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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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USAF mulls transfers from damaged base

The Washington Post

Hurricane Michael's surge across Tyndall Air Force Base last week wreaked enough devastation that the service is considering transferring some airmen and families until the base is rebuilt, military officials said Tuesday.

Tyndall, located on the Florida Panhandle, suffered a direct hit from the Category 4 storm on Oct. 10, prompting fears that jets that could not be flown away in advance were destroyed. On Wednesday, the Air Force began allowing families to visit their homes to collect valuables and take photographs, but it is expected to take years for the base to fully recover.

Brig. Gen. John Allen Jr., the service's director of civil engineers, compared the storm's

destruction to what Hurricane Katrina caused in 2005 when it ravaged Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss. In that case, the base took nearly five years to make a full recovery.

"You can imagine what kind of effort lays ahead of us," Allen said.

Florida's U.S. senators, Republican Marco Rubio and Democrat Bill Nelson, along with Republican Rep. Neal Dunn, in letters to President Donald Trump and the Defense Department, have urged the administration to affirm their commitment to rebuilding the Tyndall base and expedite the repair work there.

Airmen and their families are displaced all over the region, with most still on the Panhandle while staying in hotels, with friends or in shelters. Nearby

military installations, including Eglin Air Force Base and Hurlburt Field, are assisting some of them.

"We're going to have to make some serious decisions on which families come back to that base or not," said Brig. Gen. Edward Thomas, who visited the base Sunday.

Numerous F-22 Raptors, worth more than \$140 million each, are still in hangars that were either damaged or destroyed in the storm, Thomas said. The Air Force flew as many planes out of the path of the storm as it could, but a number of them were left behind because they were undergoing maintenance or awaiting new parts. Service officials have declined to say how many were damaged.

Thomas said none of the Raptors that faced Michael were

destroyed, but a lengthy assessment will be needed to determine what repairs are required. Visually, all of the jets are intact, and it appears that the hangars mostly protected them even as the buildings were battered by the storm, he said.

Once the Raptors are pulled from the debris, the Air Force will decide how best to repair them.

At least five temporary hangars, each capable of holding two F-22s, will be constructed on the flight line.

Thomas said he was struck during his visit to Tyndall by how directly the flight line was hit by the storm. On one side, most trees had been knocked over in one direction, he said. On the other, they were knocked over in the opposite direction. The eye of the storm had crossed right overhead.

Probe: F-16 pilot lost consciousness before fatal crash

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Air Force Thunderbirds pilot killed in April when his F-16 crashed during a training flight in Nevada lost consciousness during a strenuous maneuver moments before impact, according to a service investigation into the wreck.

Maj. Stephen Del Bagno "became completely incapacitated for a period" as he practiced the "High Bomb Burst Rejoin" maneuver alongside five other Thunderbirds pilots April 4 at the Nevada Test and Training Range near Las Vegas, according to Air Combat Command, which released the investigation Tuesday. In that maneuver, four Thunderbirds jets fly together straight up in a diamond forma-

tion before darting in opposite directions at high speed.

Though Del Bagno was able to recover slightly, he never made an attempt to eject from the aircraft, according to investigators.

Del Bagno, 34, was training for his first season with the Thunderbirds, the Air Force's squadron of elite fliers who tour the country providing aerial demonstrations to the public. He was a longtime pilot who went by the call sign "Cajun." He had most recently spent nearly three years flying F-35A Lightning II stealth fighters in Florida as part of an evaluation and instruction team.

Though the squadron had experienced three crashes in recent years, Del Bagno was the unit's first flying death since 1982.

The Thunderbirds canceled several planned shows at the beginning of their 2018 season, but they resumed flying in May.

During the training flight, Del Bagno flew inverted for some 22 seconds at an altitude between 5,500 and 5,700 feet, experiencing gravitational force, or G-force, at about a negative two before beginning a Split-S, or half loop, maneuver that rapidly took him to a G-force of more than 8.5, according to the 32-page investigators' report.

At that point, he lost consciousness, investigators concluded, noting Del Bagno made no attempts to control the plane until about one second before impact.

Two main factors contributed to the crash, according to the report. The first was the "push-pull effect" of moving from the

negative G-force — the impact of gravity on the body upside — to the extremely strenuous G-force of 8.56, or more than 8.5 times the normal pull of gravity on the body, which forced Del Bagno unconscious. Second, investigators determined the diminished tolerance to the high G-force contributed to his inability to perform maneuvers that help pilots' bodies counter those forces, called anti-g-force straining maneuvers.

Investigators found no evidence that Del Bagno's physical fitness level played any part in losing consciousness. It also determined his F-16 was in proper flying condition with no reported maintenance deficiencies that would have contributed to the crash.

Senator: Mattis needed for US security

By CLAUDIA GRISALES
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — U.S. national security would suffer greatly without Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and several top Pentagon leaders slated to leave their posts next year, a key senator said Wednesday.

Sen. Jack Reed, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, praised Mattis' experience in light of President Donald Trump's comments that the defense secretary was a "sort of a Democrat" and could leave his post.

A possible Mattis departure is more detrimental with Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force Gen. Paul Selva, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson slated to leave their posts next year, Reed added.

"In order to maintain continuity in the Department of Defense, (Mattis') presence is going to be absolutely critical," the

Rhode Island senator told reporters attending a breakfast roundtable at the Fairmont Hotel in Washington. "If he is going and there's another secretary of defense, you are going to see next year be kind of like everybody new around the water cooler trying to figure out where the bathroom is. That's not going to be good for national defense."

Trump said during a CBS' "60 Minutes" interview aired Sunday that he has a very good relationship with Mattis, the two get along "very well" and called him a "good guy." But he also said Mattis might leave.

The comments were a signal to some Washington insiders that Trump might force Mattis out following the Nov. 6 midterm elections. Several media reports in the past year have suggested that Trump and Mattis have had diverging views on approaches to national security.

"I mean, at some point, everybody leaves," Trump said. "Everybody. People leave. That's Washington."

Reed said he thinks other lawmakers on

Capitol Hill would also push back against a Trump plan to force out Mattis.

"It would be very inappropriate and would not be helpful to national security. I don't think I'd be alone" in that thinking on Capitol Hill, he said.

Reed also said Mattis, a former Marine Corps general, provided critical stability at a time when national security sorely needed it, as well as insightful advice without bias.

"Secretary Mattis is one of the most gifted secretaries I've had the privilege of working with. He has great experience. In fact, unusual experience. He's been a Marine leader from platoon all the way up to Central Command. He does provide unique insight," he said. "He's a scholar as well. He is someone who is very thoughtful and he is somebody that I think is just so committed to the country and to the men and women he leads. I think he's a remarkable and inspiring figure for the [Defense Department]."

Navy, Marines exercises boost allied readiness

By SCOTT WYLAND
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The U.S. Navy and Marines are training with their Italian and French counterparts in the Mediterranean Sea, during an exercise that coincides with a recent Russian navy buildup in the region.

The destroyer USS Mitscher, a P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol jet and a contingent from the 13th Marine

Expeditionary Unit took part in the 12-day Mare Aperto exercise that ends Thursday.

The services simulated amphibious assaults, conducted live-fire training and anti-submarine warfare drills, and practiced landing helicopters on ships, officials said. It's imperative for the U.S. and its allies to work well together in case they must counter potential adversaries like Russia, Adm. James Foggo, head of Naval Forces Europe

and Africa, said in a podcast last month.

Russia has been building up its naval presence in the Mediterranean in recent months amid increased tensions in Syria, where government forces have threatened to assault Idlib province, one of the last major rebel-held areas in the country.

The naval buildup has included at least 10 warships, many armed with long-range Kalibr cruise missiles. The

Mitscher left Norfolk on Sept. 20 for a scheduled seven-month deployment.

"There is simply no substitute for warships operating together to build trust," Cmdr. Ian Scaliatone, the Mitscher's commanding officer, said in a statement. "Mare Aperto is going to ... hone the coordination needed to respond to a crisis together."

Ex-Defense official on trial accused of taking bribes

The Washington Post

A former official in the Defense Department's inspector general's office and employees at a major telecommunications company steered work to an unqualified contractor in exchange for bribes that in-

cluded Disney cruises, Apple computers and cash, prosecutors have alleged in federal court in Alexandria, Va. As the department's inspector general moved its offices from Arlington, Va., to Alexandria from 2011 to 2013, prosecutors say

Florida contractor William Wilson made millions even though his construction company had no experience in information security issues.

Matthew Kekoa Lumho is accused of using his position in the department's IG's office to help

falsify records and approve fraudulent contracts for Level 3 Communications, a McLean, Va., telecommunications company which hired Wilson over cheaper, more local and more experienced contractors, prosecutors say.

Somali officials: US strike wiped out al-Shabab camp

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Somali intelligence officials said the largest U.S. military airstrike against al-Shabab extremists in Somalia in nearly a year largely destroyed a training camp where recruits were preparing to graduate and killed more fighters than the U.S. announced.

Two officials told The Associated Press that several missiles were fired on Friday by two unmanned U.S. drones.

Some of the freshly trained al-Shabab recruits were “burnt beyond recognition” and the death toll exceeds 75, one official said. The U.S. Africa Command on Tuesday said about 60

extremists had been killed.

The U.S. said the strike was meant to deny the al-Qaida-linked extremist group, the deadliest in sub-Saharan Africa, the ability to reconsolidate. Al-Shabab has several thousands of fighters and has proven to be resilient over the years, carrying out suicide bombings on high-profile targets in the capital, Mogadishu, and other cities as well as more conventional attacks against Somali, U.S. and African Union forces.

Some of the al-Shabab fighters killed in the U.S. airstrike, who had gone through months of training, were being prepared to carry out suicide bombings on Somali and AU

bases while others were foot soldiers meant for complex attacks across central and southern Somalia, one of the Somali intelligence officials said.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

The U.S. airstrike outside the al-Shabab-controlled seaside community of Harardere in Mudug province in Somalia’s central region was the deadliest since one on Nov. 21, 2017, against a camp killed about 100 al-Shabab fighters.

No civilian casualties have been reported in the latest airstrike which officials say hit only the intended target in a rural area. “Al-Shabab don’t

usually trust people nor would they allow them to come closer to their military sites,” one of the Somali officials said.

The strike dealt a “painful blow” to al-Shabab, the officials said.

But the camp’s location far north of the extremist group’s usual strongholds indicates its reach, analysts said.

“A large concentration of Shabab fighters a significant distance from its typical support zone in Jubba River Valley demonstrates the al-Qaida branch’s resilience across the country,” wrote Bill Roggio and Alexandra Gutowski for the Foundation for Defense of Democracies’ Long war Journal.

Mattis to meet Chinese counterpart amid tensions

Associated Press

SINGAPORE — U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis plans to meet Thursday in Singapore with his Chinese counterpart amid escalating tensions over China’s purchase of Russian fighter planes and missiles as well as ongoing friction in the South China Sea.

Shortly after Mattis arrived in Singapore on Wednesday, a senior Mattis aide told reporters that the meeting is set to happen.

Mattis and Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe were in Singapore for a regional meeting of defense ministers.

Randall Schriver, assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, told reporters the Chinese had requested the Singapore meeting. In late September, China told the Pentagon that Wei would be unavailable to meet Mattis in Beijing, so that visit was canceled.

Schriver said the U.S. sees signs that the military-to-military relationship may be on the upswing.

“The fact that he’s meeting with Minister Wei is some evidence that the Chinese are

interested in keeping things normal and stable, as are we,” Schriver said. “Our impression is that the (Chinese) military wants to keep things stable.”

Schriver said the trigger for recent tensions between the Pentagon and the Chinese military was the Trump administration’s decision in September to sanction the Chinese military for buying Russian fighter planes and missiles.

China responded with strong criticism, followed in the military arena by a decision to cancel a planned visit to the Pentagon by the head of the Chinese navy and a confrontation in the South China Sea between a Chinese warship and a U.S. Navy destroyer, the USS Decatur.

“That may turn out to be a relatively short bump in the road,” Schriver said, adding that Mattis is expected to convey to Wei U.S. interest in normal relations with the Chinese military.

More broadly, relations between the U.S. and China have deteriorated in recent months as escalating trade disputes and tariff hikes have been exacerbated by a newly announced U.S. military equipment sale to Taiwan.

Ancient ruins unearthed at US base on Okinawa

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Excavation work at a U.S. Army base on Okinawa has uncovered ancient ruins, some of which experts say are nearly 3,000 years old.

Announced this week by Yomitan Village officials, the find at U.S. Army Garrison Okinawa — also known as Torii Station — was first unearthed in 2015 at sites slated to host buildings that will be relocated from Camp Kinser and Camp Foster as part of long-standing U.S. military base consolidation plans.

“We believe they were village ruins found at 18 locations over the area where Camp Kinser’s and Camp Foster’s facilities are planning to be relocated,” said Okinawa Defense Bureau spokesman Masashi Katsuren.

Ruins from three of the 18 sites hail from the late Jomon period, between 2,700 and 2,800 years ago, said Yomitan Village Office of Cultural Division spokesman Katsuya Uechi, citing experts consulted on the find. The remaining 15

sites are from the Gusuku era, which was between 700 and 800 years ago.

It remains unclear what will be done with the unearthed artifacts. The defense bureau would not release photos of what was uncovered.

“We will continually work closely together with Yomitan Village Education Committee on archaeological properties,” Katsuren said.

The Kinser and Foster facilities are scheduled to be relocated in 2024 and beyond, and Katsuren said he does not believe the find will delay the move.

Spots slated for relocation to Torii Station include 0.2 square miles of land that makes up the West Futenma housing area, a 0.24 square mile industrial corridor along Route 58 that includes the Camp Foster Flea Market and bus parking areas spanning from the base commissary to the SPOT gate, and a 0.04 square mile warehouse area, Katsuren said.

The decision to relocate those facilities was made in April 2013.

Powerless hurricane victims face looters

Associated Press

PANAMA CITY, Fla. — Armed looters are targeting homes and businesses that remain without electricity after being ravaged by Hurricane Michael a week ago.

Sheriff's Maj. Jimmy Stanford said deputies have arrested about 10 looters each night since Florida's Bay County took a direct hit from the strong Category 4 storm last Wednesday. In some parts of the county, residents have spray-painted signs warning that "looters will be shot."

Callaway resident Victoria Smith told the News Herald that thieves came into her townhome while she and her four children were sleeping with the front door open to allow a breeze inside.

"I must've been so exhausted from ev-

erything in the past days I didn't even hear them come in," Smith said. "They just snatched my purse out of my hands and ran. ... It was all we had."

Often the looters have been armed, Stanford said.

"Most of our officers lost their homes, have been working 16- to 18-hour shifts with no sleep, no shower, and now they're encountering armed individuals," he said. "It's a stressful time for everyone in Bay County."

The storm killed at least 16 people in Florida, most of them in the coastal county that took a direct hit from the storm, state emergency authorities said Tuesday. That's in addition to at least 10 deaths elsewhere across the South.

The scope of the storm's fury became clearer after nearly a week of missing-persons reports and desperate searches of the Florida Panhandle neighborhoods devastated by the most powerful hurricane to hit the continental U.S. in nearly 50 years.

The Florida Department of Emergency Management's count of 16 dead was twice the number previously tallied by The Associated Press, and included 12 deaths in Bay County, where the hurricane slammed ashore with 155 mph winds and a catastrophic storm surge last Wednesday.

Bay County includes Mexico Beach, the ground-zero town of 1,000 people that was nearly obliterated, as well as Tyndall Air Force Base, Panama City and Lynn Haven, all of which were heavily damaged.

Investigators search Saudi consul's home

Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Turkish crime-scene investigators searched the home of the Saudi consul general in Istanbul on Wednesday in the disappearance of Saudi writer Jamal Khashoggi, and a pro-government newspaper published a gruesome account of the journalist's alleged slaying.

As Saudi Arabia's green national flag flapped overhead, forensics teams entered the residence, a little more than a mile from the consulate where Khashoggi vanished Oct. 2 while trying to pick up paperwork to get married. It was the second-such extraordinary search of land considered under international law to be sovereign Saudi soil after investigators spent hours in the consulate earlier this week.

The account published in the Yeni Safak

newspaper alleged that Saudi officials cut off Khashoggi's fingers and then decapitated him at the consulate as his fiancée waited outside.

The searches and the leaks in Turkish media have ensured the world's attention remains focused on what happened to Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist who went into a self-imposed exile in the U.S. over the rise of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. It also put further strains on the relationship between the kingdom, the world's largest oil exporter, and its main security guarantor, the United States, as tensions with Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East remain high.

Flying home after a visit to both Saudi Arabia and Turkey, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo remained positive about an

ongoing Saudi probe into Khashoggi's disappearance, but he stressed that answers are needed.

"Sooner's better than later for everyone," Pompeo said.

The report by Yeni Safak cited what it described as an audio recording of Khashoggi's slaying. It described the recording as offering evidence that a Saudi team immediately accosted the 60-year-old journalist after he entered the consulate.

Consul General Mohammed al-Otaibi could be heard on the tape, telling those allegedly torturing Khashoggi: "Do this outside; you're going to get me in trouble," the newspaper reported.

One of the Saudis reportedly replied: "Shut up if you want to live when you return to (Saudi) Arabia."

Canada officially legalizes recreational marijuana

Associated Press

TORONTO — Ian Power was among the first to buy legal recreational marijuana in Canada but he has no plans to smoke it. He plans to frame it.

Canada became the largest country with a legal national marijuana marketplace as sales began early Wednesday in Newfoundland. Power was first in line at a store in St. John's, Newfoundland.

"I am going to frame it and hang it on my wall. I'm not even going to smoke it. I'm just going to save it forever," Power said.

And there was more good news for pot aficionados: Hours before a handful of re-

tail outlets opened in the country's easternmost province a federal official told The Associated Press that Canada will pardon all those with convictions for possessing up to 30 grams of marijuana, the now-legal threshold.

A formal announcement was planned for later Wednesday. The official, who was not authorized to speak public ahead of the announcement, said those who want to take advantage of the pardons will have to apply.

Canada has had legal medical marijuana since 2001 and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government has spent two years working toward expanding that to include

recreational marijuana. The goal is to better reflect society's changing opinion about marijuana and bring black market operators into a regulated system.

Uruguay was first was the first country to legalize marijuana.

In St. John's, hundreds of customers were lined up around the block at the private store on Water Street, the main commercial drag in the provincial capital, by the time the clock struck midnight. A festive atmosphere broke out, with some customers lighting up on the sidewalk and motorists honking their horns in support as they drove by the crowd.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Haunted house suspends actors for mock rapes

OH AKRON — Complaints from visitors about being pushed onto a mattress where actors simulated raping them at an “edgy” haunted house in northeast Ohio has led to the suspension of the actors involved.

The Akron Beacon Journal reported Akron Fright Fest owner Jeremy Caudill said he was “shocked and appalled” when he learned Monday what had happened over the weekend at his haunted house in Summit County’s Springfield Township.

Some visitors complained to the newspaper they were injured by actors who shoved them. Two customers said they were pushed onto a mattress where actors simulated rape.

Fright Fest is advertised as a hands-on experience with actors getting physical and swearing amid “risque scenes.”

Colonel Sanders items to be auctioned

KY LOUISVILLE — Some items given to Colonel Harland Sanders’ driver and friend are being auctioned next month, including one of the Kentucky Fried Chicken founder’s white suits and matching Stetson hat.

Heritage Auctions of Dallas said in a news release that Dick Miller spent the last decade of Sanders’ life working for him. Miller stayed on after Sanders’ death in 1980, helping Sanders’ wife, Claudia, and working for the company.

The collection includes the couple’s driver’s licenses and credit cards, an inscribed belt buckle and a wristwatch.

The live auction will be Nov. 3 at Heritage Auctions’ Enter-

tainment & Music Memorabilia Auction, with internet bidding available through HA.com.

Police seek man who threatened woman

DE STANTON — Police in Delaware were looking for a man who allegedly threatened a woman with a hammer for refusing to speak with him.

Delaware State Police said the unidentified man followed a 31-year-old woman around the aisles at a store, prompting her to leave out of discomfort. They said he then followed her in his own car to a Wawa convenience store, where he blocked her car so she couldn’t escape.

Police say he banged on her window, demanding she get out and talk to him. When she refused, he got a hammer out of his car and waved it at her. She stayed in the car until he eventually left.

Neil Armstrong’s family to auction off artifacts

OH DAYTON — Flight enthusiasts will soon get a chance to acquire items from astronaut Neil Armstrong’s personal collection of artifacts.

The Dayton Daily News reported the family of the first man to walk on the moon will auction off over 2,000 of his personal memorabilia during a series of sales by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions beginning next month.

The Ohio native’s collection includes pieces from the Wright brothers’ flyer that pioneered powered flight in 1903.

Rabid raccoon attacks 3 people in neighborhood

DC WASHINGTON — Officials said a rabid

raccoon attacked three people in the nation’s capital before being captured.

News outlets cite a Monday statement from the city’s health department saying the raccoon targeted victims in northwest Washington’s Chevy Chase neighborhood, adjacent to the Maryland suburb of the same name. Two pets were also exposed.

The people and pets were given preventative treatment.

The health department said the raccoon was humanely euthanized.

NYPD: Man strangled by shirt caught in escalator

NY NEW YORK — The New York Police Department said a man was likely choked to death when he fell on a subway escalator and his shirt got caught in the moving staircase.

The NYPD said Carlos Alvarez, 48, fell at a subway station in the Bronx early Sunday, where he was found unconscious and unresponsive. He was cut out of the shirt and rushed to an area hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Authorities said Alvarez had been drinking before he fell.

Last cow caught weeks after truck crash

GA ATLANTA — Officials said a cow that hoofed it for two weeks on the lam after a livestock truck overturned on a busy interstate junction north of Atlanta was caught.

News outlets reported 89 cows initially escaped when the tractor-trailer wrecked before dawn on Oct. 1 on a cloverleaf linking Interstate 75 with Interstate 285. Eleven cows died in the crash.

The Georgia Department

of Transportation’s metro Atlanta district tweeted a photo of the runaway cow standing in some woods Monday morning. Department spokeswoman Natalie Dale said it was safely captured by the afternoon.

Family, missing dog reunited after 6 years

LA DENHAM SPRINGS — A Louisiana family was reunited with their dog that went missing six years ago thanks to a Mississippi couple who discovered the roaming pup.

WAFB-TV reported that owner Roberta Ostten said Jackson disappeared one night when he was let out to go to the bathroom.

Patrick and Patricia Mounts of Mississippi recently captured the roaming dog near Denham Springs and took him to a veterinarian in Liberty, Miss. The veterinarian discovered Jackson had a chip.

Museum’s totem pole getting overdue face-lift

IN TERRE HAUTE — A totem pole that’s overlooked a western Indiana museum’s entryway for decades is getting a long overdue face-lift.

A crane recently removed the Thunderbird totem pole, called Tootooch, from its longtime perch in front of the Vigo County Historical Society and Museum in Terre Haute for the project that will include repainting its seven original colors.

The Tribune-Star reported that once the restoration is complete, the pole will be moved to the new Vigo County Historical Museum.

From wire reports

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Warriors get rings, open with victory

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Stephen Curry is coming off an injury-plagued season and a summer he thought might be among his best yet.

On a festive night of celebration as another championship banner went up, Curry brought his usual flair and dazzle. Kevin Durant did all of the little things, too.

Curry had 32 points, nine assists and eight rebounds, Durant added 27 points, eight rebounds and six assists, and the Golden State Warriors opened their quest for a threepeat by holding off the Oklahoma City Thunder 108-100 on Tuesday night.

“I love who we are, game 1 of 82,” Durant said. “Just keep grinding.”

Golden State needed a strong fourth quarter after the two-time defending champions received their 2018 rings in a pregame ceremony shortly before tipoff and began the final season at Oracle Arena before a move across San Francisco Bay to new Chase Center.

“It’s a great move for the organization. We know that but this place is special, so we want

to make sure this is a special season,” coach Steve Kerr said.

Klay Thompson shot just 5-for-20 for 14 points while center Damian Jones scored 12 points on 6-for-7 shooting for the Warriors in his first career start and 26th game.

Kerr knows his players are still getting in shape and looked tired, saying: “We didn’t look much like ourselves. It’s not surprising, either. We need a couple more weeks.”

Curry called it “an emotional night” but then the Warriors had to refocus and get to work.

“We played a solid game, nothing spectacular, we had a lot of mistakes,” Curry said. “We understand the process of kind of building up.”

Paul George scored 27 points for the Thunder, who struggled to find an offensive groove while missing star Russell Westbrook because of knee surgery last month.

Oklahoma City trailed by 10 at the break then came out of halftime making nine of 12 shots to go ahead 69-66 before the Warriors rallied.

“I was really encouraged and pleased with the way we came out in the third quarter,” coach

Billy Donovan said. “Last year at times it was a struggle for us.”

Versatile Warriors All-Star Draymond Green, limited during the preseason by a sore knee, wound up with two points, 13 rebounds and five assists in nearly 33 minutes.

Curry, who shot 11-for-20 with five threes, notched 17 30-point performances during his injury-shortened 2017-18 season.

These teams met in a season opener for the first time — though the Warriors won on the road against the Seattle SuperSonics in 1983.

Golden State lost last year’s opener at Oracle after a title run, 122-121 to the Rockets.

Moment of silence

The Warriors showed a photo of late Trail Blazers owner Paul Allen on the big screen wearing a Portland hat, offering a tribute and moment of silence. Allen, a Microsoft co-founder who also owned the Seattle Seahawks, died Monday in Seattle from complications of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, according to his company Vulcan

Inc. He was 65.

Rock The Vote

Kerr encouraged fans to register to vote in a #RockTheVote message on the scoreboard, while the Warriors also did so on social media with Twitter and Facebook posts.

The rings

Players’ rings — what the team said are the first reversible championship rings ever — were lowered from the rafters with blue and yellow lightsabers.

Kerr called them “obscenely beautiful” and noted he much prefers the banner raising for its significance.

At the end of the ceremony, Curry took the microphone and called out longtime equipment manager and director of team operations Eric Housen to receive his ring in a lovely gesture to someone so important to the operation behind the scenes.

Recently retired big man David West, part of the last two title teams, sat courtside and received his ring.

Celtics welcome back big stars, pull away from 76ers

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Celtics will need time to figure out how to get the most out of their loaded roster this season.

It didn’t stop them from picking up their first victory on a night they celebrated the official return of their two biggest stars.

Jayson Tatum had 23 points and nine rebounds, and the Celtics beat the Philadelphia 76ers 105-87 on Tuesday night in the season opener for both teams.

Boston won despite shooting just 43 percent (42-for-97) from the field and 30 percent from the three-point line (11-for-37). But the Celtics’ struggles didn’t dampen the mood inside TD

Garden for the return to regular-season action for Gordon Hayward and Kyrie Irving.

Hayward said it was “amazing” to be back out there.

“My adrenaline was pumping those first three or four minutes,” Hayward said. “I think everybody’s adrenaline was pumping. It was sloppy at first. It was great just to be out there. It was a big step for me.”

Marcus Morris added 16 points and 10 rebounds off the bench. Al Horford had nine points and five blocks.

The Celtics survived a lethargic start and rough shooting night but rallied to lead by as many as 18 in the second half.

Including the playoffs, Bos-

ton has won 10 straight games at home over Philadelphia, which it defeated in the Eastern Conference semifinals last season.

Joel Embiid led the 76ers with 23 points and 10 rebounds. Ben Simmons finished with 19 points, 15 rebounds and eight assists.

Embiid made it clear afterward the 76ers have a way to go to be on the Celtics’ level.

“This not a rivalry,” he said. “I don’t know our record against them. But it’s pretty bad. They always kick our ass. So this is not a rivalry.”

Hayward played in his first game since undergoing surgery and more than 10 months of rehabilitation for the gruesome

left ankle injury he suffered five minutes into last year’s season opener.

Irving was also back following a pair of surgeries on his left knee that caused him to miss the end of the regular season and playoffs.

After receiving loud ovations during pregame introductions, Irving and Hayward both had sluggish starts.

Hayward missed his first four shots before making back-to-back jumpers. Irving missed his first nine attempts from the field. He didn’t score until finally connecting on a pair of free throws early in the third quarter.

They shot a combined 6 for 26 for the game.

Bellinger lifts Dodgers to NLCS lead

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — By the time Manny Machado rounded third base, the Los Angeles Dodgers had already started streaming out of the dugout.

After more than five hours of tension-filled baseball, they were certainly eager to celebrate.

Cody Bellinger singled home the winning run with two outs in the 13th inning Tuesday night to give Los Angeles a 2-1 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers that tied the NL Championship Series at two games apiece.

The slumping Bellinger, who began the night 1-for-21 in these playoffs, was chased all the way into left field by teammates. Even manager Dave Roberts ran out to congratulate his outfielder, who got soaked with a Gatorade shower.

"I think we gave each other a big hug," Bellinger said. "I think it was the first time I ever got mobbed out in the outfield."

Bellinger laced a full-count pitch from Junior Guerra into right field to score Machado, who was nearly picked off second base moments earlier. Instead, he slid home and touched the plate with his left hand to beat Christian Yelich's throw and finally end an October nail-biter that took 5 hours, 15 minutes.

"One of the crazier games, where there's really no margin on either side," Roberts said. "The bullpen, what they did tonight against a very good offensive club, my hat's off to these guys."

It was the fourth extra-inning postseason game in Dodger Stadium history, and the home team's first such win since beating Philadelphia in Game 4 of the 1978 NLCS.

"It was a great baseball game, it really was," Yelich said. "Both sides had opportunities and they were just able to cash one in there at the end."

With one out in the 13th, Machado hit a broken-bat single

to left field and went to second on Guerra's wild pitch. With first base open and a struggling Yasmani Grandal on deck followed by the pitcher's spot, the Brewers chose to pitch to Bellinger — and it cost them.

"Honestly, I didn't think he was going to throw me a strike," Bellinger said. "And then once I noticed he was attacking me, I just tried to put the ball in play and hopefully find a hole this time."

Milwaukee manager Craig Counsell said: "I thought it was worth the risk of trying to expand to Bellinger, and if the at-bat goes to Grandal, we walk Grandal."

Bellinger, who entered as a pinch hitter in the sixth, also made a diving catch on his belly of a ball hit by Lorenzo Cain leading off the 10th, spreading his arms out and sliding like a snow angel in right field.

"I played right field in the minor leagues a lot before I started playing center field. I haven't been there much lately,"

Bellinger said. "But it's kind of like riding a bike. I saw it hanging up there, and ran as fast as I could and dove for it."

Both teams used all their position players and wasted numerous chances. Los Angeles went through its entire bullpen.

Machado allowed his left leg to clip the lower right leg of Aguilar at first base while getting thrown out on a routine play in the 10th. Aguilar appeared upset and the two exchanged words. Both benches and bullpens emptied, but no punches were thrown.

"It's a dirty play by a dirty player," Yelich said.

Aguilar, however, said the two talked it out after Machado singled in the 13th. Machado said they go back to their days in the minors.

"Everything that happens on the field stays on the field," Machado said. "He's a great guy."

Bradley's slam puts Red Sox on top in ALCS

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Jackie Bradley Jr. didn't let his demeanor change this season, even as fans begged Boston to trade him during a miserable first-half slump.

Stayed steady after the biggest swing of his career, too.

Bradley belted a grand slam for his second big hit in the AL Championship Series, helping the Red Sox beat the Houston Astros 8-2 on Tuesday for a 2-1 series lead. His low-key personality was on display as he rounded the bases without the hint of a smile. He greeted his screaming, excited teammates at home plate with one small jump and a few high fives.

"One of my coaches back in the day ... said: 'No one should ever know whether you're winning or losing. Kind of keep the same temperament. That way, it will allow you to put some perspective into things,'" Bradley said. "And I kind of took that to heart."

Bradley's slam backed a solid start by Nathan Eovaldi, who hushed Houston a day after some social media smack talk from Alex Bregman.

"We can play at any park," Eovaldi said. "The first game is always the biggest one of any series when you go on the road."

Game 4 is Wednesday night, with Boston's Rick Porcello opposing Charlie Morton.

Steve Pearce hit a tiebreaking homer for the Red Sox off Joe Smith in the sixth, a drive that sailed just inside the foul pole in left field for a 3-2 lead.

Bradley's slam capped a five-run burst in the eighth against Roberto Osuna. The Astros closer got two outs but allowed two singles and plunked consecutive batters to force in a run. Bradley then crushed a 1-1 fastball into the right field seats to send Houston fans streaming toward the exits.

"That's the pitch I always get him out with," Osuna said. "He hit it today, but I would go there 100 more times."

Osuna was acquired from Toronto this season while serving a 75-game ban under Major League Baseball's domestic violence policy. He had a 1.99 ERA in 23 games for Houston in the regular season after he returned.

With his childhood hero and fellow Alvin, Texas, native Nolan Ryan sitting behind the

plate, Eovaldi turned in another solid start. He allowed six hits and two runs with four strikeouts in six innings for the win in the second playoff start of his career.

"For him, I know it's a special one," Boston manager Alex Cora said.

Bregman had shared a video Monday on Instagram of Houston hitting back-to-back-to-back home runs off Eovaldi in his previous outing against the Astros in June. Eovaldi downplayed the post when asked about it Monday.

Bregman did much of the damage against Eovaldi, getting two hits, an RBI and a walk in three plate appearances. Bregman has reached base safely in 20 of 28 plate appearances this postseason.

"Eovaldi did a great job," Bregman said. "He had really five pitches working for him. He's tough. We knew that coming into the game."

Bradley hit a three-run double during Boston's Game 2 victory, giving him three RBIs in consecutive games for the first time in his career.

The Astros went 1-for-8 with runners in scoring position in the first home game of the series.

LSU turns focus to slowing Fitzgerald

Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — LSU's defense is getting mentally prepared for the physical challenges ahead of it.

Yes, the fifth-ranked Tigers were able to celebrate shutting down then-No. 2 Georgia. But now LSU will be tested in its next two games by teams with quarterbacks who have dominated opponents with different strengths.

On Saturday, the Tigers will be challenged by Mississippi State's Nick Fitzgerald, who is the Southeastern Conference quarterback career-rushing

leader.

Following an off week, the Tigers will then attempt to stop Tua Tagovailoa and top-ranked Alabama on Nov. 3. Tagovailoa, who has yet to play a complete game this season, has passed for 1,760 yards and 21 touchdowns — and no interceptions.

Right now though, LSU's focus is not on the Crimson Tide; Mississippi State is receiving all of the Tigers' attention.

And with good reason: Last season, the Bulldogs hammered LSU 37-7 in Starkville.

"We still have that taste in our mouth from last year," said LSU coach Ed Orgeron,

referring to the defeat against Mississippi State. "They out-physicaled us on both sides of the football."

The Tigers were reminded two weeks ago what can happen when they lose at the line of scrimmage. Florida rushed for 215 yards in handing LSU its only defeat of the season, 27-19. The Tigers turned the tables on Georgia, holding the Bulldogs to 113 yards on the ground in a dominating 36-16 victory.

"I would not say we were embarrassed against Florida," defensive end Breiden Fehoko said. "It was that we were disappointed in the way we played.

We know what we are capable of doing. Last week against Florida, we got beat in the trenches. Florida won the game on both sides of the ball.

"We didn't lock in against Florida and they hit us in the mouth. Against Georgia, we wanted to show the whole nation what we can do. We dominated on all points of the defense. That game showed the guts of this team."

LSU's defensive players will need to play with that same tenaciousness against Mississippi State. The Bulldogs ran for 285 yards in last season's whipping of the Tigers.

NHL roundup

Devils shut out Stars, get off to best start in 23 years

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The New Jersey Devils have found a perfect combination for the start of the season.

Kyle Palmieri scores early and goaltender Keith Kinkaid makes the lead stand up.

Palmieri scored his seventh goal in four games, Kinkaid stopped 24 shots for his second shutout and the Devils continued their best start since the 1995-96 season with a 3-0 win over the road-challenged Dallas Stars on Tuesday night.

Palmieri is now the first player in NHL history to score his team's opening goal in four consecutive games to begin a season.

"It's nice to get rewarded for putting pucks on net but I think it's fun to come to the rink right now," Palmieri said. "The team is in a good mood and we're happy with the way we're playing and beating some really good teams so hopefully we keep that going."

Kinkaid has been a big reason for that. He has given up four goals in four games.

Late pickup Jean-Sebastien Dea tallied for the third straight game and Blake Cole-

man added a goal as the Devils remained the NHL's only unbeaten team.

Golden Knights 4, Sabres 1: Marc-Andre Fleury earned his 407th win to tie Glenn Hall for 10th place on the NHL list as host Vegas beat Buffalo.

Jonathan Marchessault scored twice and Fleury made 26 saves for the defending Western Conference champions. Cody Eakin and William Karlsson also had goals for the Golden Knights, who scored more than two for the first time in seven games this season.

Vladimir Sobotka scored with 37 seconds left, spoiling Fleury's bid for his 50th career shutout.

Rangers 3, Avalanche 2 (SO): Kevin Shattenkirk scored the deciding goal in a shootout to lift host New York over Colorado.

Mats Zuccarello scored for the Rangers in the first round of the tiebreaker, and Mikko Rantanen tied it in the second. Shattenkirk then beat Avalanche goalie Semyon Varlamov in the third round, and Henrik Lundqvist denied Gabriel Landeskog to secure New York's second win in six games this season (2-4-0).

Canucks 3, Penguins 2 (OT): Brock Boeser fired a wrist shot by Casey DeSmith's stick and into the net 34 seconds into overtime to lift visiting Vancouver to a victory over Pittsburgh.

The Penguins tied it late in regulation when Carl Hagelin took a perfect pass from Phil Kessel and slipped it past Anders Nilsson with 3:14 to go.

Vancouver, however, responded in the extra period.

Flyers 6, Panthers 5 (SO): Jordan Weal scored in the shootout to lift host Philadelphia over Florida.

Weal had a goal and an assist, and Jakub Voracek also scored in the shootout for the Flyers. Philadelphia had to rally to earn two points after leading by three goals late in the second period.

Wayne Simmonds and Claude Giroux each had two goals for the Flyers.

Wild 2, Coyotes 1: Eric Staal and Mikael Grandlund scored and Devan Dubnyk stopped 27 of 28 shots to lead host Minnesota to a win over Arizona.

Brendan Perlini scored and Darcy Kuemper stopped 30 shots in his season debut for Arizona. Kuemper was making

his first appearance against the franchise that drafted him in 2009. He spent parts of five seasons in Minnesota before leaving as a free agent in 2017.

Lightning 4, Hurricanes 2: Tyler Johnson had three goals, Yanni Gourde scored on a power play to put their team ahead in the third period and host Tampa Bay beat Carolina.

Johnson scored in all three periods, completing the hat trick on an empty-netter with 1:56 remaining.

After Carolina defenseman Calvin de Haan fanned on a clearing attempt, Gourde made it 3-2 on a pass from Ondrej Palat at 7:02 of the third.

Oilers 5, Jets 4 (OT): Connor McDavid had four points and Darnell Nurse scored his first goal of the season 1:25 into overtime as visiting Edmonton overcame a three-goal deficit to beat Winnipeg.

McDavid scored twice and added a pair of assists for the Oilers, who were down 4-1 to start the third period.

Ty Rattie ignited the comeback when he scored 18 seconds into the third. McDavid got his second power-play goal of the game at 2:28, and Jesse Puljujarvi tied it at 13:39.