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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Civilian 'shields' limit strikes in Mosul

Tribune Washington Bureau

BAGHDAD — As Iraqi and Kurdish military forces converge on the eastern outskirts of Mosul, U.S. commanders are concerned about their ability to launch airstrikes without laying waste to the ancient city and the civilians who live there.

The Sunni Muslim insurgents who captured the sprawling city two years ago have increased the risk of civilian casualties by rounding up thousands of Iraqis at gunpoint and herding them into areas under their control, according to U.S. officials.

The militants' goal, according to the Pentagon, is to force coalition warplanes to bomb civilians trapped in the city or to hold their fire.

The U.S.-led coalition has launched more than 2,900 aerial bombs, artillery and mortar shells, ground-launched rockets and drone-launched missiles since the Mosul offensive began on Oct. 17, according to the Pentagon.

But as the battle moves into a city of cobblestone pathways and clusters of shops, homes and Muslim shrines, U.S. pilots will "exercise tactical restraint," according to Lt. Gen. Jeffrey L. Harrigian, Air Force commander in the Middle East.

"We're going to take a look in the area of the target to make sure there are no civilians moving toward the area," he said.

Last week, U.S. warplanes destroyed 40 empty trucks near Mosul that militants planned to use to transport more civilians into the city, U.S. officials said.

"Our enemies recognize how much of an issue this is for us and how concerned we are about this," said Gen. Joseph Votel, U.S. commander in the Middle East, who visited Iraq last week.

"I think trying to keep the population on our side by the way we conduct our operations is very important."

The Pentagon already is investigating allegations that a U.S. airstrike killed eight members of an Iraqi family, including

three children, at their home in Fadhiliya, a village northwest of Mosul, during fighting on Oct. 22.

"The coalition did conduct strikes in the area at the time of the allegation," said Col. John Dorrian, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Iraq. "We will investigate to determine what happened with this incident."

Chris Woods, director of Airwars, a non-profit group that monitors civilian deaths from coalition air raids, said his analysts were tracking nine other airstrikes around Mosul in the last two weeks that he said had killed 50 people.

The chance of hitting civilians has grown as the militants have forced civilians from surrounding districts into Mosul to serve as human shields, according to United Nations officials. In some cases, the militants shot civilians who refused to comply.

The use of human shields is prohibited under international law, but humanitarian groups caution it is not an excuse for hazardous targeting.

DOD: Additional \$500 million needed for F-35

Bloomberg

The Pentagon will need as much as \$500 million extra to finish the development phase for Lockheed Martin Corp.'s F-35, the most expensive U.S. weapons system ever, defense officials said.

The F-35 program office made the request for more money to complete development, which is supposed to be in its last stretch after 15 years, during a closed-door review last month by the Defense Acquisition Board, according to the officials who asked not to be identified discussing internal budget discussions.

The Defense Department and the military services that are counting on the three versions of the F-35 are assessing how to pay for a request that would go into the department's fiscal 2018 budget proposal.

Approving the added funds would probably be the first F-35 decision to reach the desk of the next defense secretary.

The call for more money comes as the Pentagon's chief weapons tester has issued a fresh warning that the aircraft, projected to cost \$379 billion for a fleet of 2,443 U.S. planes, is far from showing it has full combat capability.

In an eight-page memo dated Oct. 14 and obtained by Bloomberg News, Michael Gilmore, the director of operational testing, recommended "very strongly that the program be restructured now and provided the additional resources it clearly requires to deliver its long-planned and sorely needed full" capability.

While the added \$500 million would be a fraction of what's already a \$55 billion development

phase, Frank Kendall, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, said in an email that he was "disappointed to hear that additional funds would be needed" and "we are working to minimize the size of the shortfall and to deliver options to address it."

Pentagon Comptroller Mike McCord said he "wasn't totally shocked" by the funding request. While it's not a big increase considering the size of the program, McCord said in an interview, "I was hopeful, maybe, that we wouldn't have a problem like this because" the program "has been moving in a fairly decent direction."

The F-35 is being developed even as the plane is in low-rate production, an overlap that Kendall once called "acquisition malpractice." The request for more funding is at odds

with past assurances that the program would absorb any cost increases in development.

"In the development program we like to tell people that we have no more money and we have no more time," Air Force Lt. Gen. Christopher Bogdan, director of the Pentagon's F-35 program office, said at a conference in 2014.

The program had "the resources to complete" on time and "on budget, and we intend on doing that," he said then. "We don't plan on going back and asking for any more money or any more time to get this program done."

The development phase was originally scheduled to end in fiscal 2012. That was extended to fiscal 2016 during a major program reorganization in early 2010, and \$476 million in funding was added then.

General's rent-free housing OK with DOD

USA Today

WASHINGTON — A general fired from the Joint Chiefs of Staff for an extramarital affair will not be sanctioned for living rent-free in the home of the defense contractor because their long-standing friendship allows such gifts, the Pentagon's inspector general has decided.

The inspector general found that the free housing Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Michael Bobeck received from an executive of Peduzzi Associates Ltd. fell "under an exception to the general gift prohibition," according to a letter sent last week to Sen. Claire McCaskill, the ranking member of the panel on investigations for the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

However, emails obtained by USA Today show that Peduzzi officials kept Bobeck informed about the interest of a key client, Sikorsky, maker of the famed Black Hawk helicopter, as the Army and National Guard wrangled over a reorganization plan that had serious ramifications for Sikorsky's bottom line. A draft letter in February that Peduzzi helped craft to key members of Congress on behalf of the National Guard Association requested that the Pentagon spend \$367 million more on Black Hawks in 2017.

Bobeck and Peduzzi had also negotiated a post-retirement job, which gave Bobeck a financial interest in Peduzzi's continued success, USA Today reported.

McCaskill, D-Mo., called on

the Pentagon to delve deeper into Bobeck's ties to the contractor.

The Army has killed the career of another general under similar circumstances. In a case from 2015, the Army fired Maj. Gen. Dana Pittard after determining that he had merely created the "perception of preferential treatment" — not for personally profiting from his relationship with his contractor friends.

Last month, USA Today reported that Bobeck had a decades-long relationship with Joe Ferreira, a vice president at Peduzzi, that blended the personal and professional. Before becoming a general, Bobeck had negotiated with Ferreira to work for Peduzzi, for example. Both had

served in the New York National Guard and had held leadership positions in its aviation units.

But the emails show that their relationship blurred lines between the professional and personal.

The exchange of information "highlights how easily a long-term friendship can cross the line and present a possible ethics violation," said Scott Amey, general counsel for the Project on Government Oversight, a non-partisan watchdog group. "It's one thing to be friends, but it's another situation to be friends and trade information for special access or privileges."

The inspector general may need to review the case again, Amey said.

DOD: Al-Qaida leaders killed in Syria, Yemen

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military killed two al-Qaida leaders involved in attack-planning in separate drone strikes last month in Syria and Yemen, a Pentagon spokesman said Wednesday.

A strike Oct. 17 near Idlib, Syria, killed Haydar Karkan, a longtime member of al-Qaida who was involved in planning external terrorist attacks on western targets, said Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman.

An airstrike four days later in a remote area of Marib Governorate in central Yemen killed Abu Hadi al Bayhani, an al-Qaida leader in the Arabian Peninsula, Davis said.

Those strikes were among three counterterrorism airstrikes that targeted top al-Qaida leaders in three separate countries last month. The third, an Oct. 23 strike in northwestern Kunar province in Afghanistan, targeted senior al-Qaida

leaders Faruq al-Qatani and Bilal al-Utubi. Davis said the United States was still assessing the results of that airstrike. Their deaths would be a "significant blow" to the group in Afghanistan, he added.

Al-Qaida remains a threat throughout the Middle East and southwest Asia where it has taken advantage of turmoil in several countries to plan terrorist attacks and train militants.

Karkan was the organization's most senior external attack planner in Syria, Davis said. He had ties to al-Qaida's most senior leaders, including founder Osama bin Laden, and was responsible for the group's terrorist activities within Syria, Turkey and throughout Europe, Davis said. Al Bayhani was "a capable and experienced operational planner" for al-Qaida in Yemen, Davis said. Four additional al-Qaida militants in the Arabian Peninsula were killed in the Oct. 21 airstrike that targeted al Bayhani, according to U.S. Central Command.

ICC ready to launch probe into Afghanistan war crimes

Foreign Policy

The prosecutor's office of the International Criminal Court is ready to initiate a full investigation of a range of possible war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan, including some by U.S. personnel, according to several knowledgeable sources.

The ICC move would mark the first time that a formal ICC investigation has scrutinized U.S. actions and sets up a possible collision with Washington.

Multiple sources have indicated that the chief prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, will seek to initiate an investigation in the coming weeks, likely after the U.S. presidential election but before the end of the year. U.S. officials visited The Hague recently to discuss the potential investigation and to express concerns about its scope.

The prosecutor's office has repeatedly called attention to alleged abuses of detainees by U.S. personnel between 2003 and 2005 that it believes have not been adequately addressed

by the United States. In a report last year, it noted that "crimes were allegedly committed with particular cruelty and in a manner that debased the basic human dignity of the victims." Bensouda may also want to probe further the attack by U.S. forces on a Doctors Without Borders facility in Kunduz that killed several dozen people.

Even once an investigation begins, it is not clear that the prosecutor would ever bring charges against Americans. Doing so would require significantly more evidence than the prosecutor's office currently possesses.

In order to charge Americans with war crimes, Bensouda would likely have to demonstrate a link between the conflict in Afghanistan and U.S. detention policies; the United States reportedly brought several detainees to Afghanistan from other parts of the world. Perhaps most controversial, the prosecutor's office would have to determine that the United States has failed to address allegations of torture.

Filipinos in Navy support Duterte, not his US policy

BY ERIK SLAVIN
AND TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's call to remove foreign troops from his country has left many Filipino-American sailors torn between sympathy for the president's domestic goals and opposition to weakening the security partnership with the U.S.

The Navy long represented a goal for Filipinos looking for a better life. Between 1952 and 1990, about 34,260 Filipinos enlisted under a recruitment program that let them join without first immigrating.

Filipinos continue to seek enlistment, while many Filipino-Americans have made the Navy a generational tradition. They now fill ranks from seaman to vice admiral.

When the 7th Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge arrived in Manila for a March port visit, roughly 15 percent of its crew had Filipino ancestry.

Some sailors on 7th Fleet ships remain Filipino citizens.

Duterte's insults directed at U.S. officials, along with his demands that the U.S. military abandon anti-terrorism efforts and halt plans to share space at Philippine military bases, have left many in a quandary.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Roland Donato, 25, is wary of Duterte's lurch toward China.

Duterte announced his "separation" from the U.S. on Oct. 20 in Beijing, though he later said he would not seek to end the U.S.-Philippines security alliance, which was formalized 65 years ago.

Donato doubted that China would prove as valuable a friend as the U.S. when it comes to fighting terrorism, which remains a particular problem in the south.

"Straying away from the U.S., that is not OK," said Donato,

who grew up in the northern city of Baguio and moved to the U.S. at age 18. "All the exercises the U.S. do are to deter terror; that's why we are here. I don't think that's a mission of China.

"Breaking away from the U.S. is like saying you don't want to be part of deterring terror."

But other than that, despite international criticism over extrajudicial street killings resulting from Duterte's national drug war, Donato and others voiced enthusiastic support for the recently elected president.

While multiple conversations with sailors started with foreign policy, they quickly turned to public safety concerns in the Philippines.

The turn largely mirrored concerns among Filipinos. Duterte ran his election campaign on an anti-crime platform, with little emphasis on security issues.

Donato grew up in a relatively safe neighborhood but says he knows people victimized by muggings and street crime. If Duterte's methods are extreme, it's because of the depth of the problem, he said.

"They've always had a problem with corruption back home," he said. "I like his goals — his intentions are good."

U.S. State Department officials have criticized Duterte over thousands of street deaths associated with the new leader's war on drugs. Duterte told a news conference in September that he would be "happy to slaughter" 3 million drug addicts to end the problem.

Police statistics show 1,578 drug suspects shot dead by security forces since Duterte took office in June, according to The Associated Press. Another 864 people have been killed by motorcycle-riding gunmen, a hallmark of vigilante groups, with many more deaths classified as "unexplained."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Frederick Santos, 27, grew up in

Quezon City and immigrated to the U.S. at 19.

Santos liked Duterte from the start and feels he will help the nation's poor.

"At the same time, I don't think it's a good idea to cut ties with the U.S., because the U.S. helps the Philippines," Santos said. "There are many Filipinos in the U.S. who support him but are not going to like that."

Duterte's jabs at Americans, whom he has called loud and discourteous, among other things, are making some Filipinos uncomfortable as well.

"My cousin is married to an American, and she said she won't bring her husband to the [Philippines] because Duterte is anti-American," Santos said.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Daniel Aldana supports getting drug dealers off the streets but isn't sure whether to take Duterte's sometimes-contradictory statements about aligning with China and Russia seriously.

Aldana, born in California to Filipino parents, said he is surprised at just how solidly pro-Duterte many of his friends in the Navy appear.

"[Duterte] is prideful, but I feel that pride is too much," Aldana said. "Sometimes what he thinks might be right is not always the right choice."

Seaman Jeric Andaya, born in Hawaii to Filipino parents, said he thinks the overall U.S.-Philippines relationship remains strong, despite Duterte's stances.

If that remains the case, then little will have changed from last year, when 92 percent of Filipinos viewed the U.S. favorably — higher than any other country surveyed, according to a Pew survey.

"I haven't gone to the Philippines yet," Andaya said. "I know a lot of our ships go there ... I hope to come there someday."

Duterte feels the impact of actions

The Washington Post

Fresh off his trip to China and his call for a "separation" from the U.S., the president of the Philippines is for the first time feeling the impact of what has seemed like to some a concerted effort to alienate his allies.

The first hit: the defection of former president Fidel Ramos. President Rodrigo Duterte's camp on Wednesday confirmed that Ramos, Duterte's China envoy, has resigned from his post just four months into the president's tenure.

The news came after Ramos, who helped Duterte get elected, put out his second scathing critique of Duterte's short tenure. The piece, published Sunday, accused Duterte of "unwittingly shooting himself in the mouth" and taking "101.5 million Filipinos" down with him by insulting allies.

"He may claim that to be more 'insulting than friendly' to our long-established allies is part of his God-given 'destiny.' But, this is obviously wrong, and full of S***!!!" he wrote.

The former president faulted Duterte for a bloody campaign against suspected drug users and dealers that's claimed thousands of lives, as well as his anti-U.S., anti-U.N. rhetoric.

Ramos, a West Point graduate and former armed forces head, was particularly critical of Duterte's comments on U.S.-Philippine military ties. Over the last few months, Duterte surprised many by calling for the withdrawal of U.S. special forces from the southern island of Mindanao and the cancellation of future U.S.-Philippine military exercises, only to back down days later.

Though opinion polls suggest that Duterte still enjoys strong public support, Ramos' comments will no doubt resonate, particularly among those with ties to the foreign policy elite and the military.

Clinton presses into Ariz., Trump focuses on Florida

Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Hillary Clinton is pressing into reliably Republican Arizona as she tries to steal a state away from Donald Trump. Her rival, reinvigorated by the FBI's new email review, is laser-focused on Florida, a marquee battleground state he can't win the White House without.

With less than a week until Election Day, both candidates are warning of dire consequences if the other is elected.

Trump says Clinton would be under investigation as president, sparking a "constitutional crisis," though the FBI has declined to prosecute her for her handling of classified information. Clinton has vowed the FBI will have "no case" after reviewing new emails, but her campaign is nervous about tightening polls and ramping up attacks on Trump, hoping to scare away voters who could still be persuaded to back him.

On her own Florida swing Tuesday, Clinton hammered Trump as dangerous and divi-

sive, highlighting in particular his treatment of women.

Always important in presidential contests, Florida has emerged as this year's most crucial state on the road to the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House. Trump can't win without carrying Florida, meaning Clinton can deliver a knockout blow if she captures its 29 electoral votes.

Even with national polls narrowing, Clinton has several more paths to 270 than Trump. Her campaign is underscoring that political reality with a stop in Arizona on Wednesday, a state that has voted for Republican presidential candidates all but once since 1952.

Her team also sees opportunities in North Carolina, a state that voted for president Barack Obama in 2008 before going Republican four years later.

Clinton's renewed focus on Trump's demeaning comments on women seemed aimed in part at baiting a response from the notoriously thin-skinned Republican. She notably ap-

peared alongside former Miss Universe Alicia Machado, a woman Trump criticized for gaining weight.

Trump, however, did not immediately take the bait. He spent Tuesday relentlessly on message, eschewing wild tangents and political fights in favor of carefully scripted remarks focused on health care and attacks on his opponent. He cautioned that Clinton's plan to strengthen "Obamacare" would lead to dire consequences, although he offered few specifics about his own plan.

He also promised, if elected, to call a special session of Congress to replace the law. However, Congress would already be in session when the next president takes office, raising the question of just what he meant.

Still, frustrated Republicans were encouraged that Trump was focusing on policy prescriptions — for one day, at least — after a roller-coaster campaign marked by self-created controversy and political missteps.

Suspect in killing of 2 officers captured

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Authorities apprehended a man Wednesday suspected in the early morning killings of two Des Moines area police officers who were shot to death while sitting in their patrol cars in what authorities described as separate ambush-style attacks.

Officers from the Dallas County Sheriff's Office and Iowa State Patrol took Scott Michael Greene, 46, into custody and were taking him to Des Moines, police said.

His arrest came about eight hours after the killings of two officers.

Des Moines Sgt. Paul Parizek told CNN that he had few details about the circumstances of Greene's capture, but that Greene was on foot on a roadway at the time and was alone when we was taken into custody.

Police responded to a report of shots fired at 1:06 a.m. and found an Urbandale Police Department officer who had been shot. Authorities from several agencies saturated the area after that shooting and about 20 minutes later discovered that a Des Moines officer who had responded to the initial killing had been shot in a patrol car at an intersection, Parizek said. The shootings happened less than 2 miles apart, and both took place along main streets that cut through residential areas.

The shootings follow a spate of police killings, including ambushes of officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge, La. Five officers were killed in Dallas on July 7 and three were killed later that month in Baton Rouge.

Des Moines and Urbandale Police later said they had identified Greene as a suspect in the killings, describing him as armed and dangerous.

Parizek said investigators determined Greene was a suspect through "a series of leads and investigative tips."

Attacker: 'I ate something bad ... humans'

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — The Florida college student accused of killing a couple and chewing on the dead man's face told deputies, "Help me, I ate something bad" and then admitted it was "humans" as he spit out a piece of flesh, court documents show.

Austin Harrouff, 19, also begged deputies to kill him after they pulled him off John Stevens' body, according to the records, obtained Monday by the Palm Beach Post.

"Shoot me now, I deserve to die," Harrouff said.

Harrouff is charged with second-degree murder in the Aug. 15 attack on Stevens, 59, and his wife, Michelle Mishcon, 53,

outside their Tequesta home. Prosecutors said they will ask a grand jury to indict him on first-degree murder charges. That would make him eligible for the death penalty.

Deputies said they found the then-muscular former high school football player and wrestler in his underwear, making animal noises and biting Stevens' face as he pinned his victim's body to the driveway.

The FBI is running tests to determine whether Harrouff was on drugs. Harrouff was hospitalized for almost two months after the attack. His father says his esophagus was burned. Martin County Sheriff William Snyder has said Harrouff may have ingested lawn chemicals

found in the couple's garage.

According to the court documents, one deputy ordered Harrouff off Stevens at gunpoint while another used an electric stun gun on him but he wouldn't let go. Snyder has said the deputies didn't shoot Harrouff because they feared hitting Stevens.

Finally, a deputy with a dog arrived and its bites enabled deputies to subdue Harrouff. Mishcon's body was found in the garage.

Less than an hour before the attack, Harrouff was having dinner with his father, sister and a friend at a restaurant about 4 miles from the victims' house when he apparently had words with his father.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Teen saves 3-year-old sister from house fire

NH EPPING — Firefighters said a teenage boy saved his 3-year-old sister from their burning home in Epping.

Julia Hutchins did a head count and found only three of her four children. Her oldest, Brandon, 16, ran back inside the burning home on Oct. 26 and grabbed his sister, Melodi, who was in bed watching "Dora the Explorer." He then ran back through the smoke-filled house.

The Epping Fire Department told the Portsmouth Herald the cause of the fire remains undetermined. It appears to have started outside the home and has displaced the family of seven.

When he went back into the house to save his sister, Brandon said, he couldn't breathe and he was scared. When he came out, he was coughing a lot and his hands were black.

3 arrested in attack on Muslim man at eatery

CA SAN DIEGO — Police said three men harassed and then beat a Somali Muslim man at a San Diego restaurant. The attack is being investigated as a hate crime.

San Diego police said the three white men in their 30s were at Zappy Pizza in the Redwood Village neighborhood when a group of Somali men and women walked in on Sunday afternoon. Police said the men then began making degrading comments based on the group's race and religion.

An argument broke out, and the fight became violent when the men hit the 20-year-old Somali man in the face with a pair

of brass knuckles and in the back of the head with a chair.

Police arrested the three men. The victim had cuts and bruises but refused treatment.

No names have been released.

Unattended vehicle rolls over 83-year-old woman

CO DENVER — Authorities said an 83-year-old woman was seriously injured when an unattended vehicle rolled over her in a gas station parking lot in Adams County.

The state patrol reported that the victim, Judith Warren, had walked behind the car after a driver pulled into a 7-Eleven parking lot on Saturday.

Trooper Tim Sutherland said the vehicle rolled over Warren and came to rest against her.

He said the driver may have forgotten to put the car in park.

Man allegedly faked being officer, robbed 3

TX HOUSTON — Houston police have arrested a man accused of flashing a badge and pulling a gun to fake being an officer and then robbing at least three people.

Records show Alvaro Javier Hidalgo, 42, of Houston, was being held Monday on three counts of aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon. His bond was set at \$180,000.

Investigators said Hidalgo is believed responsible for up to nine robberies. The three charges involve incidents Sept. 19, Sept. 26 and Oct. 1 in which the victims were approached at convenience stores or near a businesses.

Police said the robber showed a badge and a gun, spoke into what appeared to be

a police radio and then robbed the victims.

Nobody was hurt.

Minivan drags woman 2 blocks in hit-and-run

NY NEW YORK — Police have released video of a minivan driver who they say struck a 60-year-old woman in New York City and dragged her for nearly two blocks in a hit-and-run.

Police said the woman was crossing a street in Manhattan's Murray Hill neighborhood Sunday morning when she was hit. The driver didn't stop and dragged the woman against the flow of traffic before turning around. The woman suffered serious leg and body injuries. She was taken to a hospital in critical but stable condition.

Man charged after machete attack

MA WORCESTER — Worcester police have arrested a man they say attacked another man with a machete.

Officers responded to a Colton Street apartment about 7:20 p.m. Sunday after reports of a stabbing. When they got there, they were told the victim had already been taken to the hospital with injuries to the head and neck areas.

Officers learned that the suspect might still be on the scene. They followed a trail of blood to a basement apartment, where they found a man still holding a machete.

The apparently intoxicated man dropped the machete after being told several times to do so.

Police charged Fausto Portillo, 39, with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon.

Stone eagle flanking old bridge toppled in crash

OH CINCINNATI — Police said a driver crashed into a 122-year-old bridge in a Cincinnati park, toppling one of four stone eagles that were once part of the city's Chamber of Commerce building before it burned down in 1911.

The Cincinnati Enquirer reported that police said a hospital worker heading home from a night shift early Sunday crashed into the side of the Melan Arch Bridge while trying to avoid hitting a deer.

The 5-foot-tall eagles flank the bridge, which museum records say is the oldest reinforced concrete bridge in the country.

University of Cincinnati library records say the eagles had been on the estate of real estate developer and business speculator Jacob Hoffner. Abraham Lincoln visited Hoffner's statues in 1855.

Train carrying booze hits wooden pallets

NJ BERGENFIELD — Officials said a freight train transporting alcohol struck several wooden pallets that had been left on the tracks in New Jersey.

CSX Transportation spokesman Rob Doolittle told NJ.com that a train headed from Selkirk, N.Y., to Oak Island struck the pallets late Saturday in Bergenfield.

Doolittle said it wasn't immediately clear who left the pallets on the tracks. The train stopped after striking them.

Officials said the train didn't sustain any damage and no one was hurt. It continued on after an inspection. The train had two locomotives. More than 80 cars contained alcohol.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Cubs hammer Indians, force seventh game

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — One more game. For everything.

Either a 108-year World Series championship drought will come to an end, or another that's lasted 68 years.

Hysteria for one fan base, more heartbreak for the other.

Cubs vs. Indians in a winner-take-all Game 7.

As it should be.

"It's just correct and apt that we'd go seven games," Chicago manager Joe Maddon said.

Addison Russell hit a grand slam and tied a Series record with six RBIs, and Chicago took advantage of a huge early misplay in Cleveland's outfield as the Cubs, their offense finally revving, throttled the Indians 9-3 on Tuesday night in Game 6 to push this tense tug-of-war between baseball's two longest title drought holders to the limit.

The biggest, most nerve-racking day lies ahead.

"This is kind of fitting for these two franchises. This is

storybook," Cubs catcher David Ross said. "They'll make movies about this one day."

Kris Bryant homered to spark a three-run first inning, Russell hit the first Series slam in 11 years and Jake Arrieta worked into the sixth as the Cubs, down 3-1 back at Wrigley Field, are now rolling. One more win at Progressive Field would bring their first championship since 1908.

The Indians, trying for their first title since 1948, missed a second shot at closing out the

Cubs. Cleveland is now forced to play another Game 7 after losing in 11 innings to the Florida Marlins in 1997 in its last trip to the Series.

The Cubbies, shut out twice earlier in this Series, brought their clubbies to Cleveland. Bryant had four hits and Anthony Rizzo added three, including a two-run homer.

They hammered Josh Tomlin, who couldn't get out of the third inning and didn't get any help from his outfield in the first.

From Maz to Morris, here are some memorable Game 7s

Associated Press

The Chicago Cubs have played 178 games this season, the Cleveland Indians 175.

Wednesday night, they get one chance to make them all worth it.

The Cubs and Indians will play the 38th decisive World Series Game 7, and the previous 37 have included some remarkable moments.

Can Corey Kluber or Kyle Hendricks make like Jack Morris with wire-to-wire domination? Will Andrew Miller or Aroldis Chapman channel Madison Bumgarner with a 15-out save? Can the Indians give Cleveland a long-awaited party at home? Will the Cubs get a GOAT or just another goat?

Nothing left to do but find out. In the meantime, here's a little history to fill the hours until the first pitch. The Pittsburgh Pirates beat the Detroit Tigers 8-0 in the first conclusive Game 7 in 1909, with rookie Babe Adams getting a shutout and this third victory in that Series.

The next 36 included momentous homers, significant saves and a whole lot of champagne. Plus, a couple of clunkers — Dizzy Dean and Bret Saberhagen both won 11-0 romps.

Here's a look at seven notable World Series Game 7s:

Maz sinks the Yanks

1960: Pittsburgh Pirates 10, New

York Yankees 9

Between 1947 and 1962, the Yankees won 10 championships, but Bill Mazerowski and the Pirates stole one away with a wild Game 7 at Forbes Field that included the first ever Series-ending homer. Pittsburgh led 4-0 after two innings, but Mickey Mantle and the Yanks roared back for a 5-4 lead after six. New York added two more runs before the Bucs rallied in the eighth, with Hal Smith's homer putting Pittsburgh ahead 9-7. Mantle and Yogi Berra had RBIs in the ninth to tie it 9-9, setting the stage for Mazerowski's celebrated blast. The undersized future Hall of Famer led off the ninth with a shot to left against Ralph Terry, putting his helmet in hand and waving his arms as he rounded the bases.

Morris' moment

1991: Minnesota Twins 1, Atlanta Braves 0 (10)

Jack Morris made one of the most memorable starts in baseball history by dominating for 10 innings against the upstart Braves at the Metrodome. The 37-year-old retired the final seven batters he faced, including a double play to escape a bases-loaded jam in the eighth inning — Lonnie Smith got lost while running the bases earlier in the inning, costing Atlanta a sure run. Pinch-hitter Gene Larkin won it in the 10th, singling to deep left-center to score Dan Gladden and give Minnesota its second title in five years. John Smoltz countered Morris with a solid outing, pitching 7¹/₃ fine innings, but Alejandro Pena and the bullpen couldn't outlast Minnesota's durable righty.

Bumgarner's big save

2014: San Francisco Giants 3, Kansas City Royals 2

Madison Bumgarner cemented himself as one of the World Series' best-ever

pitchers with a remarkable five-inning save just three days after throwing a shutout in Game 5. Michael Morse broke a 2-2 tie with an RBI single in the fourth inning, and after getting one more inning out of left-hander Jeremy Affeldt, manager Bruce Bochy gave the ball to Bumgarner in the fifth and never came back for it. Bumgarner struck out four and allowed just two hits, getting Salvador Perez to pop up in foul territory with a runner on third in the bottom of the ninth for the final out. The big lefty won the opener, too, and easily took Series MVP honors.

D'backs get to Mo

2001: Arizona Diamondbacks 3, New York Yankees 2

Mariano Rivera, baseball's most feared closer of all time, also suffered through one of the Series' most crushing blown saves. Yankees manager Joe Torre asked Rivera to get the final six outs in a one-run game at Arizona, but Rivera couldn't come through. Tony Womack's double tied it with one out in the ninth inning, and two batters later, Luis Gonzalez blooped a single into center and jumped his way to first base before being mobbed by teammates. It was the fifth and most recent game-ending hit in a Game 7.

The Game 7 letdown

1986: New York Mets 8, Boston Red Sox 5

Game 7s aren't always the most memorable in the Series, and in 1986, the finale lacked the drama of perhaps the most famous Game 6 ever. Following Bill Buckner's game-ending error two days earlier, New York struggled initially against left-hander Bruce Hurst in Game 7, but Keith Hernandez put the Mets on the board with a two-run single in the sixth and Gary Carter drove in another run to tie it at 3. Boston went to

the bullpen for the seventh, and Series MVP Ray Knight led off with a go-ahead homer. New York later added on, with Darryl Strawberry taking his time getting around the bases after a home run, and Jesse Orosco pitched two innings for a save to clinch the Mets' second World Series title.

Cubs' last World Series Game 7

1945: Detroit Tigers 9, Chicago Cubs 3

AL MVP Hal Newhouser and the Tigers spoiled the Cubs' most recent Game 7 in the World Series, striking out 10 in a complete game at Wrigley Field. Hank Borowy started for Chicago but was lifted after three runs and no outs, and Detroit led 6-1 after 1¹/₂ innings. Doc Cramer had three hits for Detroit, and Hall of Fame slugger Hank Greenberg won his second World Series a year after returning from the U.S. Army. The Cubs hadn't been back to the World Series since until this season, and they're still seeking their first Game 7 World Series victory.

Indians' last World Series Game 7

1997: Florida Marlins 3, Cleveland Indians 2 (11)

Many fans in Cleveland — unfortunately for them — remember the Indians' previous World Series Game 7 well. In the 11th inning, Edgar Renteria hit a soft liner off pitcher Charles Nagy's glove into center field for a single, scoring Craig Counsell from third base to give Florida a championship in its fifth season of existence. The Indians had a chance to wrap up the game in the ninth inning, but Counsell hit a deep sacrifice fly off Jose Mesa to score Moises Alou. Florida's Robb Nen struck out Omar Vizquel, Manny Ramirez and David Justice in the 10th, and then Jay Powell ended the 11th by getting Jim Thome to ground into a double play before Renteria's game-ending hit.

CFP: A&M edges undefeated Huskies

BY RALPH D. RUSSO

Associated Press

Texas A&M was ranked fourth behind Alabama, Clemson and Michigan in the season's first College Football Playoff rankings.

The Aggies (7-1) surprisingly were a spot ahead of unbeaten Washington on Tuesday night in the first of six selection committee rankings. The Crimson Tide (8-0), Tigers (8-0), Wolverines (8-0) and Huskies (8-0) are the only remaining undefeated teams from Power Five conferences and hold the top four spots in the latest Associated Press poll.

The 12-person committee, however, gave a nod to Texas A&M's strength of schedule.

Ohio State was sixth and Louisville was seventh.

In the first two seasons of the College Football Playoff, only one team each season made the committee's initial top four and the final four.

The final rankings will be released Dec. 4, with the top four moving on to the College Football Playoff semifinals on Dec. 31 at the Fiesta and Peach bowls.

A look at what matters in the rankings and what they mean moving forward:

Don't panic, Huskies: Selection committee chairman Kirby Hocutt, Texas Tech's athletic director who is now in the role that Arkansas AD Jeff

Long held the first two seasons of the CFP, made it clear Texas A&M's four victories against teams with winning records (Auburn, Arkansas, Tennessee and South Carolina — though it should be noted the Gamecocks are 4-4) provided the margin over Washington. The Huskies have two such victories.

"We had a lengthy discussion on the spot," Hocutt said. "Washington is a well-balanced team and they had a good win on the road against Utah. But in the committee's mind Texas A&M has played a stronger schedule."

The good news is there is room for the Huskies to grow. Washington still has USC and Washington State on its schedule and a possible Pac-12 championship game, which could be against Utah (16th in the committee's rankings), Colorado (15th) or USC, which would need a strong finish to get there. A big stretch run by Stanford would also help the Huskies.

Oregon being terrible is hurting the Huskies, who are getting little credit for pounding the Ducks. Another reason for Washington fans to hate Oregon.

Most important is this: The Huskies control their path to a Pac-12 championship and Texas A&M does not. The Aggies will need Alabama to lose at least a couple of times to reach the Southeastern Confer-

ence championship game.

The committee is told when considering similar teams to weigh conference championships like a tiebreaker.

If Washington wins out, the Huskies should be fine to get into the top four. If they win the Pac-12 but lose once along the way, it could get a little dicey for the Huskies when matched against an 11-1 A&M team that has lost only to Alabama.

A prediction: If it comes down to Pac-12 champion Washington at 12-1 and Texas A&M at 11-1, the Huskies will get that spot. Now if Alabama were to be the 11-1 team instead of A&M that would be a different story.

Cardinals probably should panic: Louisville (7-1) will need two losses from Clemson to have a chance to win the Atlantic Coast Conference championship. Because that is probably not happening, the Cardinals are hoping to be impressive enough to get into the top four without a title.

The first rankings do not look promising for Louisville.

Hocutt again cited strength of schedule when talking about Louisville. The Cardinals' only victory against a winning team was against Florida State, a 63-20 win that very well might rate as the best singular performance by any team this season. The Cardinals' next most notable game was a close loss at Clemson.

Want to call out the commit-

tee? Michigan at No. 3 is benefiting from home victories against eighth-ranked Wisconsin, Colorado and Penn State, No. 12 in the rankings thanks to upsetting Ohio State. However, using the Sagarin Computer ratings, Michigan's strength of schedule is 49th in the nation. Louisville's is 52nd. Washington is 69th.

The Cardinals have games remaining against Wake Forest, Houston and Kentucky, all winning teams but none ranked.

The takeaway for Louisville: The Cardinals need a ton of help.

Margin of victory: Hocutt pointed out the committee does not look at margin of victory, which is sort of ridiculous.

The conference commissioners who set up the playoff protocol get hung up on the idea of not encouraging teams to run up the score, so there is no margin of victory metric. But there is no way the committee can evaluate teams properly while looking only at a W or L and not the final score.

Group of five: Unbeaten Western Michigan at No. 23 is the highest ranked team from the Group of Five, just ahead of Boise State at 24. The Broncos probably can't afford even one loss, but if they can make a perfect run to a Mid-American Conference title, a Cotton Bowl bid likely awaits.

Davis' big night propels No. 17 W. Michigan

Associated Press

MUNCIE, Ind. — Western Michigan receiver Corey Davis used a nationally televised game as his own personal proving ground Tuesday night.

He got open. He made spectacular plays when given the chance. And, of course, he kept the 17th-ranked Broncos unbeaten.

By the time the show-stopping senior finally left the 52-20 victory over Ball State, he had caught 12 passes for a Mid-American Conference-record 272 yards, tied the conference mark for career touchdown receptions (47) and celebrated a school-record 11th consecutive victory.

"It's kind of like The Masters out there when there's no wind blowing and it's just a beautiful day, and you're just feeling really good," coach P.J. Fleck said before joking about a couple of drops Davis had. "But I told him, 'You left some meat on the bone out there.'"

At 6-foot-3, 213 pounds, some NFL scouts think Davis has what it takes to be a first-round draft pick next year.

It seemed like Davis burned the Cardinals' secondary on every play, catching TD passes of 57, 35 and 62 yards while moving within 296 yards of Trevor Insley's 17-year-old national record (5,005). Davis has 4,709 yards.

Western Michigan (9-0, 5-0 MAC, No. 23 CFP) knew just how talented Davis was after watching him the past four years.

The rest of the college football world may have gotten its first long look at him when quarterback Zach Terrell went 23-for-34 for 367 yards with the three TD passes.

Ball State (4-5, 2-3) made too many mistakes to have a chance after Jarvion Franklin gave Western Michigan the lead for good with a 23-yard TD run in the first quarter.

"Unfortunately, we didn't execute at a high level like we needed to in order to have a chance to win against a football team like Western Michigan," first-year Ball State coach Mike Neu said.

Curry, Warriors cruise past Blazers

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Stephen Curry had just five points in the first half against the Portland Trail Blazers. He knew the second half was going to be different from his first shot.

“You see one go in and that’s all you really need confidence-wise,” he said. That first shot? It was a three-pointer.

Curry finished with 28 points, 23 in the third quarter alone, and the Golden State Warriors beat the Trail Blazers 127-104 on Tuesday night to extend their early season winning streak to three games.

Ian Clark came off the bench with a career-high 22 points for the Warriors, who have rebounded after a season-opening loss to San Antonio. Kevin Durant added 20 points and Golden State rested its starters down the stretch after leading by as many as 35 points.

Damian Lillard had 31 points for the Blazers, who fell in five games to the Warriors in the Western Conference semifinals

last season. Playing the first of a back-to-back, Portland coach Terry Stotts also went to his reserves with eight minutes left.

The Blazers beat the Warriors 137-105 in Portland last February, with Oakland, Calif., native Lillard scoring a career-high 51 points against his hometown team. It was one of just nine losses for the Warriors. Lillard averaged 36.5 points against the Warriors last season.

“They played their game. In the first half, we were right there. In the second half, they stuck with it,” Lillard said. “Their defense was more consistent than ours, and their offense was more free than ours was. We needed to have more of a presence.”

Cavaliers 128, Rockets 120: Kyrie Irving scored a season-high 32 points and reigning champion Cleveland remained undefeated.

Kevin Love scored 24 points while LeBron James added 19 points and 13 rebounds as host Cleveland placed six players in

double figures. The Cavaliers are 4-0 for the first time in 16 years.

Jazz 106, Spurs 91: George Hill had 22 points and visiting Utah made a season-high 15 three-pointers, handing San Antonio its first loss of the season.

Rodney Hood had 19 points, Trey Lyles 15 and Shelvin Mack 14 for Utah, which finished 15-for-31 from three-point range.

Heat 108, Kings 96: Goran Dragic scored 25 points, Tyler Johnson had seven of his 22 in overtime for host Miami.

Pistons 102, Knicks 89: Tobias Harris scored 25 points and Marcus Morris added 22 to lift host Detroit over New York.

The Pistons have won three in a row — all by double digits — since dropping their season opener.

Magic 103, 76ers 101: Serge Ibaka sank two free throws with 1.4 seconds to snap a tie game and send Orlando over host Philadelphia.

The Magic rallied from an

18-point deficit to win for the first time in four games this season.

Bucks 117, Pelicans 113: Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24 points and 10 rebounds, Jabari Parker added 21 points, and visiting Milwaukee beat winless New Orleans.

Anthony Davis scored 35 points — the third time he has scored at least that many points — to go with 15 rebounds, three blocked shots and three steals.

Timberwolves 116, Grizzlies 80: Zach LaVine scored 31 points and hit five three-pointers, and Minnesota built a lead too big to give away in a victory over host Memphis, its first of the season.

Pacers 115, Lakers 108: Paul George scored 30 points, including Indiana’s final 12 of the game to rally the host Pacers over Los Angeles.

The Lakers trailed by as many as 16 points, but rallied and had their final lead at 108-107 before George put it away.

Lundqvist beats Blues, notches 60th shutout

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Henrik Lundqvist made a season-high 35 saves for his 60th career shutout to lead the New York Rangers to a 5-0 win over the St. Louis Blues on Tuesday night.

Jimmy Vesey had a goal and two assists, and Dan Girardi, Rick Nash, Mats Zuccarello and Kevin Hayes also scored for New York, which has won seven of its first 10 games.

Jake Allen started in goal for St. Louis and allowed four goals on 19 shots until he was replaced by Carter Hutton after Zuccarello made it 4-0 with 7:05 remaining in the second. Hutton stopped eight of the nine shots he faced.

Girardi opened the scoring with a 4-on-4 goal at 9:37 as his shot ricocheted off the skate of

the Blues’ Valdimir Tarasenko and bounced off the ice past Allen’s glove side. Vesey doubled the lead 1:34 later on the power play with his sixth of the season.

Maple Leafs 3, Oilers 2 (OT): Nazem Kadri got his second goal of the game in overtime, lifting host Toronto over Edmonton.

Connor McDavid and Auston Matthews were scoreless in the anticipated first matchup of the last two No. 1 overall picks.

Blue Jackets 3, Stars 2: Sam Gagner tied it with 16 seconds left in the third period and Seth Jones scored 46 seconds into overtime, lifting host Columbus past Dallas.

Sabres 2, Wild 1: Johan Larsson had a third-period goal in his return to Minnesota and Robin Lehner made 27 saves to

lift Buffalo.

Bruins 2, Panthers 1: Brad Marchand and Dominic Moore scored to lead visiting Boston past Florida.

Lightning 6, Islanders 1: Nikita Kucherov had two goals and two assists, Ben Bishop made 26 saves, and visiting Tampa Bay cruised.

Steven Stamkos, Brian Boyle, J.T. Brown, and Valtteri Filppula also scored, and Victor Hedman and Slater Koekkoek each had two assists to help the Lightning snap a three-game skid.

Blackhawks 5, Flames 1: Patrick Kane had a goal and two assists, and host Chicago won its third straight.

Capitals 3, Jets 2: Jay Beagle scored with 30 seconds left in the third period and Braden Holtby made 43 saves as visiting Washington won its third

straight.

Senators 2, Hurricanes 1 (OT): Kyle Turris scored in overtime, lifting host Ottawa past Carolina.

Predators 5, Avalanche 1: Craig Smith scored twice, Pekka Rinne stopped 28 shots and struggling Nashville beat host Colorado.

Ryan Johansen and Matt Irwin each scored his first goal of the season.

Ducks 4, Kings 0: Rickard Rakell had a goal and two assists in his season debut, and John Gibson stopped 30 shots to earn his seventh career shutout as visiting Anaheim beat Los Angeles.

Coyotes 3, Sharks 2: Louis Domingue stopped 39 shots and Brad Richardson scored in his 600th career game, lifting host Arizona past San Jose.