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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Aide: DOD resisted SIGAR report on abuse

The Washington Post

The Pentagon tried to block an independent assessment of child sex abuse crimes committed by Afghan soldiers and police, instead insisting on the creation of its own report offering a far less authoritative review of human rights violations perpetrated by U.S. allies, according to an aide to Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt.

Although the report released Nov. 16 by the Defense Department Inspector General's office, or DODIG, reached the grim conclusion that for years, U.S. personnel have been inadequately trained to report such crimes, a parallel investigation by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR, is thought to contain a much more detailed accounting of the problem's severity.

But the results of SIGAR's unreleased inquiry, which was requested by 93 members of Congress in 2015, remains classified at the Pentagon's direction, raising questions about the military's transparency and the extent to which it is complying with laws meant to curb such abuse.

The Pentagon responded with "resistance" when Congress tapped SIGAR to conduct the probe, said Tim Rieser, an aide to Leahy, vice chairman of the Senate Ap-

propriations Committee, whose namesake legislation, known as the Leahy Law, requires the U.S. military to halt assistance to foreign military units found to have committed gross human rights violations.

Instead, senior Pentagon officials argued that SIGAR, which since 2009 has produced dozens of reports exposing corruption within the Afghan government and incompetence among Afghan security forces, lacked the jurisdiction for this particular task, Rieser said.

"It's fair to say there was an effort to discourage the investigation" by SIGAR, he said, adding that eventually the two agencies agreed to coordinate and release complementary reports, but that the Pentagon's investigators did not fulfill promises to fully cooperate.

Kathie Scarrah, a spokeswoman for the Defense Department Inspector General's office, said that its investigators "heard no complaints throughout the evaluation about coordination" with SIGAR. The DODIG unclassified report "had significant findings," she added, "which should be the focus of the attention."

It's unclear who within the Pentagon's senior ranks resisted SIGAR's involvement. A spokesman for the Office of the Secretary of Defense declined to address

questions about the two reports, citing the Thanksgiving holiday and the "extensive research" that would be required.

Afghan security personnel have been known to recruit young boys as servants, sometimes to use for sex. There is a broader practice in Afghan society to dress some boys as women and to have them dance at gatherings. Known as bacha bazi, it was banned under the Taliban but was revived after the U.S. invasion in 2001.

U.S. troops who have witnessed such abuse have complained about it for years. Still, it's unclear precisely how deeply rooted the problem is among Afghan security forces. The Defense Department's report said it reviewed 16 allegations from 2010 to 2016, but that the actual number is unknown because of inconsistent reporting procedures and "an overall lack of unified guidance on reporting and record keeping relating to child sexual abuse."

It's unclear whether SIGAR documented more or fewer cases of child sex abuse. But in a statement, SIGAR's head, John Sopko, said, "In reviewing the DODIG's report, it's clear that SIGAR's report paints a much fuller picture of the issue. It's information I believe the American people have a right to know."

Army borrows from Navy playbook in treating wounded

BY WILL MORRIS

Stars and Stripes

LANDSTUHL, Germany — The Army has reduced the need for medical evacuations from combat zones by adopting a Navy program that soldiers say has saved money and improved care.

The 7227th Medical Service Unit at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center — where many wounded servicemembers from Afghanistan first arrive for treatment — earlier this year adopted the Health Experts onLine Portal, or HELP, a web-based program used by the Navy to treat sailors deployed on ships.

The system stores patient information — X-rays, electrocardiograms and treatment records — that specialists anywhere in the world can access to advise less expe-

rienced medical personnel on how to treat patients.

Because of improved communications and downrange diagnosis, 40 percent of the patients who normally would have been medically evacuated to Landstuhl were able to remain in theater, according to the hospital.

By reducing the number of transport cases, HELP saved about \$100,000 per month in transportation costs, for a total savings of \$743,736 by Oct. 31.

Lt. Col. Aaron Neil, commander of the 7227th Medical Service Unit, said that before using HELP, the way forward-deployed doctors communicated with specialists about treating patients was "disjointed."

A deployed doctor who needed to consult a specialist would have to call around and

hunt one down, Neil said. When the two finally got connected, they often wouldn't be able to review vital information together.

"We needed to be able to provide accurate medical consultation across the board of services," said Neil, whose Columbia, Mo.-based reserve unit recently finished a nine-month rotation at Landstuhl. "There wasn't really a program designed to do this. We weren't using anything to do it."

Because Landstuhl sends many patients back to the U.S. for further treatment, Neil's unit was able to interest several major hospitals in adopting the program, including Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Neil estimated that most military treatment facilities will adopt the system on their own by October 2019.

USS Fitzgerald departs Japan for stateside repairs

BY TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Fitzgerald has left its homeport in Japan for the U.S., where it will receive repairs after a late spring collision that killed seven sailors.

The Yokosuka-based destroyer was towed into deep waters early Friday so it could link up with the heavy-lift transport vessel Transshelf for the multiday loading process, a Navy statement said.

The Fitzgerald will be taken to Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Miss., for fixes and upgrades.

The collision on June 17 between the USS Fitzgerald and a Philippine-flagged merchant ship killed seven sailors and injured three more.

The Navy relieved the ship's two senior officers and a senior enlisted sailor. Several officers and enlisted watchstanders also were held accountable for

the accident.

Only about 50 sailors from the Fitzgerald's crew of about 300 will remain aboard the ship as it travels back to the U.S., 7th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Clay Doss previously told Stars and Stripes.

"The majority of [Fitzgerald] sailors — but not all — will have opportunities to serve other commands in Japan based on available billets, individual crew desires and the needs of the Navy," he said. "Some sailors do not desire reassignment in [Japan] and have asked for orders to other locations."

Huntington Ingalls Industries was chosen to repair the Fitzgerald because the company would be able to restore the ship in the shortest amount of time, Naval Sea Systems Command said in a statement issued in August.

"Given the complexity of the work and the significant unknowns of the restoration, the Navy determined that only an

Arleigh Burke-class shipbuilder could perform the effort," the statement said.

The project's start date, scope, cost and timeline are still to be determined, it added.

The Navy decided to take the Fitzgerald back to the U.S. to free up space along Yokosuka's waterfront for other 7th Fleet ships needing maintenance, Doss said in a previous statement.

"The main reason why the ship was not repaired here is because it would've tied up those resources and tied up the dry docks," he said. "We could do it here; it's just more cost effective and safer to go through the heavy lift route."

The Fitzgerald incident was the first of two deadly accidents involving U.S. warships in the Pacific this year. Ten sailors were killed in August when the USS John. S. McCain — also homeported at Yokosuka — collided with an oil tanker east of Singapore.

Report: Pilot error likely to blame for '15 helo crash

BY SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Pilot error likely caused a fatal crash in which an Army helicopter struck high-voltage power lines in South Korea, said a report released by the Army Combat Readiness Center.

Chief warrant officers Jason McCormack, 43, of Maryland, and Brandon Smith, 38, of Grand Junction, Colo., were killed when their AH-64D Apache attack helicopter crashed 50 miles east of Camp Humphreys on Nov. 23, 2015.

The pair were conducting annual training when the Apache struck power lines nearly 400 feet above the ground, said the report, which was recently released to Stars and Stripes.

"Entanglement of the rotor in power lines likely slowed the main rotor and prevented further flight," it said.

The aircraft — assigned to 4th Aerial Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Aviation Regiment, 2nd Combat Aviation Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division — broke apart in flight and caught fire after the crash, the report said.

The pilot and co-pilot sustained massive trauma and burns in the accident, which the report said "was not survivable."

"The helicopter most likely succumbed to human factors while transitioning between training areas using terrain flight modes during marginal and erratic weather conditions and attempting to negotiate a known wire hazard," it said.

McCormack and Smith were experienced aviators with deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, and there was no evidence of medical issues that could have contributed to the crash, the report said.

Defendant voices his remorse over Okinawa slaying

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

NAHA CITY, Okinawa — For the first time since his arrest last year, the former U.S. base worker accused of raping and killing a Japanese woman attempted to express remorse during the closing arguments of his murder trial Friday on Okinawa.

Kenneth Franklin Gadson, 33, was back at Naha District Court after two days of proceedings Nov. 16-17, in which the former Marine pleaded not guilty to murdering Uruma office worker Rina Shimabukuro, 20, on the night of April 28, 2016. Gadson admitted to charges of rape resulting in death and the illegal disposal of a body, telling the court he "had no plans to kill her."

After Friday's closing arguments from both the prosecution and defense, Gadson — again wearing a white T-shirt, blue pants and black plastic sandals — was given a final chance to speak.

Aside from reading prepared statements, he had been silent up to that point. Defendants who show remorse and apologize are sometimes given leniency in the Japanese justice system.

"I'm not a bad person, and I didn't mean for any of this to happen," Gadson said, sheepishly, while briefly facing the stunned audience.

In an awkward moment, Gadson was asked to repeat his statement several times for the court translator as the final proceedings of his three-day murder trial concluded.

Gadson's fate is now in the hands of a panel of three judges and six jurors, who will render a verdict Friday. The prosecution is seeking life in prison with hard labor.

Prosecutors discounted Gadson's past claims of severe mental illness, and the defense did not bring them up on Friday.

In his closing statement, Gadson's attorney, Toshimitsu Takaesu, asked the court to be fair in its judgment of his client.

FBI failed to notify US officials Russia targeted personal email accounts

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The FBI failed to notify scores of U.S. officials that Russian hackers were trying to break into their personal Gmail accounts despite having evidence for at least a year that the targets were in the Kremlin's crosshairs, The Associated Press has found.

Nearly 80 interviews with Americans targeted by Fancy Bear, a Russian government-aligned cyberespionage group, turned up only two cases in which the FBI had provided a heads-up. Even senior policymakers discovered they were targets only when the AP told them, a situation some described as bizarre and dispiriting.

The FBI declined to answer most questions from AP about how it had responded to the spying campaign. The bureau provided a statement that said in part: "The FBI routinely notifies individuals and organizations of potential threat information."

Three people familiar with the matter — including a current government official and a former one — said the FBI has

known for more than a year the details of Fancy Bear's attempts to break into Gmail inboxes. A senior FBI official, who was not authorized to discuss the hacking operation publicly, declined to comment on timing but said that the bureau was overwhelmed by the sheer number of attempted hacks.

The AP did its own triage, dedicating two months and a small team of reporters to go through a hit list of Fancy Bear targets provided by the cybersecurity firm Secureworks.

The Secureworks list comprises 19,000 lines of targeting data. Going through it, the AP identified more than 500 U.S.-based people or groups and reached out to more than 190 of them, interviewing nearly 80 about their experiences.

About one-quarter were still in government or held security clearances at the time they were targeted. Only two told the AP they learned of the hacking attempts from the FBI. A few more were contacted by the FBI after their emails were published in the torrent of leaks that coursed through last year's electoral contest. Some leak victims have not heard from the bureau at all.

Rep. Conyers steps down as top Dem on Judiciary panel

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., the longest-serving member of Congress, stepped aside as the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee amid growing pressure as an ethics investigation begins into sexual harassment allegations.

Conyers, 88, said he would not resign from Congress but instead would fight the allegations in the hope of reclaiming his spot atop the committee overseeing federal laws and

other legal issues.

Conyers settled a sexual harassment allegation brought by a former staffer, leaving her on the payroll as a temporary employee and paying out just less than \$30,000.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi issued a statement after Conyers' announcement: "I particularly take any accusation of sexual harassment very seriously. Any credible accusation must be reviewed by the Ethics Committee expeditiously. We are at a watershed moment on this issue."

Groups question police use of phone-spy tech

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Police departments in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and Las Vegas are among scores across the country quietly using a highly secretive technology developed for the military that can track the whereabouts of suspects by using the signals constantly emitted by their cellphones.

Civil liberties and privacy groups increasingly are raising objections to the suitcase-sized devices known as StingRays — cell site simulators that can sweep up cellphone data from an entire neighborhood by mimicking cell towers. Police can determine the location of a phone without the user even making a call or sending a text message. Some versions of the technology even can intercept texts and calls, or can pull information stored on the phones.

Part of the problem, privacy experts say, is the devices also can collect data from anyone within a small radius of the person being tracked. And law enforcement goes to great lengths to conceal usage, in some cases, offering plea deals rather than divulging details on the StingRay.

"We can't even tell how frequently they're being used," said attorney Jerome Greco, of the Legal Aid Society, which recently succeeded in blocking evidence collected with the device in a New York City murder case. "It makes it very difficult"

At least 72 state and local law enforcement departments in 24 states plus 13 federal agencies use the devices, but further details are hard to come by because the departments that use them must take the unusual step of signing nondisclosure agreements overseen by the FBI.

An FBI spokeswoman said the agreements, which often

involve the Harris Corp., a defense contractor that makes the devices, are intended to prevent the release of sensitive law enforcement information to the general public.

But the agreements don't prevent an officer from telling prosecutors the technology was used in a case.

In New York, use of the technology was virtually unknown to the public until last year, when the New York Civil Liberties Union forced the disclosure of records showing the NYPD used the devices more than 1,000 times since 2008. That included cases in which the technology helped catch suspects in kidnappings, rapes, robberies, assaults and murders. It even has helped find missing people.

But privacy experts say such gains come at too high a cost.

"We have a Fourth Amendment to the Constitution," said Jennifer Lynch, an attorney with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, referring to the protection against unreasonable search and seizure. "Our Founding Fathers decided when they wrote the Bill of Rights there had to be limits placed on government."

Lawmakers in several states have introduced proposals ranging from warrant requirements to an outright ban on the technology; about a dozen states already have laws requiring warrants. Federal law enforcement said last year that it routinely would be required to get a search warrant before using the technology — a first effort to create a uniform legal standard for federal authorities.

Case law is slowly building. Two months ago, a Washington appeals court overturned a conviction on a sex assault after judges ruled a violation of the Fourth Amendment because of evidence improperly collected from the simulator without a proper warrant.

Marine pilot, sons have much to be thankful for

The Baltimore Sun

The engine of the recreational airplane trembled a half-mile above the gray Chesapeake Bay. The pilot checked his flight instruments and glanced at his two boys, ages 4 and 8. Both were calm in the 26-foot aircraft.

No reason to worry, Christopher Curry told himself as he cruised toward Annapolis at about 125 mph.

Then the single engine shuddered and smoked. Bits fell off in the sky. The propeller slowed.

To Curry, a Marine Corps pilot, the signs were clear: This plane is going down.

This Thanksgiving, there was plenty to be thankful for in one Odenton, Md., home. Because two weeks ago, on a cold, cloudless afternoon, the Currys fell from the sky, crash-landed their airplane on the freeway — and walked away unharmed.

Curry, 32, a captain in the Marines, flies Harrier jets for a living. He came home last summer from a deployment in Okinawa, Japan, and soon returned to the air — with his sons. They would take off from Tipton Air-

port and cruise across the bay to Cambridge for crab melts.

Flying took Curry away from Drake and Cameron. Now, it drew them all together.

With them, flying was new again, he said.

The Curry brothers are fearless, their father said. Cameron, the younger boy, was taking a helicopter tour of Baltimore last summer when he reached for the controls. Drake, in second grade, has decided he will fly jets like his dad.

On Nov. 10, a Friday, Drake's school let out early. There was no soccer or music lessons on the boys' schedules. Curry suggested they fly away.

With Drake buckled in the passenger seat and Cameron in the back, the father guided the single-engine Socata Tobago down the runway at Tipton Airport and eased its 1,600 pounds into a breezy sky.

The family flew to the Shore and saw the treetops painted with autumn. Forty-five minutes in, they were flying back when Curry noticed the slight tremble in the engine.

It was almost 3 p.m. They were traveling west, approaching Annapolis. The trembling worsened. In minutes, the plane was shaking, rattling. White smoke seeped into the cockpit. Small debris, shredded rubber hosing, fell from the engine.

The propeller slowed. Curry pushed the prop lever: nothing.

The Marine Corps captain had trained for this. He reduced speed, calmly.

The plane lost altitude, flying slow above Annapolis. Drake seemed unconcerned; Cameron was asleep.

Tipton was too far away. Curry pointed the plane toward Lee Airport near Annapolis. He radioed air traffic control.

"I'm an emergency aircraft ... pending engine failure ... I'm flying in direct."

The engine slowed more, then stopped. He was at 1,400 feet, falling fast. He could glide in. But would he reach the runway?

Curry pointed the nose of his plane down. He had to maintain about 75 mph to prevent a stall. The plane shook violently.

Now, Cameron was awake

and scared. Drake was crying. Curry needed more speed, more altitude — more time. The trees rose up, bigger and bigger.

Ahead of the airplane stretched the eastbound Route 50 exit ramp to Aris T. Allen Boulevard. Curry was flying head-on into traffic. There was nowhere else, he thought.

The airplane stall alarm was shrieking when Curry touched down in the empty lane. "Hold on," he shouted, throwing his arm across Drake's tiny chest.

One wing clipped a light pole. The plane spun, hit a guardrail and crumpled. The family lurched against their seat belts.

Curry still doesn't know what caused the engine to fail. The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating.

This holiday, he was thankful for a passer-by who stopped and wrapped his boys in a big coat. He's thankful for a woman who played them cartoons on her phone as firefighters arrived.

As Curry was driving them home, Drake spoke up.

He asked when they could go flying again.

Egypt reeling after deadly mosque attack

Associated Press

CAIRO — Egypt was reeling Sunday from the horrific militant attack on a mosque in northern Sinai that killed 305 people two days earlier — the deadliest assault by Islamic extremists in its modern history and a grim milestone in a long-running fight against the insurgency led by an Islamic State affiliate.

Survivors and Egypt's top prosecutor have given accounts of the massacre that unfolded as more than two dozen assailants, carrying a black ISIS banner, unleashed gunfire and explosions during Friday prayers at the Al-Rawdah Mosque in a sleepy village by the same name near the small town of Bir al-Abd.

The attackers arrived in five SUVs, took positions across from the mosque's door and windows, and just as the imam was about to deliver his sermon from the pulpit, they opened fire and tossed grenades at the estimated 500 people inside.

The worshippers screamed and cried out in pain. A stampede broke out in the rush

toward a door leading to the washrooms. Others tried desperately to force their way out of the windows. Those who survived spoke of children screaming as they saw parents and siblings mowed down by gunfire or shredded by the blasts.

When the violence finally stopped, 305 people, including 27 children, had been killed and 128 wounded.

One of the witnesses, Ebid Salem Mansour, recalled how the attackers shouted "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great," as they fired on the worshippers.

So composed were the militants that they methodically checked their victims for any sign of life after the initial round of blazing gunfire. Those still moving or breathing received a bullet to the head or the chest, the witnesses said. When the ambulances arrived they shot at them, repelling them as they got back into their vehicles and fled.

Friday's attack targeted a mosque frequented by Sufis, members of a mystic movement within Islam. Islamic militants, including ISIS, consider Sufis heretics because of their less literal interpretations of

the faith.

President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi vowed that the attack "will not go unpunished" and that Egypt would persevere with its war on terrorism.

On Saturday, he ordered that a mausoleum be built in memory of the victims of Friday's attack and canceled a visit to the Gulf Sultanate of Oman that was scheduled for this week.

Friday's assault was the first major militant attack on a Muslim congregation, and it eclipsed past attacks, even dating back to a previous Islamic militant insurgency in the 1990s. The death of so many civilians in one day recalls the killing of at least 600 in August 2013, when Egyptian security forces broke up two sit-in protests in Cairo by supporters of Mohammed Morsi, an Islamist president ousted by the military the previous month.

The local ISIS affiliate has targeted Sufis in the past. Last year, the militants beheaded a leading local Sufi figure, the blind sheikh Suleiman Abu Heraz, and posted photos of the killing online.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Charity officials embrace firearms raffle

NM SANTA FE — Organizers of a year-end charity gun raffle in southern New Mexico say they are better off after separating from United Way Worldwide, which objected to the annual firearms sell-off.

Alamogordo-based Thrive in Southern New Mexico describes itself as the leading fundraising organization for local nonprofits in a rural, two-county area. Executive Director Stephanie Hale said the charity keeps more funds in the local community after dropping its affiliation with United Way, and that its firearms raffle pays for annual operating expenses.

Man in dismemberment case charged in killing

MO KANSAS CITY — A man who was arrested after sleeping in a Kansas storage unit with his two children and his dismembered wife's remains has been charged in the killing of a California man who vanished last year.

The Desert Sun reported that Justin Tod Rey was charged Wednesday with murder in the death of Sean Ty Ferel. The Palm Springs, Calif., man disappeared in May 2016 after vacationing with Rey. Three months later, Rey crashed Ferel's vehicle in Los Angeles. Ferel's body hasn't been found, but his blood was in the trunk, and his belongings were found in an Arizona storage unit that Rey had rented.

Coast Guard leader fined after killing bear

AK KODIAK — The commanding officer of Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak was fined after pleading

guilty to a noncriminal charge for shooting a brown bear out of season.

The Kodiak Daily Mirror reported Mark Morin was fined \$310 after authorities said he accidentally shot the bear while attempting to scare it off during an elk hunting trip in September.

Authorities said Morin was at a cabin on Afognak Island when four bears approached. Morin said he fired a warning shot that didn't faze the bears, so he fired again. A third shot struck a cub, killing the bear.

Police clear officer who ejected smoking fan

AL TUSCALOOSA — Tuscaloosa police said an officer who removed a cigarette-smoking Alabama fan from the football stadium did nothing wrong.

The Tuscaloosa Police Department announced last week that an internal investigation found the officer acted appropriately.

Cellphone videos of the officer forcing the woman to leave Bryant-Denny stadium during the Nov. 4 game were widely circulated on social media.

The department posted video recorded by the officer's body camera that showed the officer asking the woman to extinguish the cigarette. He removed her from her seat after she raised the cigarette to his face. The woman told WBRC-TV she was holding up the cigarette for the officer to take.

Man in postal uniform, mask robs business

SD SIOUX FALLS — Sioux Falls police said a man wearing a U.S. Postal Service uniform and an elderly man mask used a handgun to rob a business.

Authorities said the suspect in the Friday armed robbery took an undetermined amount of money. Officials didn't identify the business that was robbed.

Police said the man entered the business carrying a package and mail and then pulled out a handgun and pointed it at two employees. After getting the money, officials said the man left the business and drove away in a black SUV.

Corrections officer fired, accused of fraud

FL MELBOURNE — A Florida corrections officer is accused of taking money from a recently released inmate and spending it on several purchases.

News outlets reported Felicia Brown, 29, was charged with fraud on Friday.

Sheriff Wayne Ivey said that when an inmate is released from jail, their funds are returned on a debit card.

In this case, he said, the officer who processed the inmate's release made an "honest mistake" in not returning the money. He said that when Brown noticed the other officer's mistake, she took the money.

Judge who exploded in anger is suspended

NV LAS VEGAS — The Nevada Commission on Judicial Discipline has suspended a Clark County District Court judge for two months without pay and ordered him to undergo a psychiatric exam.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that Family Court Judge William Potter ordered a lawyer handcuffed in court, commented on cases during his re-election bid and exploded in anger during the commission's

own hearing.

The commission said the panel questioned Potter's "mental stability and capacity to control his anger." It ordered Potter to submit the psychiatric exam's results, write letters of apology, perform community service with an anti-bullying group and pay it \$5,000.

Couple crash into woods after chase

OH BUTLER — Police said a couple crashed into two cruisers during a high-speed chase in Ohio.

The chase ended after the couple crashed into a wooded area in Butler Township on Nov. 20. Authorities said the man and the woman, both 26, were hospitalized with injuries that are not life-threatening.

Police said the chase started after officers tried to stop the couple from stealing less than \$100 worth of merchandise from a Walmart. Chief John Porter said the driver struck a police cruiser in the parking lot, hit a dumpster and then backed into a second cruiser. Porter said the cruisers need to be repaired.

Small plane crashes into San Jose house

CA SAN JOSE — Authorities said a single-engine plane crashed into a San Jose house, injuring all three on board but no one on the ground.

The Mercury News reported the pilot had just taken off from nearby Reid-Hillview airport Nov. 19 when he reported a system failure. He was turning back when the plane crashed into the home's front converted garage. Only the nose of the plane breached the front room, but the exterior wall buckled under the force of it.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Auburn stuns No. 1 'Bama

Associated Press

AUBURN, Ala. — Auburn fans blanketed the field from end zone to end zone just like the last time they got to celebrate a stirring Iron Bowl win.

This time, Jarrett Stidham, Kerryon Johnson and No. 6 Auburn didn't need a miraculous final play to unleash the celebration. It was a build up to the crescendo as the Tigers beat top-ranked Alabama in a dominating 26-14 win Saturday. Auburn earned a berth in next week's Southeastern Conference title game against No. 7 Georgia.

The Tigers, an afterthought earlier this season, now have their sights set on one of the four playoff spots. And Auburn coach Gus Malzahn made it clear his two-loss squad deserves a shot. One of his team's two defeats was to defending national champion Clemson, No. 3 at the time.

"We've got to win next week and that's going to be a handful," Malzahn said of his upcoming rematch with Georgia. "I don't know, them experts got it figured out. I don't think anybody else has played two No. 1 teams and a No. (3) team. Put up our schedule against anybody."

Auburn fans covered the field in orange and blue after the final play, creating a scene similar to 2013 when the fourth-ranked Tigers beat No. 1 Alabama on a last-play, 109-yard return of a missed field goal. The Tigers went on to the national title game but had lost the three Iron Bowls since. This was Auburn's biggest margin of victory in the Iron Bowl since winning 49-26 in 1969.

Stidham passed for 237 yards and ran for a fourth-quarter touchdown to set up a rematch with Georgia in the SEC championship game Dec. 2 with a playoff spot almost certainly on the line.

Auburn (10-2, 7-1 SEC, No. 6 CFP) mostly shut down the league's top scoring offense for their second win in three weeks over the top team in the playoff rankings. They won the Western Division a week after dispatching the Bulldogs with similar precision.

The Crimson Tide (11-1, 7-1) made a rare assortment of mistakes for a team that had appeared to be headed toward a shot at a fourth consecutive SEC title and playoff berth.

Alabama coach Nick Saban said his team still deserves a playoff shot after playing for the national title the past two years and scarcely getting challenged this season.

"I don't think one game defines who you are," Saban said. "It certainly doesn't define this team for who they are. I'm sorry that I could not do a better job as a coach and as a leader."

Auburn's Johnson delivered a jump pass for a touchdown and ran 30 times for 104

yards before leaving in the fourth quarter with a right shoulder injury.

Malzahn said after the game Johnson has "a shoulder issue," but didn't elaborate on his status for the rematch with Georgia in Atlanta. Johnson had earlier appeared hurt on a run toward the pylon but stayed in for a 1-yard touchdown run on the next play.

The SEC's leading rusher crumpled to the ground after a carry and walked off the field holding his right arm close to his body with a towel draped over his head. Fans chanted, "Kerryon!" "Kerryon!"

With No. 2 Miami losing Friday night to Pittsburgh, it's the first time the top two teams in the AP poll have fallen on the same regular-season weekend since Nov. 17, 2012.

Then, No. 1 Oregon lost to No. 14 Stanford and No. 2 Kansas State went down to Baylor.

Stidham completed 21 of 28 passes and ran for 50 yards, including a 16-yard touchdown scamper early in the fourth quarter. Ryan Davis caught 11 passes for 139 yards.

"I think we're pretty darn good," Stidham said. "Coach Malzahn told us it's never been done in three weeks beating two No. 1 teams, so I think this team is pretty good."

Alabama's Jalen Hurts passed for 177 yards and a touchdown while running 17 times for 80 yards, but neither he nor the Tide offense ever really seemed to get going.

Alabama had a devastating sequence after Auburn took the lead late in the third on Johnson's 1-yard run.

Trevon Diggs' 55-yard return set the Tide up for a potential go-ahead score, and a pass interference against Auburn helped. Hale Hentges nearly caught a tipped pass in the end zone but replay overturned the touchdown call.

Then the Tide botched a field goal attempt with a bad snap.

Alabama had two straight botched snaps on a promising drive in the fourth quarter, failing to make good on a do-over after an Auburn penalty on the second.

The takeaway

Alabama: Didn't play with its normal poise in big games despite the return of three injured linebackers. Failed on its first six third-down attempts and finished 3 of 11 while allowing Auburn to convert on half of its 18 attempts. Tailbacks Damien Harris, Bo Scarbrough and Josh Jacobs each had only six carries.

Auburn: Continued its revival from early and midseason struggles. Held onto the ball for 36 minutes and 78 plays.

No. 8 Ohio State tops Michigan

Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Dwayne Haskins did what Ohio State quarterbacks have been doing for more than a decade. He beat Michigan.

The latest victory, though, came with a bizarre twist.

Haskins replaced injured star J.T. Barrett and led the eighth-ranked Buckeyes from behind to beat the Wolverines 31-20 Saturday for their sixth straight win in a rivalry they've dominated no matter who's under center.

"It was really unreal," Haskins said.

Indeed.

Barrett was warming up on the sideline before kickoff when he said an unidentified male made accidental contact with his right leg, aggravating a knee injury he has played through all season.

"I remember he was wearing something gray, and he continued to walk," Barrett said. "He got a little nervous."

And, Urban Meyer was more than a little upset.

"Too many people on the sideline," Meyer said after the game. "I'm so angry right now."

Barrett said he will play next Saturday night when Ohio State (10-2, 8-1 Big Ten) plays in the Big Ten championship game against No. 5 Wisconsin, needing another win to bolster hopes of getting a spot in the College Football Playoff.

"Yeah, I'll play next week," he insisted.

Barrett grabbed his right knee on a run midway through the third quarter after being tackled. He limped off the field and toward the locker room before returning to watch from the sideline.

"I've played with it this whole year," he said. "This time, it didn't unlock for me."

Barrett was 3 of 8 for 30 yards with a TD and ran 15 times for 67 yards and another score.

The Wolverines (8-4, 5-4) have lost 13 of 14 to Ohio State, including the last three with coach Jim Harbaugh.

Michigan was relegated to starting John O'Korn because Brandon Peters wasn't cleared to play after having a concussion and Wilton Speight is still out with cracked vertebrae. The fifth-year senior simply didn't make the most of the opportunity, completing fewer than half of his passes. He was picked off with about two minutes left and the Buckeyes up 24-20, heaving a pass deep to the middle of the field where only defensive back Jordan Fuller could catch it.

"That was all on me," O'Korn said.

Mayfield, No. 3 Sooners roll

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Baker Mayfield began the week with tears and an apology.

He ended it as he so often has — by celebrating a victory.

The Oklahoma quarterback passed for 281 yards and three touchdowns after being punished for directing a lewd gesture toward the Kansas bench last week, and the third-ranked Sooners routed West Virginia 59-31 on Saturday to maintain their momentum heading into the Big 12 Championship game.

Mayfield was stripped of his captaincy and starting job for Saturday's contest, his final home game as a Sooner. He received the loudest cheers when the seniors were announced, then more loud cheers when he entered the game to start Oklahoma's second drive.

"The first steps on the field made that all go away," Mayfield said. "They (the fans) are always going to have my back. It's OK for me to grow and learn and move on. If I'm progressing and becoming a better man in their eyes that's something I'm proud of. I'm going to learn from my mistakes and move forward."

The Sooners scored touchdowns on all five possessions Mayfield played in before halftime, and on all six drives he completed in the game. Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley was pleased with the way Mayfield handled the week's events.

"His last game here, no matter how you draw it up, was going to be emotional," Riley said. "I was proud of him. I thought he held it in check. He was definitely emotional before — I know a lot of thoughts were running through his head. So for him to play the way he did considering all the circumstances was again why the guy is the best."

Mayfield completed 14 of 17 passes in a nearly flawless performance likely kept him at the front of the Heisman Trophy race.

"(No.) 6 is the best player in college football," West Virginia coach Dana Holgorsen said. "He has a lot of really good people around him."

Rodney Anderson ran for 118 yards and four touchdowns for the Sooners (11-1, 8-1 Big 12, No. 4 CFP). They will play TCU for the Big 12 title next Saturday in Arlington, Texas.

Oklahoma gained 646 yards in its straight win. It was the most points the Sooners have scored against the Mountaineers.

"This is going to be short and sweet," West Virginia defensive coordinator Tony Gibson said. "Defensively, we sucked up front, we sucked at linebacker, we sucked at DB. Dana should probably fire me after that."

West Virginia's Chris Chugunov passed for 137 yards in his first start. He stepped in for Will Grier, who injured a finger the previous week against Texas. Kennedy McKoy ran for 137 yards and three touchdowns for the Mountaineers (7-5, 5-4).

It was a chippy contest in the first half, and it reached its peak when Oklahoma right guard Dru Samia was ejected after an altercation in the second quarter. It didn't stop the Sooners — just two plays later, Anderson scored his third touchdown of the game from 17 yards out to give the Sooners a 28-10 lead. Mayfield ran over to the sideline, jumping up and down, waving his arms up and exhorting the crowd.

Kyler Murray, a transfer from Texas A&M, started in Mayfield's place and took off for a 66-yard run on the first play from scrimmage. Anderson scored on the next play to put the Sooners up 7-0.

College hoops roundup

No. 11 Miami cruises past N. Florida

Associated Press

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Bruce Brown and Anthony Lawrence scored 14 points each to lead No. 11 Miami to an 86-65 victory over North Florida on Saturday.

Dewan Huell finished with 13 points for the Hurricanes (5-0) while Ja'Quan Newton and Chris Lykes had 12 and 10 points, respectively.

Brown scored six points in a 16-2 run that helped Miami build a 17-point lead midway through the first half. Brown's dunk with 7:04 remaining capped the surge and gave the Hurricanes a 26-9 lead.

JT Escobar scored 16 points for the Ospreys (1-7).

No. 14 Minnesota 89, No. 25 Alabama 84: At New York, Nate Mason scored 20 points to lead Minnesota over Alabama, which finished the game with just three players, in the championship game of the Barclays Center Classic.

Jordan Murphy scored 19 points and grabbed 14 rebounds for Minnesota (7-0) while Isaiah Washington added 14 and Amir Coffey finished with 12.

Collin Sexton had 40 points for the Crimson Tide while Riley Norris had 13 and Galin Smith added 10.

Florida Gulf Coast 70, Navy 54: Brandon Goodwin tossed in 19 points, on 7-of-11 shooting, and Christian Terrell finished with a double-double as the host Eagles dominated the second half on its way to a win over the Midshipmen at the FGCU Shootout on Saturday.

Shawn Anderson and Bryce Dulin each had 13 points for the Midshipmen (4-3), while Tom Lacey scored 10.

Navy shot just 34.5 percent (20 of 58) from the floor, including a 2 of 18 effort (11 percent) from three-point range.

No. 4 Clemson tops S. Carolina

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — When a championship is in the balance, Clemson coach Dabo Swinney knows he can count on Hunter Renfrow.

The receiver had a pair of touchdown catches as the fourth-ranked Tigers won their fourth straight over rival South Carolina 34-10 on Saturday night. The victory kept Clemson on track for a third consecutive trip to the College Football Playoff.

Renfrow, the one-time walk-on, had a 4-yard touchdown grab to put the Tigers up 20-0 at halftime. He opened the third quarter with a twisting,

61-yard catch and run that thwarted any hopes of a Gamecocks' comeback.

It was Renfrow's third career multiple-TD game — the other two were Clemson's national championship contests against Alabama.

"It's just that time of year," Swinney said, chuckling. "He just comes up big."

Renfrow's had that knack since the 5-foot-11 junior arrived on campus with dreams of playing major college football. He made a name for himself against Alabama after the 2015 season with a pair of touchdowns in Clemson's 45-40 loss.

A year later, Renfrow once

more bedeviled the Crimson Tide and had the game-winning, 2-yard TD catch with a second to go in the Tigers' 35-31 win. He was tied for the team lead with 46 catches coming into the South Carolina game Saturday night, but his only touchdown reception came last week in a 61-3 blowout of Citadel.

He was happy with his role Saturday as the Tigers (11-1, No. 3 CFP) continued their stranglehold on the Palmetto State's most cared-about sporting event.

"I'm just so proud of the way we played, the way we came into this environment," Renfrow said. "Defense helped us out early and got a big score."

NBA roundup

Blazers rally from 17 down in fourth

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — C.J. McCollum shook off foul trouble and the memory of some recent late misses to prove his clutch ability again on Saturday night.

McCollum scored 26 points, including seven straight during a 10-0 game-closing run, to lift the Portland Trail Blazers to a stunning 108-105 comeback victory over the short-handed Washington Wizards.

Damian Lillard led with 29 points for Portland, which trailed by 17 points early in the fourth quarter, a night after another dramatic 127-125 victory at Brooklyn on Friday.

Bradley Beal scored 26 points and Otto Porter added 24 points and 10 rebounds for Washington in the first game of what the team expects to be a two-week stretch without All-Star John Wall. The point guard received injections to treat left knee inflammation earlier Saturday.

Beal missed a jumper to give Washington back the lead with 6.5 seconds left and a potential game-tying three-point attempt at the buzzer.

"I guess there was just a little guy sitting on top of the rim knocking the ball out of there," Beal said. "I definitely put it on my shoulders."

Spurs 106, Hornets 86: Pau Gasol and LaMarcus Aldridge each had 17 points and seven rebounds, and San Antonio held host Charlotte to 37 percent shooting on Saturday night.

Rudy Gay added 15 points for the Spurs, who snapped Charlotte's three-game home win streak.

The Hornets entered the game 7-2 at the Spectrum Center, but shot just 22 percent from the field in the first half, fell behind by 11 at halftime and could never make a serious run at the Spurs.

Celtics 108, Pacers 98: Kyrie Irving scored 25 points and Al Horford added 21 to lead visiting Boston over Indiana.

Victor Oladipo, leading Indiana with 22.9 points per game, did not play for the first time this season. He sat with a bruised right knee sustained in Friday's 107-104 win over Toronto.

Warriors 110, Pelicans 95: Stephen Curry bounced back after an 0-for-10 start and scored 14 of his 27 points in the third quarter as host Golden State held on to beat New Orleans.

Anthony Davis had 30 points and 15 rebounds for New Orleans, which had won three straight.

Mavericks 97, Thunder 81: Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 19 points, rookie Dennis Smith held his own against Russell Westbrook on the rookie guard's 20th birthday and Dallas beat visiting Oklahoma City.

76ers 130, Magic 111: J.J. Redick hit eight three-pointers and scored 29 points, and host Philadelphia cruised past skidding Orlando.

Rockets 117, Knicks 102: James Harden had 37 points and 10 assists as Houston rallied from an early deficit to beat visiting New York.

Raptors 112, Hawks 78: Norman Powell scored 17 points, Jonas Valanciunas added 16 and Toronto blew out host Atlanta.

Jazz 121, Bucks 108: Rookie Donovan Mitchell scored 24 points and Utah made a season-high 18 three-pointers in a victory over visiting Milwaukee.

Clippers 97, Kings 95: Blake Griffin made a 10-foot jumper with 3.2 seconds remaining and had a season-high 33 points to lead the Clippers over host Sacramento.

NHL roundup

Pittsburgh tops Tampa to snap 3-game skid

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby and Phil Kessel came through for the reeling Pittsburgh Penguins.

Crosby and Kessel each scored twice and the Penguins beat the Tampa Bay Lightning 5-2 on Saturday night to end a season-high three-game losing streak.

"We needed that win tonight," Kessel said. "We needed to find our footing and get a couple wins going. Tonight was a good start."

Tristan Jarry, making his first home start, stopped 33 shots for his first NHL win. He also assisted on the first goal of the game and got the game puck from his teammates.

"It's obviously very special, and it's nice to get that out of the way," Jarry said about his first NHL win. "It's something I'll never forget and it's something I'll cherish forever."

Pittsburgh hasn't lost four straight in regulation overall since Dec. 14-19, 2015, the first four games of coach Mike Sullivan's tenure. The Penguins, playing without injured star forward Evgeni Malkin, also ended a two-game home regulation losing streak.

Kessel also had two assists, and Crosby had one, fueling a Penguins offense that scored three power-play goals and added another short-handed. Kessel, with seven goals in his last nine games, scored his team-best 11th. Crosby, who has points in five of his last six, added his ninth.

The Lightning, off to the best start in franchise history, have just five regulation losses, but three have come in the last four games.

Capitals 4, Maple Leafs 2: Alex Ovechkin had a hat trick to help Washington beat host Toronto.

Ovechkin scored two of his three goals in the opening period for the Capitals. Jakub Vrana also scored, and Braden

Holtby made 27 saves for his 13th victory of the season.

Golden Knights 4, Coyotes 2: Tomas Nosek, William Karlsson and Erik Haula scored in a 1:42 span of the second period and visiting Vegas beat Arizona for its fifth straight victory.

Jonathan Marchessault had an empty-net goal right before the buzzer and an earlier pair of assists for the Knights. They improved to 3-0 against Arizona and solidified their spot in first place in the Pacific Division in their inaugural season.

Devils 4, Red Wings 3 (OT): Brian Gibbons scored at 2:32 of overtime to lift New Jersey past host Detroit.

New Jersey moved past Columbus into first place in the Metropolitan Division.

Blackhawks 4, Panthers 1: Jonathan Toews scored and Corey Crawford made 37 saves in his 400th NHL game to help visiting Chicago beat Florida.

Blues 6, Wild 3: Jaden Schwartz scored twice in host St. Louis' victory over Minnesota.

Canadiens 3, Sabres 0: Carey Price made 36 saves in his return from a lower-body injury and Montreal beat visiting Buffalo to snap a five-game losing streak.

Flames 3, Avalanche 2: Micheal Ferland and Mikael Backlund scored in the final minute of the second period to help rookie goalie David Rittich beat host Colorado for his first NHL victory.

Sharks 4, Jets 0: Logan Couture scored two goals and Martin Jones had 38 saves in San Jose's victory over visiting Winnipeg.

Kings 2, Ducks 1 (SO): Trevor Lewis scored in the fourth round of a shootout as host Los Angeles ended a three-game losing streak.