

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Mattis warns Russia: Situation 'untenable'

BY JOHN VANDIVER

*Stars and Stripes*

Russia will face countermeasures from the U.S. if it continues to violate a 31-year-old nuclear treaty, U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis warned Thursday, adding that Moscow also will have to "pay the piper" in connection with new allegations of cyberstrikes on U.S. allies.

"Make no mistake, this situation is untenable," Mattis said at the conclusion of a NATO defense ministers meeting in Brussels.

Mattis blasted Russia for its development of a new missile system that allies say violates the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty between Washington and Moscow.

"Russia must return to compliance with the INF treaty or the U.S. will need to respond," Mattis said. "The United States is reviewing options in our diplomacy and defense posture to do just that in concert with our allies."

The new Russian missile, known as the 9M729, has an assessed range of up to 3,400 miles, according to the GlobalSecurity.org website. The INF treaty bans all missiles with a range between 310 and 3,400 miles.

Mattis declined to say which military options were available, but measures that

could be considered include shifting more missile defense capabilities to Europe and developing new intermediate-range systems if the U.S. decides the treaty is no longer binding.

Kay Bailey Hutchison, the top U.S. envoy to the alliance, and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg also made statements Tuesday accusing Russia of violating the INF treaty. Russia has denied doing so and has accused the U.S. of violating the treaty by placing its missile defenses in Europe. Washington says those systems are designed to intercept long-range attacks and are not directed toward Russia.

Mattis' mention of cyberstrikes at the summit's close referred to allegations aimed at Russia's military intelligence agency. On Thursday, the Netherlands accused the agency, known as the GRU, of targeting the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, an international watchdog group.

The same day, the United Kingdom blamed the GRU and its agents for cyberattacks that targeted political, businesses, media and sports institutions in a global cyberattack campaign.

NATO, which dedicated a large part of its two-day ministerial to cyberdefense talks, condemned Russia for its attacks. While

Moscow has denied involvement, Mattis said Russia must face consequences.

"Basically, the Russians got caught with their equipment, with people who were doing it, and they've got to pay the piper," Mattis said. He added that he had seen the evidence and is convinced of Russian culpability.

Mattis was mum on the consequences Russia should face but said there were a range of actions that could be taken and that "it doesn't necessarily equate to some kind of tit-for-tat on cyber."

The U.S. pledged to increase its cyber support to NATO, announcing in Brussels that it would make American digital weaponry available to member states when needed. "We are ready today to provide cyber support to our allies," Mattis said.

NATO is creating a new cyberoperations center and allies have designated the cyberspace realm as a military domain on a par with land, sea and air operations.

"Russia must stop this reckless pattern of behavior, including the use of force against its neighbors, attempted interference in election processes and widespread disinformation and campaigns," Stoltenberg said. "In response, NATO will continue to strengthen its defense and deterrence in the cyber domain."

## CNN: US planning show of force to deter China

*Bloomberg News*

HONG KONG — The U.S. Pacific Fleet is drafting plans for a global show of force to warn China and to demonstrate resolve to deter Beijing's military actions, CNN reported, citing several unidentified U.S. defense officials.

The draft proposal from the Navy recommends that the Pacific Fleet conduct a series of operations during a single week in November that would involve American warships, combat aircraft and troops to demonstrate that the U.S. can counter potential adversaries quickly on several fronts, CNN

said.

"We plan for a variety of contingencies and different operations, but we do not comment on future operations," said U.S. Navy Capt. William Kafka, spokesman for Indo-Pacific Command.

The proposal was being driven by the military, CNN reported.

The plan suggests sailing ships and flying aircraft near China's territorial waters in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait in freedom-of-navigation operations to demonstrate the right of free passage in international wa-

ters, the report said.

China has publicized a series of military exercises in recent months, with President Xi Jinping presiding over the country's biggest-ever fleet review in April. Last month, roughly 3,200 Chinese soldiers and 30 aircraft participated in Russia's largest military drills since the Cold War.

Earlier this week, the U.S. accused China's navy of "unsafe and unprofessional" conduct near an occupied reef in the South China Sea after a Chinese destroyer maneuvered close to the bow of an American warship attempting to as-

sert navigation rights. While close encounters between U.S. and Chinese forces are not unprecedented, the incidents were seen as the latest indication of rising tensions between the two sides.

The Navy proposal focuses on operations in the Pacific, but the CNN report said they could stretch as far as the western coast of South America, where China is expanding investments and diplomatic relationships.

If the initial proposal is approved, the missions could be expanded close to Russian territory, it said.

# Marines beef up Osprey presence in Hawaii

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The Marine Corps continues to extend its reach in the Pacific with the recent relocation of an MV-22 Osprey squadron to Hawaii and a 6,100-mile trans-Pacific flight by eight of the tilt-rotor aircraft.

On Sunday, aviators with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 268 completed a three-day flight from Darwin, Australia, to Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

VMM-268 completed a similar journey for the first time last year while flying only four Ospreys.

By tilting their rotors, Ospreys can take off, fly and land as helicopters, but they can also be flown at high speeds as fixed-wing aircraft.

“We were traveling at fixed-wing top rotor airspeeds,” said Lt. Col. Richard Alvarez, commander of VMM-268. He piloted one of the Ospreys from Darwin, where they had been deployed for training since April, along with about 1,600 Marines.

That was an average speed of about 288 mph.

The flight was done in three legs: Darwin to Guam, then to Wake Island, then to Hawaii. Each leg took five to eight hours, Alvarez said.

In two legs, the Ospreys flew in smaller divisions of four that are more maneuverable, particularly when aerial C-130 tankers are used for refueling, as was the case in this trans-Pacific flight, he said. In another leg, the eight aircraft flew as one division.

Each Osprey has the capacity to carry 25 Marines, but only the flight crews were aboard the eight aircraft, which had arrived in Darwin aboard a Navy ship.

Alvarez described the trans-Pacific flight as further confirmation that the Marine Corps has “the ability to self-deploy in MV-22s anywhere in the world we need to go.”

## Female commander in Afghanistan being replaced

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN  
*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Army Maj. Gen. Robin Fontes, who last year assumed the highest post of any female servicemember in the war in Afghanistan, is being replaced as commander of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, NATO confirmed Thursday.

NATO’s Resolute Support mission in a statement described her departure as “a normal rotation” of leadership, but sources familiar with CSTC-A said they were surprised by the news, as Fontes was earlier expected to remain at the command’s helm until next summer.

A U.S. official told Stars and Stripes on Thursday that Fontes would be replaced by Maj. Gen. James Rainey, likely within weeks. Resolute Support could not immediately

confirm the timing or the successor’s name.

Rainey was assigned to the Pentagon in January as assistant deputy chief of staff for the Army. Before that, he commanded the 3rd Infantry Division. Rainey also served as a deputy commanding general for U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and commander of Bagram Air Field.

CSTC-A, tasked with building Afghanistan’s security forces, is considered one of the most important commands in the NATO mission.

Fontes was widely respected among the military and diplomatic communities in Kabul. However, the Afghan security forces her command has helped train still aren’t capable of securing the country on their own after 17 years of war. Insurgents hold or contest more of the country’s

territory than at any time since the 2001 invasion, according to Pentagon and independent analyses.

The CSTC-A change comes about one month after Gen. Scott Miller took command of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, replacing Gen. John Nicholson.

On Thursday, Gen. Joseph Votel, head of U.S. Central Command, dismissed suggestions that replacing Fontes was part of a new approach to the war by Miller.

“I expect that Gen. Miller and the team going forward will continue to approach this with the same vigor that Gen. Nicholson and Gen. Fontes did,” Votel told reporters at the Pentagon by phone from CENTCOM in Tampa.

“I do consider this to be, kind of, a normal rotation of leadership that is taking place,” Votel added.

## DOD pushed to explain policy on protecting foreign forces

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — A Democratic senator is pressing the Pentagon to explain a policy that allows the military to launch attacks to protect an array of foreign forces, a practice that critics contend adds to already inflated powers to conduct counterterrorism missions overseas.

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., in a letter to Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, asked the Pentagon to explain what he described as a “broad and troubling” interpretation of presidential authority under a military doctrine known as collective self-defense.

Under that principle, the military can conduct strikes to defend foreign troops it identifies as partner forces, even when U.S. personnel are not at risk and when no engagement has been authorized by Congress. Because U.S. troops might not be involved or even present when the strikes occur, it goes beyond the right of self-defense that U.S. troops have at all times.

In his Oct. 2 letter, Kaine said the “unintended consequences of this policy could be grave, and it raises the possibility of inadvertently becoming entangled in other countries’ conflicts, especially as U.S. forces are deployed to over 170 countries

around the world.”

“I view the use of collective self-defense as yet another unilateral expansion of the President’s Article II authority in a now 17-year counterterrorism campaign that seemingly knows no limits or end,” he said. Article II of the Constitution, among other things, lays out the president’s role as commander in chief of the military.

In a written response to an earlier query from Kaine, the Pentagon said that collective self-defense “is not typically limited to particular groups or individuals committing the hostile act or demonstrating hostile intent.”

## Grassley: FBI report shows no Kavanaugh misconduct

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A top Senate Republican said Thursday the confidential FBI report on charges that Brett Kavanaugh sexually abused women three decades ago “found no hint of misconduct” by the Supreme Court nominee.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, made his remarks — and urged his colleagues to confirm the conservative judge — in a written statement hours after the post-midnight delivery of the FBI document to Congress. With Kavanaugh’s uncertain prospects for approval depending in part on the decisions of five wavering senators, lawmakers began viewing the document in a secure room in the Capitol complex.

“There’s nothing in it that we didn’t already know,” Grassley contended, basing his comment on a briefing he said he’d received from committee aides. He added, “This investigation found no hint of misconduct.”

Democrats have complained that the FBI’s reopening of its Kavanaugh background check has been far too limited, leaving out contact with crucial potential witnesses. They said some people had reached out to be interviewed by the FBI or the Judiciary Committee but were not questioned.

White House spokesman Raj Shah rebuffed that idea, saying, “What critics want is a never-ending fishing expedition into high school drinking.” He said the FBI reached out to 10 people and interviewed nine, including “several individuals at the request of the Senate, and had a series of follow-up interviews ... following certain leads.”

While the FBI interviews were to focus on sexual assault allegations, Democrats also have questioned his drinking habits during high school and college and dishonest comments they have said he’s made about his background.

# Navy vet arrested over letters sent to Pentagon, White House

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Navy veteran from Utah has admitted to federal authorities that he mailed suspicious packages this week addressed to two top Pentagon officials and to President Donald Trump, Justice Department officials said Thursday.

William Clyde Allen III, 39, who served in the Navy from 1998 to 2002, was arrested Wednesday by FBI agents and local law enforcement at his home in Logan, Utah, according to the U.S. Attorney’s Office of Utah. Allen admitted to investigators that he sent envelopes, which security officials initially suspected contained the deadly poison ricin, addressed to Trump, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Adm. John Richardson, the Navy’s top officer.

He did not provide a motive for his actions, according to court documents.

The Pentagon on Wednesday said the letters addressed to Mattis and Richardson contained unprocessed castor seeds, the natural material from which ricin is produced. The seeds themselves pose little, if any, threat to humans, according to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Secret Service, which intercepted the letter mailed to Trump, declined to comment on the third letter. All three were intercepted Monday, officials said. The let-

ters addressed to the Pentagon never made it into the Defense Department’s headquarters, and the envelope to Trump was never in the White House, U.S. officials said. No one was harmed by the envelopes.

Allen was booked Wednesday evening into the Davis County jail in Utah, where he remained Thursday held on a “threat of terrorism” charge without bail, jail records show. The FBI was continuing its investigation Thursday, said an agency spokeswoman who declined further comment on the case.

Navy records show Allen enlisted in the service in October 1998 and was discharged in October 2002. He served as a damage control fireman and served aboard the USNS Supply — a fast combat support ship — and the now-decommissioned USS Detroit, another combat support ship.

Records also show he attained the rank of petty officer third class but eventually left the service as a seaman apprentice, indicating he was reduced at least two ranks before his discharge. It was not clear Thursday what led to the loss in rank.

In 2003, Allen faced driving-under-the-influence charges in Utah, court records show. In 2004, he was charged in a child sex abuse case involving two girls with whom he had an unspecified “relationship of trust,” according to court documents. He later pleaded guilty to lesser neglect and abuse charges and was not ordered to register as a sex offender.

## Trump tax probes could bring big fines

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Though President Donald Trump insists he did nothing wrong on his taxes, experts say he could be on the hook for tens of millions of dollars in civil fines if state and federal authorities substantiate a New York Times report that found he and his family cheated the IRS for decades.

The statute of limitations for bringing criminal charges has long run out, but civil cases have no such limits, and the financial penalties could be staggering. Civil fraud charges for intentionally underpaying taxes, as the Times alleged the Trump family did, could include a penalty of up to 75 percent of the unpaid federal taxes and double the unpaid state amount, experts said.

The penalties “could be substantial, and if the allegations are proven in court, they should be levied,” said Norman Eisen, chairman of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and former chief ethics counsel in the Obama administration.

The New York tax department said it is studying the Times’ 15,000-word report and “vigorously pursuing all appropriate avenues of investigation.” New York City also said it would investigate. A spokesman for the Internal Revenue Service declined to comment.

Trump tweeted that the newspaper did “a very old, boring and often-told hit piece on me.”

The White House dismissed the report as a “misleading at-

tack against the Trump family by the failing New York Times,” but spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the newspaper got one thing right: Trump’s father not only did deals with his son but heaped praise on him by saying “everything he touched turned to gold.”

A lawyer for Trump, Charles J. Harder, told the Times that there was no “fraud or tax evasion” and that parts of the report were “extremely inaccurate.”

The Times said Trump received at least \$413 million from his father over the decades, much of that through dubious tax maneuvers, including outright fraud. The report contradicts Trump’s portrayal of himself as a self-made billionaire who started with just a \$1 million loan from his father.

## US ends '55 treaty with Iran after UN court ruling

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In response to a U.N. court order that the U.S. lift sanctions on Iran, the Trump administration said Wednesday it was terminating a decades-old treaty affirming friendly relations between the two countries. The largely symbolic gesture highlights deteriorating relations between Washington and Tehran.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said withdrawing from the 1955 Treaty of Amity was long overdue and followed Iran “groundlessly” bringing a complaint with the International Court of Justice challenging U.S. sanctions on the basis that they were a violation of the pact.

Meanwhile, national security adviser John Bolton said the administration also was pulling out of an amendment to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations that Iran or others, notably the Palestinians, could use to sue the U.S. at The Hague-based tribunal. Bolton told reporters at the White House that the provision violates U.S. sovereignty.

“The United States will not sit idly by as baseless politicized claims are brought against us,” Bolton said.

He cited a case brought to the court by the “so-called state of Palestine” challenging the move of the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as the main reason for withdrawing.

Earlier, Pompeo denounced the Iranian case before the U.N. court as “meritless” and said the Treaty of Amity was meaningless and absurd.

“The Iranians have been ignoring it for an awfully long time; we ought to have pulled out of it decades ago,” he told reporters at the State Department.

## Suspect in officers' shooting in SC is competitive rifleman

Associated Press

FLORENCE, S.C. — A Vietnam veteran who bragged online about maintaining his target-shooting skills was being held Thursday in the shooting of seven law enforcement officers, one of whom died, as deputies tried to serve a search warrant at his home.

Authorities said Frederick Hopkins opened fire on the deputies from inside the home and held children hostage while shooting long-range at other officers who rushed to the suburban neighborhood.

The sheriff department's armored personnel carrier was brought in to recover the wounded during Wednesday's two-hour standoff, and the shooter finally released the children as he was taken into custody, authorities said.

“Officers went there unknowing the firepower the suspect had,” Florence County Sheriff Kenney Boone said at a news conference.

“Fire was being shot all over. The way this suspect was positioned, his view of fire was several hundred yards. So he had an advantage. The officers couldn't get to the ones who were down.”

Records show Hopkins, 74, is a disabled Vietnam veteran and a disbarred lawyer who has faced several charges in recent years, starting with a 2014 count of disorderly conduct.

Authorities have not described what weapons were involved, but Hopkins apparently owned several guns, including an M14 rifle. A 2014 post on his Facebook page said he celebrated his 70th birthday at a shooting range by repeatedly firing his

M14, set up exactly like the one he used in Vietnam.

“I have been shooting competitively since 1984 and lovin' it. I just love the smell of gunpowder in the mornin's,” said the post. Other posts from 2016 show images of rifles set up on what looks like a range, and say he was the “South Carolina 3-Gun Silhouette Champion for 2011.”

The violence stunned people in the area, where many have been dealing with record flooding from Hurricane Florence. Both the sheriff and the police chief cried as they spoke to reporters after the standoff.

The slain officer, Terrence Carraway, 52, of Darlington, had just been honored for his 30 years of service with the Florence Police Department.

“I want you to pray for the family who lost the bravest police officer I have ever known,” said his chief, Allen Heidler.

WIS-TV reported Thursday that Florence County Chief Deputy Glenn Kirby said Hopkins was hospitalized with a head injury and was unable to speak with officers. WPDE-TV reported Hopkins fell at the scene.

Kirby also said that the search warrant involved an accusation that a 27-year-old person at the home sexually assaulted a foster child who lives in the home.

Three Florence County deputies were wounded while trying to serve the warrant about 4 p.m. Wednesday. Officers from all over arrived to help, and the suspect ultimately shot four Florence city police officers, one fatally, Heidler said.

Boone credited his department's military equipment for enabling them to pull the wounded from the field of fire.

## Pence: China is interfering in US policies and politics

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Vice President Mike Pence is accusing China of trying to undermine President Donald Trump as the administration deploys tough, new rhetoric over Chinese trade, economic and foreign policies.

In prepared remarks for an appearance Thursday at the Hudson Institute, Pence said China is using its power in “more proactive and coercive ways to interfere in the domes-

tic policies and politics of the United States.”

“China wants a different American president,” Pence said.

Pence's speech came a week after Trump accused China during a meeting of the U.N. Security Council of interfering in American elections to help his Democratic rivals.

“Regrettably, we found that China has been attempting to interfere in our upcoming 2018 election,” Trump said. “They

do not want me, or us, to win because I am the first president ever to challenge China on trade.” As proof, Trump later referenced a paid advertising insert in The Des Moines Register by Chinese government-affiliated entities.

In the prepared remarks provided by his office, Pence charged that China is targeting “industries and states that would play an important role in the 2018 election” as it responds to Trump's protectionist trade

tariffs on China. “By one estimate, more than 80 percent of U.S. counties targeted by China voted for President Trump in 2016; now China wants to turn these voters against our administration,” Pence said.

U.S. intelligence agencies assess that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election to boost Trump over his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton through hacking and releasing sensitive documents and social media manipulation.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

### Mom gets drunk on alcohol in sippy cup

**GA** MARIETTA — Police in suburban Atlanta said a woman filled her son's sippy cup with an alcoholic beverage, sneaked it into a movie theater and became so drunk she couldn't walk, talk or care for the 5-year-old.

News outlets quote a Cobb County police arrest warrant as saying Kristina Gibson is facing charges including public intoxication.

Police said Gibson also possibly combined the drink with prescription drugs.

Sgt. Wayne Delk said a theater employee called police after moviegoers complained because Gibson's son was crying.

Police called her friend to pick up the boy and the woman was taken to a hospital.

### Police: Students given pot brownies for votes

**MI** HARTFORD — Police were investigating allegations that a 17-year-old cheerleader distributed marijuana-laced brownies at her southwestern Michigan high school in an effort to be voted homecoming queen.

WXMI-TV reported that three brownies recovered from students at Hartford High School were sent to the state police crime lab for testing. Investigators said nine other confections remain unaccounted for.

Hartford police officer Michael Prince said officers learned through a tip that the brownies were taken to the school Sept. 26. The tipster said some were distributed in goodie bags for the football team, and the leftovers were used for homecoming queen votes.

### Man appeals sentence in mutilation attack

**SD** SIOUX FALLS — A Sioux Falls man who pleaded guilty to aggravated assault for choking his ex-girlfriend and mutilating her breasts is appealing his sentence to the South Dakota Supreme Court.

Tony Ledbetter's attorney, David Stuart, told the justices Wednesday that the circuit court erred when it failed to sentence Ledbetter to 30 years or less as laid out in a plea agreement.

Ledbetter was sentenced to 45 years in prison in Lincoln County last November.

Ledbetter was convicted of punching his ex-girlfriend, knocking her unconscious and cutting off her nipple with a pair of scissors. When the victim regained consciousness, Ledbetter attacked her again and cut her left breast.

### Teen hospitalized after paintball attack

**NJ** PATERSON — A 14-year-old New Jersey boy was hospitalized with severe welts after he was shot multiple times at close range by a man wielding a paintball gun.

Paterson police said the boy was shot 20 to 25 times at close range Monday night with no clear motive. Police issued an arrest warrant for the attacker.

### Zoo evacuated after threat to crash plane

**CO** DENVER — About 1,000 people had to cut short their visit to the Denver Zoo after someone threatened to crash an airplane into the facility.

Police spokesman Sonny

Jackson told KUSA-TV someone phoned in the threat Tuesday afternoon, and the zoo was immediately evacuated.

During the investigation, visitors gathered in surrounding City Park just east of downtown, and some roads were blocked off.

### City police on the hunt for loose python

**AL** BIRMINGHAM — The search is on in downtown Birmingham for a missing ball python.

WBRC-TV reported that Caleb Louis, 21, took his pet to a nonprofit program he participates in called the Dannon Project. Lisa Cole of the Dannon Project said Louis was told to take the snake out the building.

Louis returned the python to his car. He let the window down slightly so it could get air. He returned to the car about 10 minutes later and the python was gone.

### Vandals pull old Viking statue into river

**PA** PHILADELPHIA — Police said vandals toppled a 100-year-old Viking statue along a river running through Philadelphia.

Authorities found the 7-foot-4-inch statue of Thorfinn Karlsefni submerged in the Schuylkill River around 2:30 a.m. Tuesday.

The statue represents the Icelandic explorer who is thought to have visited America around 1004 A.D.

No arrests have been made in connection with the recent damage.

The statue weighs several thousand pounds, and police said they will need a crane to pull it from the water.

### City limits cemetery access for Halloween

**MA** SALEM — The city of Salem is limiting the number of people who will be allowed inside a historic cemetery with a direct link to the 1692 witch trials as Halloween approaches.

The Salem News reported that on Saturdays and Sundays during October and on Halloween night, no more than 100 people will be permitted inside the Charter Street Burial Ground at any one time.

The city started limiting access to the cemetery last year after large crowds were seen sitting, eating and even changing diapers on the tombs.

The cemetery, established in 1637, is the burial site of John Hathorne and Bartholomew Gedney, two judges who presided over the witch trials.

### Family reunited with dog lost for 5 years

**CT** NORWICH — A Connecticut family was reunited with their dog five years after the beloved pet went missing.

The Norwich Bulletin reported that Norwich Assistant Animal Control Officer Donna Gremminger spotted the 17-year-old female dachshund in a parking lot in a city park. She has lost most of her sight and hearing.

Through a microchip, they identified the dog's owners as Rick and Michelle Riendeau, of Brooklyn, Conn., and reunited them Monday.

From wire reports

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# Red Sox, Yanks ready to rumble again

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Fans have been waiting for another one of these rumbles: baseball's most-bitter rivals set to tangle again, this time as 100-win heavyweights in the playoffs.

Munson vs. Fisk, Pedro vs. Popeye, A-Rod vs. Varitek and earlier this year Brock Holt vs. Tyler Austin.

The Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees back at each other in the postseason for the first time in 14 years.

"We're a team that can play with anybody, and we're not afraid to go in there," Yankees center fielder Aaron Hicks said after a 7-2 wild-card win over Oakland sent New York to a best-of-five AL Division Series that starts Friday in Fenway Park.

Yankees fans were chanting "We want Boston!" during the late innings. The Red Sox tweeted "We want New York" after the final out in the Bronx.

"I think they're ready and relish the opportunity to go up against the game's best this year," Yankees rookie manager Aaron Boone said of his players.

That is the same Aaron Boone whose 11th-inning homer in Game 7 of the 2003 AL Championship Series beat the Red Sox. A year later Boston overcame the Yankees and became the first major league team to bounce back from a 3-0 postseason deficit. The Red Sox went on to win their first World Series since 1918, but Boone's drive off Tim Wakefield has not been forgotten or forgiven.

Boston was 10-9 against the Yankees this year and set a club record with 108 wins under new manager Alex Cora, boosted by MVP candidate Mookie Betts, slugger J.D. Martinez and ace Chris Sale. New York finished eight games back and became

the first team since the 2001 Athletics to reach triple digits in wins and fail to finish first — New York also set the major league mark for home runs, powered by the likes of Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton.

These teams also have a history of hitting each other.

Back on April 11, Austin charged the mound at Fenway after Red Sox reliever Joe Kelly threw at him twice, hitting Austin in the side with the second pitch. Boston players were livid Austin slid spikes-first into shortstop Holt earlier in the game. A bench-clearing brawl led to suspensions and fines, but Austin won't be around for a rematch — he was dealt to Minnesota in July.

"It's Yankees-Red Sox. That's what everybody wants. That's what they got," Red Sox star pitcher David Price said then.

Just another in a long history of bad blood between rivals a little more than 200 miles apart.

Boston player-manager Joe Cronin and New York outfielder Jake Powell fought on the field and beneath the Yankee Stadium stands in 1938, and Jimmy Piersall of the Red Sox and Billy Martin of the Yankees brawled beneath Fenway Park's stands in 1952.

A fight broke out in 1967 at Yankee Stadium after New York's Thad Tillotson hit Joe Foy with a pitch and Boston's Jim Lonborg hit Tillotson — who after the scrap hit Dick Howser with a pitch.

In 1973, Thurman Munson crashed into catcher Carlton Fisk at Fenway after Gene Michael missed a bunt, and the All-Stars fought. Then at Yankee Stadium in 1976, New York's Lou Piniella charged into Fisk at the plate, and Boston pitcher Bill Lee was body-slammed during the fighting and wound up with a broken collarbone.

A notorious brawl took place during Game 3 of the 2003 AL Championship series, when Red Sox ace Pedro Martinez threw 72-year-old Don Zimmer to the ground.

Zimmer, a former Boston manager and then a Yankees coach, ran across the infield and lunged at Martinez during the fighting.

Then the following July, Boston's Bronson Arroyo hit New York's Alex Rodriguez with a pitch, A-Rod stared at the pitcher as he walked toward first, catcher Jason Varitek got between them and pushed the AL MVP, leading to dugouts and bullpens emptying.

That October the rivals met again in the 2004 ALCS. The Yankees took a 3-0 lead and were one inning from reaching the World Series when Mariano Rivera walked Kevin Millar and pinch-runner Dave Roberts — now the Los Angeles Dodgers manager — stole second. Bill Mueller hit a tying single and the Red Sox won 6-4 in 12 innings when David Ortiz hit a game-ending, two-run homer at 1:22 a.m.

Boston won 5-4 the next day on Ortiz's RBI single in the 14th inning, won Game 6 in New York 4-2 behind Curt Schilling and his bloody sock, then blew out the Yankees 10-3 in the finale.

"All empires fall sooner or later," Red Sox president Larry Lucchino said.

Boston swept St. Louis in the World Series, swept Colorado four years later and beat the Cardinals in a six-game series in 2013. Over that same span, the Yankees have won just one title, in 2009.

Fast forward to this week, with the teams ready to meet again.

"It's going to be intense," New York pitcher CC Sabathia said.

## New York routs Oakland in AL wild-card game

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Aaron Judge got the party started with a two-run homer nine pitches in. By the time Giancarlo Stanton capped the mauling with monstrous drive in his postseason debut, New York Yankees fans already were looking ahead.

"We want Boston!" they chanted.

Coming up next.

"It's going to be intense," CC Sabathia predicted after the Yankees pounded the Oakland Athletics 7-2 on Wednes-

day night to win their second straight AL wild-card game.

New York will take a train to Boston for a best-of-five Division Series starting Friday night, a matchup of 100-win heavyweights.

"I think they're ready and relish the opportunity to go up against the game's best this year," Yankees rookie manager Aaron Boone said of his players.

Boston went 10-9 against the Yankees this year and set a club record with 108 wins. New York became the first team since the

2001 A's to reach triple digits in wins and fail to finish first.

"We've just got to do our homework and come out swinging," said Luke Voit, who broke open the game with a two-run triple in a four-run sixth.

Luis Severino atoned for last year's flop in the wild-card game against Minnesota, pitching no-hit shutout ball into the fifth. Dellin Betances entered with two on and got six straight outs as part of a five-hitter and the Yankees extended their home postseason winning streak to seven.

Oakland has lost eight straight winner-take-all postseason games since beating Willie Mays and the New York Mets in Game 7 of the 1973 World Series, and dropped all four of their postseason matchups against the Yankees.

"It's pretty hard but I'm not disappointed at all," said big league home run champion Khris Davis, who hit a two-run homer off Zach Britton in the eighth. "I think we showed some people we can do some things and I think next year, we're a little bit more of a threat."

# Rams focusing on Seahawks, not hype

*The Associated Press*

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. — The Los Angeles Rams realize they're a popular Super Bowl pick after their spectacular first quarter of the season. Pundits, fans and other teams seem to be lining up to praise them.

While they appreciate the respect, this is a profoundly weird experience for any Rams who were around even two years ago for the franchise's less-than-glorious return to LA after a decade of losing in St. Louis.

This team doesn't have much experience in being the favorites for anything, and the Rams are wary of the role.

"I hate it," said Michael Brockers, who has been on the defensive line for seven years.

"I hate looking at 'SportsCenter' and they've got you at the top of the power rankings," Brockers added with a smile. "It's just like, you know, stop crowning us! For me, I'm a humble guy. I don't want to be crowned. I always want the attitude of being the hungry dog, being the underdog, because you almost seem to be more

hungrier when you play like that."

Nobody with any experience in the Rams' locker room has forgotten that this franchise is just one year removed from streaks of 13 consecutive losing seasons and 12 consecutive non-playoff seasons. Humility is relatively easy with that struggle still on their minds, according to the players and coaches who went through it.

Jared Goff doesn't even turn 24 until next Sunday, but he remembers going 0-7 as a rookie starter for the hapless Rams of 2016.

"I don't think we're getting any bit caught up in anything," said Goff, who's second in the NFL with 1,406 yards passing after his outstanding effort against Minnesota. "I think a lot of people on this team, being part of that team two years ago, understand how easy it is to be on the other side of it, and you don't ever want to go back there."

Receiver Robert Woods said it's "easy" to ignore the attention the Rams (4-0) are getting.

"It's just buzz," he said. "It's just noise. We've been on both

sides. We've been not talked about, and now we're being talked about, but it's really just focus. We know how it goes. We had a great year last year and fell short, and I think this year the team is just focused."

Los Angeles was revived last season by coach Sean McVay, going 11-5 and winning the NFC West before losing its playoff opener. This season's team appeared to be even stronger on paper — and through four games, that's exactly what it has been.

The Rams lead the NFL with 468.5 yards per game of offense, increasing their total every week. Only five teams have allowed fewer points than the Rams, and their special teams have thrived despite losing two of their four Pro Bowl selections to injury.

The rest of the football world can get excited about the Rams, but McVay reflexively downplays any idea that they're a Super Bowl favorite.

"I have no doubt that we have the right kind of guys in our locker room that know it's about earning it every single day," McVay said. "They are confident, but like we've said

over and over, there's a humility that exists."

Along with the respect they've garnered, the Rams' 15-5 record over the past 20 regular-season games has turned them into a target for opponents.

The power shift in the NFC West could be cemented this weekend if the Rams can win in Seattle for the second straight season. The Seahawks had won eight division titles in 13 years before Los Angeles shoved past them last season, but the Rams only spoke of the Seahawks with immense respect Wednesday.

"Being hunted, I don't think that bothers us," Brockers said. "Because we've been underdogs for so long, so our mentality isn't even that we're that good. We've won some games, but we know we can get better."

Attention has even darker aspects for professional athletes: Woods' house was burglarized last Thursday while he was playing against the Minnesota Vikings. Police arrested four suspects Tuesday in connection with that crime.

## Rockets hoping Paul can escape bad postseason luck

*Associated Press*

LAKE CHARLES, La. — Houston Rockets owner Tilman Fertitta said this week that his team was a "hamstring" away from the Western Conference title last season.

The hamstring he was referring to was Chris Paul's, with the injury the latest setback for the point guard whose illustrious career at times has seemed cursed.

After signing Paul to a four-year, \$160 million extension in the offseason, the Rockets hope the bad luck ends this year and he'll help them to their first title since 1995.

"Chris deserves a championship," Fertitta said. "It is time. But luck is luck and it just takes

a little luck in sports. You have to set yourself up to be one of the best and then you need a few things to fall into place."

The Rockets led the Warriors 3-2 in the conference finals last season before Paul's season ended with a hamstring injury in Game 5. Golden State won the next two games to advance to the Finals and go on to win the title.

Paul scoffed at the notion that his ill-timed hamstring injury was the worst thing that's happened to him.

"If that's the toughest thing, then I'm living a real good life," he said. "But it's definitely up there as far as basketball goes, as far as not being able to influence the outcome.

If that doesn't do something to you then you're in the wrong profession."

But that disappointing end to Paul's first season in Houston was far from the first time things have gone awry at the worst times for the nine-time All-Star. He was dogged for years about his inability to escape the second round of the playoffs after making nine trips to the postseason without ever reaching the conference finals before finally breaking through with the Rockets last season.

Paul looked sure to advance in 2015 when he and the Clippers were up 3-1 over the Rockets in the conference semifinals. But they were rout-

ed in Game 5 before squandering a 19-point second-half lead in a loss at home in Game 6 and being eliminated in Houston in Game 7.

No one with the Rockets would go as far as to say that Paul might be cursed, but everyone agreed that he's had more than his share of bad luck. Coach Mike D'Antoni feels for Paul. But this isn't the first time he's worked with a superstar point guard with problems such as these.

D'Antoni coached Steve Nash for four seasons on those great teams in Phoenix that were never able to win a title. Nash was named MVP twice, but finished an 18-year career without a ring.

# Capitals raise Cup banner, rout Bruins

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—From banner to blowout, the Washington Capitals' Stanley Cup defense is off to a rousing start.

After watching the franchise's first Cup banner ascend to the rafters, the Alex Ovechkin-led Capitals scored two goals in the first two minutes on the way to a 7-0 thrashing of the Boston Bruins on Wednesday night. T.J. Oshie opened the scoring 24 seconds in and Evgeny Kuznetsov scored the first of his two goals at 1:47 to give Washington the fastest first two goals by a defending champion in a season opener in NHL history.

"We scored right away," Ovechkin said. "After that, they were kind of in shock."

By midway through the second period, the Capitals chased goalie Tuukka Rask with five goals on 19 shots and ignited chants of "Back-to-back! Back-

to-back!" from the fired-up crowd. That's the chant Oshie started after the victory parade in June, and it was echoing throughout the arena four months later.

"I said it because I believe it," Oshie said. "We got a lot of guys in here that not too long ago were raising the Stanley Cup above our head. Not a lot's changed."

Braden Holtby stopped all 25 shots he faced to improve to 15-2 with four shutouts against the Bruins.

The emotional banner ceremony featured montages from the Capitals' playoff run and ensuing celebrations and a roar when Ovechkin carried the freshly engraved Cup onto the ice and skated a lap with it. Minutes after Ovechkin kissed the Cup and put it back in its box, he and his teammates blew away any concern about an emotional letdown and began

making a statement that they want to win it back.

"We showed we're not going to give a team easy ways to beat us," Ovechkin said.

In Todd Reirden's first game as coach, the Capitals beat the Bruins for the 13th consecutive time, this time without Tom Wilson. Washington's top-line right winger began his 20-game suspension for another illegal check to the head of an opponent in a preseason game.

Without Wilson, the Capitals' offense didn't miss a beat as Ovechkin scored one of four power-play goals, Kuznetsov scored his second on the power play and John Carlson beat Boston backup Jaroslav Halak on a 5-on-3 advantage. Newcomer Nic Dowd joined the fun with a spinning back-hander, and Cup-clinching goal-scorer Lars Eller added the exclamation point with the seventh of the night.

The Bruins were not pleased

by Eller's celebration, and winger Brad Marchand instigated a fight with him soon after.

"His celebration was unnecessary," Marchand said. "He took an angle in front of our bench and celebrated in a 7-0 game. So I just let him know."

Rask fell to 1-11-5 in his career against the Capitals with a 3.30 goals-against average and .889 save percentage that are each the second-worst of any opponent.

"I'm out there to give us a chance," Rask said. "It didn't happen today. Three soft goals, you've got to look in the mirror and go fix it."

Only two goals came against Halak, whose presence on banner night in Washington was poetic after his performance for Montreal in the 2010 playoffs ended one of the Capitals' previous best chances to win a championship.

## Roundup

# Matthews' second goal boosts Leafs in OT

Associated Press

TORONTO — John Tavares let out a big sigh of relief during the pregame introductions.

The Toronto Maple Leafs did the same thing after an ugly season-opening victory.

Auston Matthews scored his second goal of the night at 1:01 of overtime to give Toronto a 3-2 victory over the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday night.

Matthews took a feed from Patrick Marleau off the rush and beat goalie Carey Price high past the blocker.

"It was a perfect pass," Matthews said. "Patty had me there and I was able to just get it over him."

Tavares scored his first goal for Toronto, but for much of the game, Montreal that had the upper hand as Toronto goalie Frederik Andersen was forced to make 34 saves, including 15 in the third period.

"They kind of outworked us," Matthews said. "A lot we can learn moving forward."

Toronto coach Mike Babcock was happy with the victory, but not how his team got there.

"Montreal played with great effort and

great structure," Babcock said. "In the end, we won the game, but we have to work way harder and play way better than we did tonight."

Tavares received a raucous ovation when his name was announced as the final player to come out of the tunnel before puck drop, and seemed relieved to finally be in a game that mattered after so much hype.

"It was tremendous," Tavares said. "To have that type of welcoming from this fanbase and this city is pretty special."

"They've got a lot of players that can move the puck on both sides of their stick," Price said. "They've got a lot of skill up front and they seem to find each other. They're a pretty good squad."

Montreal rookie Jesperi Kotkaniemi, the first NHL player born in the 2000s, picked up an assist. The Finn, who turned 18 in July, also became the second-youngest player in Canadiens' history to score a point.

**Ducks 5, Sharks 2:** John Gibson made 31 saves, Brandon Montour scored the tie-breaking goal with 11:58 to play and visiting Anaheim spoiled Erik Karlsson's San Jose debut.

Rickard Rakell added a goal and two as-

sists, Max Comtois scored on his opening shift in the NHL and Adam Henrique also had a goal in the first game for the Ducks since getting swept in the first round by San Jose last spring. Jakob Silfverberg had three assists and Carter Rowney scored an empty-net goal for Anaheim.

Evander Kane and Tomas Hertl scored for the Sharks but Martin Jones allowed four goals on the first 13 shots he faced to take the loss. Jones finished with 10 saves.

**Canucks 5, Flames 2:** Rookie Elias Pettersson scored on his first shot in his first NHL game for host Vancouver.

Nikolay Goldobin, Brendan Leipsic, Jake Virtanen and Tyler Motte also scored for Vancouver. Jacob Markstrom stopped 33 shots.

Matthew Tkachuk and Sean Monahan had goals for the Flames, and Mike Smith finished with 18 saves.

Pettersson opened the scoring with 6:12 left in the first period, picking up the puck in the neutral zone, springing into the Calgary end with teammate Derrick Pouliot on a 2-on-1. Pettersson kept the puck and fired a wrist shot into the top of the net.