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Mattis: N. Korea nuclear threat rising

By KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Saturday that the nuclear weapons threat from North Korea is accelerating and warned that an attack “will be met with a massive military response.”

Mattis spoke to reporters after meeting in Seoul with his South Korean counterpart for annual talks on security and the decades-old alliance between the two countries.

The former Marine general has stressed his preference is for diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis with North Korea, saying Friday that “our goal is not war.”

But he accused the North of illegal and unnecessary nuclear and missile programs, vowing Saturday that the United States is prepared to use force to defend itself and its allies.

“Make no mistake. Any attack on the United States or our allies will be defeated, and any use of nuclear weapons by the North will be met with a massive military response that is effective and overwhelming,” he told reporters after meeting with South Korean Defense Minister Song

Young-moo.

Mattis also visited the Demilitarized Zone that divides the peninsula on Friday, accusing the North of threatening others with a “catastrophe” as North Korean soldiers watched his every move from the other side in the truce village of Panmunjom.

His comments came ahead of a planned visit by President Donald Trump next month. Trump has warned he will “totally destroy” North Korea if necessary.

Tensions have spiked in recent months as Pyongyang has shown rapid progress in its efforts to develop a nuclear-tipped missile that could reach the U.S. mainland.

The communist state has test-fired dozens of missiles and conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test Sept. 3. North Korea has been relatively calm since it last fired a missile over Japan on Sept. 15, but this week it renewed a threat to detonate a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific Ocean.

Mattis said Saturday that the U.S. will never accept the North as a nuclear power and warned it will be outmatched by the military power of the U.S.-South Korean alliance.

Song, meanwhile, said he and Mattis agreed that limits on the payloads for

South Korean missiles would be lifted. He said the allies also discussed the conditions under which the transfer of wartime operational control of South Korean forces would be transferred from the U.S. to Seoul.

The transfer originally was scheduled for 2012, then 2015, but the two sides agreed to an indefinite delay after the North Koreans conducted their third nuclear test in 2013.

Vice President Mike Pence also said Friday that the U.S. will maintain economic and diplomatic pressure on the North to abandon its banned weapons programs.

Speaking to airmen at the Minot Air Force Base, N.D., Pence promised to keep the U.S. nuclear arsenal strong.

“Under President Trump’s leadership, we’ll make sure that our nuclear deterrent is stronger than ever before — modern, robust, flexible, resilient, and ready to confront any and all enemies of peace with a rapid, effective and overwhelming response,” Pence said, with a B-52 bomber in the background.

The base has one of the nation’s two B-52 bomber units and oversees 150 of the Air Force’s 450 Minuteman 3 nuclear missiles, according to The Associated Press.

Helo crash in Afghanistan kills US servicemember

By PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — A U.S. servicemember died in a helicopter crash in Afghanistan’s eastern Logar province, NATO said Saturday.

Six other American crewmembers were injured in the Friday night crash and all were sent for medical treatment, NATO said.

The helicopter had taken troops to the volatile Kharwar district for a night raid and hit a tree, forcing an emergency

landing, Salim Saleh, the provincial governor’s spokesman, told Stars and Stripes.

The Taliban, who are said to control about half of Logar province, said it shot down the helicopter, killing dozens of Americans, a claim NATO refuted.

“We can confirm the crash was not the result of enemy action,” NATO’s Resolute Support Mission said in a statement. “We have full accountability for all personnel, and the crash site has been secured.”

The death brings the total number of U.S. servicemembers killed in Afghanistan this

year to 12. More than 2,300 have been killed since the war began 16 years ago.

NATO said an investigation into Friday’s incident had been launched.

“We are deeply saddened by the loss of our comrade,” said Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan. “On behalf of all of Resolute Support, our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families and friends of our fallen comrade and those injured in this unfortunate event.”

Also on Saturday, at least nine police officers were killed

in separate attacks by Taliban insurgents on police checkpoints in eastern Ghazni province, a provincial official told The Associated Press.

Arif Noori, spokesman for the provincial governor, said two police checkpoints came under attack by Taliban fighters in the early hours, leaving nine officers dead and two wounded.

He said six insurgents were killed and nine others were wounded in the battle, which lasted almost an hour.

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.

President frustrated by secrecy with JFK files

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It was a showdown 25 years in the making: With the world itching to finally get a look at classified John F. Kennedy assassination files, and the deadline for their release just hours away, intelligence officials were still angling for a way to keep their secrets. President Donald Trump, the one man able to block the release, did not appreciate their persistence. He did not intend to make this easy.

Like much else surrounding investigations of the 1963 killing of President John F. Kennedy, Thursday's release of 2,800 records from the JFK files was anything but smooth. It came together only at the last minute, with White House lawyers still fielding late-arriving requests for additional redactions in the morning and an irritated Trump continuing to resist signing off on the request, according to an account by two White House officials. They spoke only on condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions.

The tale of the final hours before the congressionally mandated 25-year release deadline adds a new chapter to the story of Trump's troubled relationship with his spy agencies. He again flashed his skepticism and unpredictability in dealing with agencies long accustomed to a level of deference. Intelligence officials, meanwhile, were again left scratching their heads about a president whose impulses they cannot predict.

Those officials had their own story to tell, some rejecting the notion they were slow to act on Trump's expectations for the documents. The CIA began work months ago to get its remaining assassination-related documents ready for release on Thursday, according to a person familiar with the process. The person, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the process and spoke only on condition of anonymity, said the goal was to have all the agency's documents ready to be released in full or with national security redactions before the deadline.

Since taking office, Trump has challenged the integrity of intelligence leaders, moved to exert more control over U.S. spying agencies and accused his predecessor of using government spycraft to monitor his campaign. In the JFK files matter, one White House official said, Trump wanted to make clear he wouldn't be bullied by the agencies.

Just before the release Thursday, Trump wrote in a memorandum that he had "no choice" but to agree to requests from the CIA and FBI to keep thousands of documents secret because of the possibility that releasing the information could still harm national security. Two aides said Trump was upset by what he perceived to be overly broad secrecy requests, adding that the agencies had been explicitly warned about his expectation that redactions be kept to a minimum.

GOP-tied website original source of Trump research

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A conservative website with strong ties to the Republican establishment triggered the investigation into Donald Trump's past that ultimately produced the dossier that alleged a compromised relationship between the president and the Kremlin.

The Washington Free Beacon on Friday confirmed it originally retained the political research firm Fusion GPS to scour then-candidate Trump's background for negative information, a common practice known as "opposition research" in politics. Leaders from the Free Beacon, which is funded largely by Republican billionaire Paul Singer, insisted none of the early material it collected appeared in the dossier released later in the year detailing explosive allegations, many uncorroborated, about Trump compiled by a former British spy.

"During the 2016 election cycle, we retained Fusion GPS to provide research on multiple candidates in the Republican presidential primary, just as we retained other firms to assist in

our research into Hillary Clinton," wrote the site's Editor-in-Chief Matthew Continetti and Chairman Michael Goldfarb. They continued: "The Free Beacon had no knowledge of or connection to the Steele dossier, did not pay for the dossier and never had contact with, knowledge of or provided payment for any work performed by Christopher Steele."

Reports recently revealed that the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee continued funding Fusion's work after the original GOP source lost interest.

Trump last week called it a "disgrace" that Democrats had helped pay for research that produced the document. But the original source of the research remained a secret.

The Free Beacon first retained Fusion to investigate Trump in the fall of 2015 and ended its relationship after Trump secured the Republican presidential nomination in late spring of 2016, according to a person close to Goldfarb, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to share private discussions.

Obama plans to report for jury duty in Cook County

The Washington Post

Since leaving the White House in January, former President Barack Obama has turned heads, images of him slipping into a Broadway play with his elder daughter, Malia, and kitesurfing with billionaire Richard Branson in the British Virgin Islands were shared on social media sites.

His next stop: jury duty in Cook County, Ill.

Obama, a constitutional scholar who frequently invokes messages of civic engagement, plans to serve next month, the county's chief judge told the Chicago Tribune on Friday. Obama owns homes in Washington, D.C., as well as Chicago. He'll follow in the footsteps of presidential predecessors

George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, both of whom appeared for jury selection after leaving the White House.

Cook County Chief Judge Timothy Evans first shared the news with county commissioners during a budget hearing. He later told the Tribune that necessary precautions would be taken to accommodate security and scheduling needs.

He did not specify the date or courthouse location Obama will report to in November.

"He made it crystal clear to me through his representative that he would carry out his public duty as a citizen and resident of this community," Evans told the Tribune.

A spokesman declined to comment on the former president's private schedule.

At least 13 killed in Mogadishu hotel blast

Associated Press

MOGADISHU, Somalia — A suicide car bomb exploded outside a popular hotel in Somalia's capital on Saturday, killing at least 13 people and wounding more than 16, and gunfire continued as security forces pursued the attackers inside the building, police said. Two more blasts were heard, one when an attacker detonated a suicide vest.

Speaking to The Associated Press by telephone from the scene, Capt. Mohamed Hussein said more than 20 people, including government officials, were thought to be trapped as security forces battled extremists holed up on the top floor of the Hotel Nasa-Hablod, close to the presidential palace. Two of the five attackers were killed on the first floor, Hussein said. The others hurled grenades and cut off the building's electricity as night fell.

Saturday's blasts came two weeks after more than 350 people were killed in a massive truck bombing on a busy Mogadishu street in the country's worst-ever attack.

Al-Shabab, Africa's deadliest Islamic extremist group, quickly claimed responsibility

for Saturday's attack and said its fighters were inside the hotel. As night fell, sporadic gunfire could be heard as soldiers responded.

A senior Somali police colonel and a former lawmaker were among the dead, Hussein said.

Mohamed Dek Haji said he survived the bombing as he walked beside a parked car that was largely destroyed by the explosion. He said he saw at least three armed men in military uniforms running toward the hotel after the suicide bombing at its gate.

"I think they were al-Shabab fighters who were trying to storm the hotel," he said, lying on a hospital bed. He suffered small injuries on his shoulder and skull from flying glass.

Witnesses in some previous attacks have said al-Shabab fighters disguised themselves by wearing military uniforms.

Al-Shabab often targets high-profile areas of Mogadishu. It has not commented on the massive attack two weeks ago; experts have said the death toll was so high that the group hesitated to further anger Somali citizens as it pursues its insurgency.

American citizen who fought with ISIS gets 20 years in prison

Associated Press

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — More than 100 people in the U.S. have been charged with trying to help Islamic State, or trying to join it, but Mohamad Khweis stood out because he succeeded.

Khweis, 27, the only American citizen to be convicted in a U.S. jury trial of successfully joining ISIS overseas, was sentenced to 20 years in prison Friday.

Khweis, from Alexandria, Va., was convicted on terrorism charges earlier this year. Khweis traveled to ISIS-controlled territory in Iraq and Syria in December 2015, even obtaining an official membership card. But he found life there distasteful and escaped after a few months. He surrendered to Kurdish forces.

The vast majority of people charged in U.S. courts with ISIS-related terrorism offenses ran afoul of sting operations in which the suspects thought they had made a connection with the terrorist group, only to find out their supposed con-

tacts were actually undercover informants or agents.

The nature of Khweis' crime merited a strong sentence, said prosecutor Dennis Fitzpatrick, who argued for 35 years in prison. One thing Khweis never did, his lawyers said, was take up arms on behalf of ISIS.

Defense attorney John Zwerling agreed with the suggestion that Khweis' case is unique because he is one of the few Americans to actually make it to ISIS territory. But he said his client deserves a measure of credit for leaving ISIS on his own and providing authorities with intelligence on the group's inner workings. He also helped identify four Westerners who had left ISIS with intentions to do harm in their home countries.

Zwerling argued it was counterproductive to punish Khweis with decades in prison because it sends the message to other Americans who might consider abandoning ISIS that they have nothing to look forward to in the U.S. but a prison cell.

Spain takes over Catalonia, fires separatist leaders

Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain — Spain took formal, direct control of Catalonia on Saturday, on paper firing the region's defiant separatist government a day after lawmakers passed a declaration of independence for the prosperous northeastern region.

But there was no immediate sign if top Catalan officials were intending to obey or resist the sacking and throw the region into further turmoil by prolonging a standoff with authorities.

The move came after one of the most tumultuous days in the country's recent history, as the national parliament in Madrid approved unprecedented con-

stitutional measures to halt the secessionist drive by the regional parliament in Barcelona.

Spain made the takeover official by publishing special measures online early Saturday in the country's gazette.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy, who now replaces Catalan President Carles Puigdemont as the top decision-maker in the northeastern region, also dissolved the regional parliament and called a new regional election for Dec. 21.

Still, it was not clear whether a new election would solve Spain's problems with separatists in Catalonia. Polls suggest pro-independence parties likely would maintain their slim ad-

vantage in parliamentary seats but would not get more than 50 percent of the vote.

Puigdemont and the 12 members of the Catalan Cabinet will no longer be paid and could be charged with usurping others' functions if they refuse to obey.

There was no immediate sign they intended to comply with the orders. The Catalan Cabinet met Friday but didn't make any public appearances or offer statements following Rajoy's announcement of the planned government takeover. Spanish prosecutors say top Catalan officials could face rebellion charges as soon as Monday.

Beyond any possible resistance from top Catalan officials,

it's unclear how Rajoy's government in Madrid will be able to exert its control at lower levels of Catalonia's vast regional administration.

Some among Catalonia's roughly 200,000 civil servants have said they will refuse to obey orders from Madrid. They risk being punished or even fired under the special powers granted to central authorities by the nation's Senate on Friday.

Vice President Soraya Saenz de Santamaria will be Rajoy's strongwoman in running Catalonia until the Dec. 21 election. She will coordinate other ministries that take over functions of the region's regional departments.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Boy, 10, leads police on high-speed chase

OH CLEVELAND — A 10-year-old boy led police on a high-speed pursuit that began in Cleveland and ended miles away along the Ohio Turnpike when state troopers boxed him in, and police said it's the second time in two weeks the boy has taken cars on joy rides.

Authorities said no one was injured during the pursuit, which began at about 9:30 a.m. Thursday. Westlake police saw a car speed by chased by another vehicle, possibly driven by the boy's mother, on Interstate 90 west of Cleveland.

A man called 911 and reported the boy's car was swerving in and out of traffic and had almost run several vehicles off the road. He also said a woman was following him in a red SUV.

The boy will be placed in the custody of Erie County Children's Services after being evaluated.

Warning of pot in candy derided as scare tactic

NJ TRENTON — New Jersey is warning parents to look out for marijuana-laced candy in their kids' trick-or-treat bags, but they can't point to any evidence that's ever happened.

Advocates for legalizing the drug say the warning published last week by the state attorney general's office is nothing more than a Halloween scare campaign.

A spokeswoman for the attorney general's office said a warning was necessary because of the similarities in packaging of some edible drugs and candy.

The executive director of the New Jersey chapter of NORML said cannabis consumers are not looking to dose children with cannabis and there's no evidence of it ever happening at Halloween.

Lawsuit: CPR attempts delayed for hanged man

CT REDDING — The family of a man who hanged himself last year is suing the Connecticut police department that responded to his home, saying officers initially turned away a medic who might have been able to save him.

The lawsuit filed last week said Peter Valenti III was not cut down until a medic detected electrical cardiac activity 26 minutes after he was first found by Redding police. Subsequent CPR attempts were unsuccessful.

The suit alleges Redding's police chief initially blocked the EMT, calling the area a crime scene.

The lawsuit said the chief asked another officer if Valenti was "definitely dead." The other officer said it appeared so.

Woman gets 16 years for trying to drive drunk

MD ROCKVILLE — A Maryland woman whose drunken driving left two men dead is going back to prison after trying to drive while intoxicated.

The Washington Post reported Thursday that Kelli Loos, 41, was sentenced to 16 years in prison. A judge in Montgomery County said the "public has to be protected" from her.

Loos tried to drive while drunk less than a month after getting her license back. She blew several times into a breathalyzer-like device that locks the car's ignition if it detects alcohol. Her actions violated her parole conditions.

The Bethesda woman's prison term will likely be far less. The accident that killed two men occurred on the Capital Beltway in 2009.

Probe uncovers scheme to scam pet owners

GA ATLANTA — One of the world's largest airlines said its investigation into a bogus pet-shipping website has uncovered a "larger criminal scheme" preying on people hoping to buy Chihuahuas, poodles and puppies.

Delta Air Lines filed a federal lawsuit last month over a website that it says tricks people into thinking they're dealing with the airline when arranging for their pets to fly on jets. Delta said the site — DeltaPetTransit.com — is designed to look like a Delta site and uses the airline's logos and pictures of its planes.

In court records filed last week, Delta said its investigation turned up sites using its name that promise to ship pets and that advertise dogs for sale.

Delta says the website operators collect thousands of dollars without delivering any pets.

Official: Sea lion disease could spread to dogs

OR SALEM — State officials are warning Oregonians to keep their dogs away from sea lions.

A bacterial outbreak that began last month has been causing sick or dead sea lions to strand themselves on beaches in Lincoln, Tillamook and Clatsop counties.

The disease can spread through contact with urine or other bodily fluids of an infected animal. Dogs are more likely to come into contact with distressed sea lions so they face a higher risk of infection than people.

State public health veterinarian Emilio DeBess said dog owners should keep their pets on a leash while at the beach.

The outbreak of leptospirosis is expected to last at least another month.

Man fakes kidnapping to collect ransom

NE BEATRICE — Authorities said a Beatrice man faked his own kidnapping so he could collect ransom from his parents.

The Beatrice Daily Sun reported that the parents called Beatrice police last week to report that their son was being held for \$5,000 in ransom, which had to be wired to his bank account.

Police determined that the calls came from the 30-year-old man's girlfriend's phone and traced the phone to the man's Beatrice home. Officers said they saw him through a window there, holding a silver handgun. They forced their way in and took him into custody. The gun turned out to be a CO2-powered BB gun.

Man locked in cooler cited for drinking

WI MARSHFIELD — Police have cited a Wisconsin man who decided to start drinking after he got locked inside a convenience store's beer cooler.

USA Today Network-Wisconsin reported that a Marshfield Kwik Trip manager called police Wednesday morning to report a man had spent the night in the cooler and drank beer while inside.

According to police, the 38-year-old Marshfield man said he went into the store to buy beer and got locked inside the cooler just before midnight Tuesday. He decided he might as well just stay inside the cooler and drink.

A customer told Kwik Trip employees the man was inside the cooler at just before 6 a.m. Wednesday. The workers opened the door and the man left without paying for the beer. He was cited for theft.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Astros take Game 3 of World Series

Associated Press

HOUSTON — A perfect fit in their own place, the Houston Astros are halfway home.

George Springer and the Astros broke out the bats early this time to keep up their unbeaten October run at spirited Minute Maid Park, beating the Los Angeles Dodgers 5-3 Friday night for a 2-1 lead in the World Series.

"We're very comfortable here," Astros manager A.J. Hinch said.

You can say that again.

Houston moved two wins from its first championship, but the game also included this: Yuli Gurriel made a racist gesture shortly after homering off Japanese star Yu Darvish. Major League Baseball will follow up, and punishment is possible.

The ballpark was booming hours earlier, with cheers, chants and a train whistle echoing beneath the closed roof.

Deep in the heart of football country, a sellout crowd stood much of the evening. And with every Houston batter getting a hit or walk, fans enjoyed the Friday Night Sights.

"The energy in the building is second to none," Hinch said. "It's loud. They're loud from

the very beginning."

Coming off a dramatic rally to win Game 2 at Dodger Stadium, the Astros improved to 7-0 at home this postseason. Jose Altuve & Co. have dominated, too, outscoring the Red Sox, Yankees and Dodgers 36-10 in that span.

Gurriel homered to begin a four-run burst in the second inning that sent Darvish to the shortest start of his career.

Back in the dugout, Gurriel put his fingers to the side of his eyes and said "chinito" — a derogatory Spanish term that translates literally to "little Chinese." Gurriel, from Cuba, previously played in Japan.

Astros curveballer Lance McCullers Jr. wobbled, but protected the lead into the sixth. Brad Peacock rose to the occasion with 3²/₃ innings of hitless relief for his first pro save.

With every pitch by Peacock in the ninth, the decibel level increased.

"To tell you the truth, when I was out there a couple of times, I got the chills from them screaming so loud," he said.

Springer lined a leadoff double in the first and the Astros went on to win a home game for the first time in the World Series. They were swept by the White Sox in 2005, and this win

left them two victories from a most elusive championship.

"Obviously, this crowd is into it. Very educated, very enthusiastic," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "They've got some confidence over there, that team."

McCullers left in the sixth as Los Angeles scored twice to cut into a 5-1 deficit.

Peacock followed, and shouldered the load for a shaky bullpen. The right-hander was nearly perfect, walking one and striking out four.

"It was awesome," said Peacock, who made 21 starts and 13 relief appearances during the regular season. "I've never experienced anything like that in my life."

Coupled with four shutout innings from McCullers to finish off the Yankees in Game 7 of the AL Championship Series, the unconventional Astros became the first team to have two saves of three-plus innings in one postseason.

On a night when a lot went right for Houston, also credit third base coach Gary Pettis, who's been having quite a postseason. He boldly sent Josh Reddick careening home on a wild throw by reliever Tony Watson for a two-out run in the fifth.

The Astros rode the momentum of a thrilling victory Wednesday night in Los Angeles, where Marwin Gonzalez hit a tying homer in the ninth on an 0-2 pitch from star closer Kenley Jansen, and Houston went deep three times in extra innings before hanging on to win 7-6 in 11 on Springer's two-run shot.

Dodgers rookie Cody Bellinger almost won that game with a drive that was caught on the warning track in the ninth. He fanned all four times up in Game 3, leaving him 0-for-11 with seven strikeouts in the Series.

"I think he's just in that funk right now where he's chasing balls out of the strike zone," Roberts said.

This game wasn't nearly as dramatic as the previous one, not that the home crowd minded.

Fans were revved up from the start when injured Houston Texas defensive end J.J. Watt — who has raised more than \$37 million for relief efforts after Hurricane Harvey — hobbled out to the mound on crutches to throw the first ball.

Soon, it was time for the Houston hitters to take over.

Houston's Gurriel may be punished for racial gesture

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Astros first baseman Yuli Gurriel is facing possible punishment after making a racist gesture during the World Series.

Gurriel said he didn't intend to offend Dodgers pitcher Yu Darvish when he pulled on the corners of his eyes after homering against him during Houston's 5-3 win in Game 3 on Friday night.

"I didn't try to offend nobody," Gurriel said in Spanish through a translator. "I was commenting to my family that I didn't have any luck against Japanese pitchers here in the United States."

Gurriel, a 33-year-old from Cuba, made the gesture shortly after homering to start Houston's four-run second inning. While sitting in the dugout, Gurriel put his fingers to the side of his eyes and said "chinito" — a derogatory Spanish term that translates literally to "little Chinese."

Darvish was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and Iranian father.

A person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press the league intends to speak with Gurriel. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the league had not

publicly addressed the matter. Gurriel may be punished, including a possible suspension during the World Series.

Gurriel said the derogatory term is used commonly in Cuba to refer to Asian people. He said he knows the Japanese are offended by it because he played in Japan in 2014.

Darvish played professionally in Japan from 2005-11 before joining the Texas Rangers in 2012. He was traded to the Dodgers at this year's July 31 trade deadline. He was angry about what happened.

"Acting like that, you just disrespect all the people around the world," he said in Japanese through a translator.

Gurriel hopes to speak with Darvish about what happened.

"Yes, of course. I want to talk to him because I have nothing against him," he said. "I think he's one of the best pitchers in Japan, and I never had success against him. ... If he felt offended, I want to apologize to him."

Darvish hopes the incident can be a learning experience.

"Nobody's perfect and everybody is different and then ... we just ... have to learn from it," he said. "And then he made a mistake and then we're just going to learn from it. We are all human beings. That's what I'm saying, so just learn from it and we've got to go forward, move forward."

No. 24 Memphis pulls away from Tulane

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — During a four-game winning streak that has given No. 24 Memphis the lead in the American Athletic Conference West Division, the Tigers have averaged 49.5 points and 541.5 yards of total offense. Still, there's something missing.

The Tigers are still seeking more from their high-powered offense that has occasionally sputtered.

They got plenty of points Friday night. Memphis overpowered Tulane 56-26 behind a balanced attack that produced 298 passing yards and 259 rushing yards. Quarterback Riley Ferguson passed for three touchdowns and rushed for two others, while running back Darrell Henderson added 112 yards and another score.

"When you score 56 points, it's a good night," Memphis coach Mike Norvell said. "But we've got to continue to be more consistent in what we're doing."

The win kept the Tigers (7-1, 4-1) atop the West Division by a half game over SMU, which

defeated Tulsa on Friday night. Tulane (3-5, 1-3) dropped its third consecutive game and lost its 11th straight in the series.

The Tigers sputtered in the third quarter, managing only 30 yards and being held scoreless. In its win at Houston last week, Memphis was shut out in the first half before rallying for 42 second-half points.

"That third quarter was terrible," Memphis receiver Anthony Miller said. "We're back to the drawing board. We've just got to limit the mistakes. We have yet to play a complete game. That's our goal this season."

Ferguson entered having thrown for 1,181 yards and 11 touchdowns — with one interception — in the team's previous three games. He continued his solid play by throwing for 262 yards and three touchdowns in the opening half. The Tigers led 35-12 at the break.

He also was concerned about what transpired in the third quarter. Each of the team's three drives ended with punts. Two were three-and-outs.

"It's just execution, that's the

main thing," Ferguson said. "We have to keep ourselves in manageable downs and distances. If we do that, we'll be successful."

Tulane, which ranked 12th nationally in rushing at 266 yards per game, managed only 16 rushing yards in the first quarter and 122 for the game.

"Seeing them with 52 carries and (only) 122 yards, that's pretty special," Norvell said.

Despite the sluggish start, the Green Wave scored 19 straight points after falling behind 35-0.

Tulane scored twice in the final 3:44 of the first half — including a touchdown on the final play of the half — and added a third-quarter touchdown on a 6-yard pass from Jonathan Banks to Charles Jones to trim the deficit to 35-19.

Although Memphis averaged 12 yards per play in the opening half, it was unable to sustain its first-half production. Memphis required a defensive score to create a second-half spark. Linebacker Austin Hall recovered a bad Tulane snap in the end zone to give the Tigers

a 42-19 lead early in the fourth quarter. Ferguson added his two rushing touchdowns in the closing eight minutes.

"We're just not to the point where we can miss assignments," Tulane coach Wilie Fritz said. "They have great skilled guys, an excellent quarterback, good backs, good receivers. ... You have to be hitting on all cylinders defensively and we certainly weren't."

The takeaway

Tulane: Much like it did in last week's 34-28 loss to South Florida, another nationally ranked opponent, Tulane battled back from a huge deficit. Against USF, the Green Wave rallied from being down 34-7. Against Memphis, the Green Wave trimmed what was a 35-point deficit to 16 points on two occasions.

Memphis: The Tigers continued on their trek to the American Athletic Conference West Division title. Memphis has won four straight and has games left against Tulsa, SMU and East Carolina. Only SMU has a winning record.

Jaguars acquire former Pro Bowl DT Dareus from Bills

Associated Press

The Jacksonville Jaguars are taking a chance on Marcell Dareus, hoping he can solidify the team's most glaring defensive deficiency.

The Jaguars (4-3) traded a sixth-round draft pick in 2018 to the Buffalo Bills (4-2) on Friday in exchange for the 330-pound run-stopper with a checkered past.

Jacksonville ranks sixth in total defense and second in passing defense, but 31st against the run. Dareus, a two-time Pro Bowl selection and the third overall pick in the 2011 draft, should help bolster the interior of a defense that leads the NFL in sacks (33) and is second in takeaways (16).

He also is reunited with former Bills and current Jaguars

coach Doug Marrone. Dareus played two years, including his best season (2014), under Marrone in Buffalo.

The trade ends a tumultuous tenure for Dareus in Buffalo. He was the team's highest-paid player, having signed a six-year extension worth up to \$96 million in 2015. The deal included \$60 million guaranteed. But he has been suspended twice by the NFL and sent home by new coach Sean McDermott.

"He was a question mark," Bills general manager Brandon Beane said on a conference call following the trade. "When you come in to a new city and you look at the roster, you obviously look at, 'OK, he is a guy that you flag for two reasons: 1. He's a higher salary guy. B. He had a prior history with the suspensions.' You do want to see

those guys, you know, how they fit, and like I said early on, we probably had some struggles but he's not a bad person. At the end of the day, I wish him the best and I know Sean does and the whole organization does."

The Bills made the trade to save millions in cap space this year and next. It was the latest in a roster purge for Beane, who dealt receiver Sammy Watkins to the Los Angeles Rams and cornerback Ronald Darby to Philadelphia on the same day in August.

Dareus had his best game of the season against Tampa Bay on Sunday, playing his most snaps since the opener and finishing with a season-high five tackles.

Marrone clearly hopes for the same in Jacksonville, where starter Abry Jones has 16 tack-

les and a sack in seven games.

"I was not calling people about him as the trade deadline approached," Beane said. "I know people suspected maybe we were or weren't. Quite honestly, had not called anyone. Jacksonville reached out to us and made an inquiry and it kind of went from there. ... We thought it was a win for Marcell and obviously for the Bills as well."

Dareus was one of the league's best defensive tackles in 2014, finishing with 49 tackles and a career-high 10 sacks. But his career took a turn the next season. He was suspended for the first game of 2015 after being arrested twice within a month — in his native Alabama on felony drug charges and in upstate New York after a street-racing incident.

NHL roundup

Golden Knights' impressive run goes on

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Golden Knights hoped to give Las Vegas a reason to cheer when they opened their first ever homestand days after a mass shooting jarred the city.

Consider this a jackpot for Las Vegas' first major professional sports franchise.

Oscar Dansk got his third win in his third career game, and Vegas beat the Colorado Avalanche 7-0 Friday night to extend the best start ever by an NHL expansion team.

The Golden Knights won six of seven during their first string of home games. Their Oct. 10 home opener came nine days after 58 people were killed and nearly 550 were injured when authorities say Stephen Paddock rained gunfire from the windows of a 32nd-floor hotel suite into a crowd of country music concertgoers.

Vegas coach Gerard Gallant said the team talked a lot about doing its part to keep "Vegas Strong" — the mantra adopted

by the city in the aftermath of the shooting.

"It definitely had a big impact," Gallant said. "It was a tragic night and our players really responded to it. They went out and they supported the city of Las Vegas and they did the best they can. When you come to the rink at that time, that first game, that meant a lot to see that ceremony. It meant a lot to them. It just carried over to our team."

The Golden Knights improved to 8-1-0. They've won five straight, matching the longest winning streak ever by a team in its inaugural season, joining the New York Rangers (1926-27) and Edmonton Oilers (1979-80), according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Dansk stopped 32 shots in his second career start. The 23-year-old has been thrust into action after injuries to starter Marc-Andre Fleury and backup Malcolm Subban and has allowed three goals on 74 shots — a .960 save percentage.

"I've just been trying to work in practice and keep up with the pace with the guys," Dansk said. "Goalie coach Dave (Prior) has been on me quite a bit, keeping me strict with everything, all the details. It's been unexpected, but a lot of fun."

James Neal got his seventh goal, and David Perron, Oscar Lindberg, Cody Eakin, Jonathan Marchessault, Erik Haula and William Carrier also scored. Nate Schmidt had two assists.

Semyon Varlamov allowed all seven goals on 21 shots.

"We've been through tough losses," Avs captain Gabriel Landeskog said. "We're a different team this year. We're going to bounce back tomorrow."

As the Golden Knights tacked on each goal, Dansk said his confidence grew.

"It gives you breathing room, because hockey is such a tight game," Dansk said. "I just try not to worry about it too much. I just try to stay focused in my own thoughts and keep focus-

ing on my next save."

After a scoreless first period, Colorado outshot Vegas 10-1 during the first eight minutes of the second. The Golden Knights then scored four goals over the final 11:10 of the period.

Predators 2, Blackhawks 1: Pekka Rinne made 43 saves and visiting Nashville killed off six power plays against Chicago.

Blues 2, Hurricanes 1: Dmitri Jaskin scored his first goal of the season and Brayden Schenn added the game-winner to give visiting St. Louis a victory over Carolina.

Devils 5, Senators 4 (SO): Jesper Bratt and Drew Stafford scored in the shootout, and host New Jersey beat Ottawa after blowing a two-goal lead in the final 1:15 of regulation.

Blue Jackets 2, Jets 1 (OT): Josh Anderson scored 2:38 into overtime and host Columbus rallied to beat Winnipeg.

Stars 2, Flames 1: Alexander Radulov scored a power-play goal in the third period to lead visiting Dallas past Calgary.

NBA roundup

Two players ejected in Warriors' win over Wizards

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Kevin Durant had 31 points, 11 rebounds and six assists to help rally the Golden State Warriors from 18 points down and beat the Washington Wizards 120-117 on Friday night, a game marred by a fight between Golden State's Draymond Green and Washington's Bradley Beal shortly before halftime that led to both being ejected.

Stephen Curry added 20 points and eight assists, hitting two threes and two free throws in the final minute of the third quarter to get Golden State within 97-87 heading into the final 12 minutes. Then Klay Thompson and Durant made

threes early in the fourth for a four-point game. Thompson scored 18 points.

Durant's jumper with 1:20 to go put Golden State up by five, but the defending champions still needed his two free throws with 9.4 seconds left. John Wall missed an off-balance three, then Washington couldn't capitalize on one final chance.

With 19.5 seconds left in the second quarter, Beal held the front of Green's jersey with his left hand while grabbing Green around the jaw with his right. That enraged Green, who threw his right arm in frustration and wrapped arms with Beal as if hugging, then other players joined the scrum.

Green had to be pulled away from the skirmish by Andre Iguodala and Warriors security personnel. Green was tossed after getting his second technical foul. The back of his uniform was torn from near his right shoulder down to his waist.

Raptors 101, Lakers 92: DeMar DeRozan scored 17 of his 24 points in the second half and Toronto rallied late for the first victory on its six-game road trip.

Timberwolves 119, Thunder 116: Karl-Anthony Towns had 33 points and 19 rebounds as host Minnesota held off Oklahoma City.

Rockets 109, Hornets 93:

James Harden had 27 points, 11 assists and 10 rebounds, and visiting Houston made 22 of 57 three-point attempts in a victory over Charlotte.

Knicks 107, Nets 86: Kristaps Porzingis had 30 points and nine rebounds, and host New York beat Brooklyn for its first victory of the season.

Nuggets 105, Hawks 100: Nikola Jokic recorded a double-double with 18 points and 15 rebounds, Will Barton and Gary Harris each scored 18 points and Denver handed host Atlanta a loss in its home opener.

Magic 114, Spurs 87: Evan Fournier scored an efficient 25 points and Orlando handed visiting San Antonio its first loss.