Otte.

The 25-year-old Otte lost in qualifying in Paris but got into the main draw when another player withdrew.

Federer saved all four break points he faced and needed a little more than 90 minutes to advance.

He is playing at Roland Garros for the first time since 2015. Federer completed a career Grand Slam by winning the clay-court major in 2009.

Federer's friend and Swiss countryman, Stan Wawrinka, also moved on in straight sets.

Wawrinka, the 2015 French

Open champion and runner-up in 2017, beat Cristian Garin 6-1, 6-4, 6-0.

Corentin Moutet produced the biggest win of his burgeoning career in front of his home crowd to reach the third round at a Grand Slam tournament for the first time.

Aged 20 and ranked 110th, the Frenchman defeated 19th-seeded Guido Pella of Argentina 6-3, 6-1, 2-6, 7-5.

Moutet will next play countryman Richard Gasquet or Juan Ignacio Londero of Argentina.

Sixth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas also made it to the third round at Roland Garros for the first time, overcoming a slow start to beat Hugo Dellien of Bolivia 4-6, 6-0, 6-3, 7-5.

Former champion Garbine Muguruza advanced to the third round by beating Johanna Larsson 6-4, 6-1.

The Spanish player, who won the title at Roland Garros

in 2016 by defeating Serena Williams, did not face a break point.

Muguruza is expected to face tougher opposition in her next match against ninth-seeded Elina Svitolina.

Chasing a record-extending 12th title at the French Open, Rafael Nadal posted a 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 win over Yannick Maden to reach the third round.

Nadal lost only six games in the first round against Yannick Hanfmann. He was on the verge of doing even better on Wednesday but lost focus briefly in the third set and dropped his serve twice.

In the next round, Nadal will be up against 27th-seeded David Goffin.

Seventh-seeded Kei Nishikori rallied to beat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

Svitolina was set to play 67th-ranked Kateryna Kozlova but organizers said the Ukrainian player withdrew with a virus.

Sloane Stephens, who lost to Simona Halep in last year's final, needed a bit more time to defeat gritty but error-prone Sara Sorribes Tormo 6-1, 7-6 (3).

A runner-up to Serena Williams at the French Open in 2015, Lucie Safarova announced her retirement after losing a doubles match with partner Dominika Cibulkova.

The 32-year-old Safarova topped the doubles rankings two years ago and won the doubles title at Roland Garros in 2015 and 2017.

Bianca Andreescu, the No. 22 seed from Canada, withdrew ahead of her second-round match against Sofia Kenin due to a right shoulder injury.

Fourth-seeded Kiki Bertens retired from her second-round match during the first set.

Bertens had a chance to seize the No. 1 spot in the WTA rankings with a deep run in Paris.

Dietrich's 3 HRs lift Reds over Pirates

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Derek Dietrich was describing his three-homer game for the media when Scooter Gennett walked past and put it in a slightly different perspective.

"Anybody can hit three, Derek," said Gennett, who did him one better in 2017.

No, Dietrich's latest big game didn't set any records. But it extended one of the most unexpected home run tears by a Reds player in recent years.

Dietrich hit three homers — all two-run shots — and the Pittsburgh Pirates suffered yet another injury to their rotation Tuesday night as Cincinnati pulled away to an 11-6 victory.

"This is more than just a hot streak," manager David Bell said.

Dietrich grounded out in his first at-bat and connected in the fourth off Jordan Lyles (5-2), who left after the inning with discomfort in his left hamstring. Dietrich then connected off Geoff Hartlieb in the fifth and again in the seventh for his first three-homer game.

After the third homer, the 13,824 fans at Great American Ball Park demanded a curtain call. Still holding his batting helmet, Dietrich emerged from the dugout and raised both arms.

He didn't get another at-bat to try to match Gennett, who tied the major league record with

four homers at Great American Ball Park on June 6, 2017.

Signed to a minor league deal in February with a chance to compete for a spot off the bench, Dietrich has gotten playing time with Gennett sidelined since spring training with a groin injury. His 17 homers set a career high, and 12 of his last 17 hits have been home runs.

"They let me be myself," Dietrich said. "They believe in me. They gave me an opportunity. That's all I've ever needed along the way."

Most of the damage has been against the Pirates, who have allowed eight of the homers.

"He's hitting our mistakes extremely well," manager Clint Hurdle said. "The balls are not

where we wanted them, and he's clobbered them."

Lyles had an awkward follow-through on a pitch in the fourth but completed the inning. The Pirates already are missing starters Jameson Taillon and Trevor Williams. They've had 22 players on the injured list this season, with starter Chris Archer also missing time because of a sore thumb.

Now, there's a chance Lyles will have to miss time as well.

"We've got the injury bug so far this year," Lyles said. "Everybody knows it."

With its seventh loss in nine games, Pittsburgh fell to 26-27, the first time the Pirates have been below .500 since May 3.

MLB roundup

Smeltzer throws 6 shutout innings in big-league debut

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Devin Smeltzer took the mound for his first game in the majors, his wife and parents among a sizable crowd at Target Field, set to face NL MVP Christian Yelich and the hard-hitting Milwaukee Brewers.

Nervous?

After fighting to get this far, no way.

Diagnosed with cancer when he was just 9 years old, Smeltzer added another chapter to his inspiring comeback story, pitching six shutout innings in his debut to help the Minnesota Twins beat the Brewers 5-3 Tuesday night.

"It's everything I've dreamed of. I've worked for this my whole life, been through a lot and it all came true today," he said after tearful hugs from 21 family members outside the clubhouse, including an extended embrace with his wife, Brienne.

"I joked with my wife after the game, 'I think that's the most calm I've ever been.' I'm usually very high energy," he said. "Tonight, I felt like I'd

done it a million times."

Smeltzer probably had that many dreams, or more, about baseball success while building to this moment. It was a long way from the day doctors found a grapefruit-sized cancerous tumor against his bladder.

"I know that tomorrow, between the lines, may not happen. It's been told to me before, and I don't take a day for granted out there," he said.

He exited with the game scoreless and got a no-decision. Manager Rocco Baldelli said Smeltzer will get another chance at his first win.

Padres 5, Yankees 4: Eric Hosmer hit a three-run homer during a big first inning against Masahiro Tanaka, and San Diego manager Andy Green burned through his bullpen to help hold off host New York.

Nationals 5, Braves 4: Stephen Strasburg matched his season high with 11 strikeouts in seven innings and Washington took the lead on three straight walks to beat host Atlanta.

Astros 9, Cubs 6: Alex Bregman homered twice, his second a tiebreaking two-run shot in

the sixth inning that propelled injury-weakened host Houston over Chicago in a win that gave manager AJ Hinch his 500th career victory.

Tigers 3, Orioles 0: Matthew Boyd took a five-hitter into the seventh inning, Niko Goodrum homered and Detroit interrupted a prolonged slump by defeating host Baltimore.

Indians 7, Red Sox 5: Roberto Perez and Greg Allen homered during a five-run ninth inning as Cleveland beat host Boston.

Rockies 6, Diamondbacks 2: Chris Iannetta hit a two-run homer in the seventh, sending host Colorado past Arizona.

Rays 3, Blue Jays 1: Austin Meadows homered for the third straight game and five Tampa Bay pitchers combined at home to throw a six-hitter and beat struggling AL East rival Toronto.

Marlins 11, Giants 3: Jorge Alfaro and Garrett Cooper hit Miami's first three-run homers of the year and sent visiting San Francisco to its sixth straight loss.

Phillies 4, Cardinals 3: Cesar

Hernandez hit a go-ahead two-run homer, Nick Pivetta threw five tough innings and host Philadelphia beat slumping St. Louis.

White Sox 4, 2; Royals 3, 1: Lucas Giolito struck out 10 while winning his fifth straight start and Chicago posted two victories over Kansas City.

Hours after Yolmer Sanchez hit an RBI single in the ninth inning to give Chicago a 2-1 win in the resumption of a suspended game, Giolito (7-1) put on quite a performance.

Rangers 11, Mariners 4: Nomar Mazara and Ronald Guzman homered and Texas beat host Seattle to improve to 3-1 this season when using an opener instead of a starting pitcher.

Mets 7, Dodgers 3: Michael Conforto's first career grand slam snapped a seventh-inning tie for visiting New York.

Angels 6, Athletics 4: Shohei Ohtani hit a tiebreaking two-run single with two outs in the ninth inning, and visiting Los Angeles snapped Oakland's longest winning streak in 13 years at 10 games.