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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Turkey begins attack on Kurds in Syria

Associated Press

AKCAKALE, Turkey — Turkey launched airstrikes and fired artillery aimed at crushing Kurdish fighters in northern Syria on Wednesday after U.S. troops pulled back from the area, paving the way for an assault on forces that have long been allied with the United States.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the start of the campaign, which followed an abrupt decision Sunday by President Donald Trump that American troops would step aside to allow for the operation.

Trump's move, which has drawn harsh bipartisan opposition at home, represented a shift in U.S. policy, essentially abandoning the Syrian Kurdish fighters who have been America's only allies inside Syria in the fight against Islamic State.

After Turkey's offensive began, there was signs of panic in the streets of Ras al-Ayn — one of the towns under attack with residential areas close to the borders. Cars raced to safety, although it was not clear if they were leaving the town or heading away from border areas. Near the town of Qamishli, plumes of smoke were seen rising from an area close to the border after activists reported sounds of explosion nearby.

At least one member of the Kurdish-led force known as the Syrian Democratic Forces was killed in the Turkish bombardment, Kurdish activists and a Syria war monitor said.

Trump said Wednesday the U.S. does not endorse Turkey's military assault on Syria, calling the operation a "bad idea."

Trump's written statement was issued hours after Turkey, a NATO ally, launched its

offensive.

"The United States does not endorse this attack and has made it clear to Turkey that this operation is a bad idea," Trump said.

Turkey's campaign — in which a NATO member is raining down bombs on an area where hundreds of U.S. troops were stationed — drew immediate criticism and calls for restraint from Europe.

"Coalition forces are not near the places Turkey has struck so far," an official with the U.S.-led coalition told The Associated Press.

Kurdish forces have warned of a "humanitarian catastrophe" that could potentially unfold because of the Turkish military operation.

"Our mission is to prevent the creation of a terror corridor across our southern border, and to bring peace to the area,"

Erdogan said in a tweet.

He added that Turkish Armed Forces, together with Turkish-backed Syrian fighters known as the Syrian National Army, had begun what they called "Operation Peace Spring" against Kurdish fighters to eradicate what Erdogan said was "the threat of terror" against Turkey.

Minutes before Erdogan's announcement, Turkish jets began pounding suspected positions of Syrian Kurdish forces in Ras al Ayn, according to Turkish media and Syrian activists. The sound of explosions could be heard in Turkey.

It was difficult to know what was hit in the first hours of the operation. Mustafa Bali, a spokesman for the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, said Turkish warplanes were targeting "civilian areas" in northern Syria, causing "a huge panic."

Resiliency trumps disaster as Fla. air base rebuilds

The (Panama City, Fla.)
News Herald

TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — The graphic image from space of Hurricane Michael passing over this military airfield, its twin runways clearly visible in the center of the eye, should be the iconic symbol of what happened here a year ago.

The image caught from a weather satellite and superimposed on a computer map of Bay County demonstrated human technology at its apex, capturing the deadly cyclone as it scoured the terrain of eastern Bay County. It also caught the moment where nature's wrath overcame human technology as the 130-mph winds and torrential rain all but destroyed

this 78-year-old Air Force base as its commander and a small hand-picked team cowered in an underground shelter.

Yet Col. Brian Laidlaw, commander of the 325th Fighter Wing before and after the storm, disagrees.

"The photograph showed the entire 15-mile-wide eye of the storm," Laidlaw agreed in a recent interview. "It completely encompassed Tyndall ... the 29,000 acres of Tyndall are in the middle, and the runways are smack dab in the middle" of the image.

Nevertheless, in the year since Hurricane Michael, Laidlaw said he has collected a rich body of evidence that shows a different — and more uplifting — symbol of what has happened

at Tyndall Air Force Base. As he and thousands of military personnel and civilian contractors have labored 24/7 to bring the base back to life, Laidlaw said, the resilience and dedication of the Tyndall community has supplanted the mere images of destruction.

It started slowly. When the storm had passed Oct. 11, the prospect of resurrecting Tyndall appeared too daunting to even imagine. Of the 484 buildings and structures on the 14.5-square-mile facility, half were destroyed or suffered sufficient damage to make repairs unfeasible. The flight line was reduced to rubble. The control tower sustained severe flooding. Most of the base's 663 housing units were flattened or

seriously damaged.

But because of its vital location near the Gulf of Mexico and an extended air combat training range shared with Eglin Air Force Base, closing Tyndall was never an option, Laidlaw said on many occasions this past year.

To date, the Air Force has spent \$700 million for repairs and renovations at Tyndall, and Laidlaw said with the start of the 2019-20 fiscal year Oct. 1, he anticipates receiving another \$577 million from the disaster aid supplemental appropriation passed by Congress in June. The remainder of what will likely top \$3 billion in military construction funds is anticipated to come during the 2020 and 2021 fiscal years.

US airstrikes last month in Afghanistan near record high

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The United States dropped more bombs and other munitions in Afghanistan last month than any other month in nearly a decade, Air Force data released Tuesday showed.

The increase in bombing followed the collapse of peace talks between the United States and the Taliban in early September and a vow by President Donald Trump “to hit our enemy harder” than ever before.

Manned American aircraft and drones released 948 munitions in Afghanistan throughout September, according to U.S. Air Forces Central Command.

Since international combat operations in Afghanistan ended about five years ago, the United States has been the only foreign NATO partner known to conduct airstrikes in the country.

American aircraft have flown about 800 sorties so far this year, of which about 290 included strikes, AFCENT said.

Speaking last month on the 18th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States,

Trump said, “We have hit our enemy harder than they have ever been hit before, and that will continue.”

The announcement came days after Trump ended nearly a year of peace negotiations between the insurgents and American officials.

Trump cited a Taliban attack that killed an American servicemember in Kabul as a reason for the cancellation.

“We did step up our attacks on the Taliban since the talks broke down,” Defense Secretary Mark Esper told reporters in Washington last week.

September’s uptick added to a bombing campaign that had already accelerated under Trump.

Last year, the U.S. dropped a record high 7,362 munitions in Afghanistan.

The United Nations has blamed the increase for causing more civilian deaths.

Airstrikes, most of which were conducted by U.S. forces, were the leading cause of noncombatant deaths in Afghanistan during the first half of the year, killing more than 360 people, the U.N. said in a July report. The U.S. military routinely disputes the methodology and sourcing of the U.N.’s findings.

Corps: Marine involved in fight that led to student’s death

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Marine on leave was involved in a scuffle that led to the death of a Boston college student who was fatally injured as he and his friends were leaving a late-night party, the Marine Corps said Tuesday in a statement.

Daniel J. Hollis, a student at Emerson College, and his friends were leaving a party Sept. 28 when they were confronted by another group of college-age boys, according to a webpage created by his family on CaringBridge, a website used to communicate updates to family and friends about someone’s illness or medical treatment. Words were exchanged, and the two groups started pushing and shoving. “In the scuffle, we believe Dan was hit and subsequently hit his head on cement/bricks as he fell,” according to the family’s post.

Boston police said officers reported to an assault and battery at about 1:30 a.m. in the area of 15 Park Vale Ave. in Brighton and found Hollis unconscious and suffering from a head injury. He was transported to a local hospital.

Hollis died Oct. 2 at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, according to his obituary.

“We are deeply saddened to learn that an off-base incident allegedly involving one of our Marines has led to the passing of a man in the Boston community,” the Marine Corps said in its statement. “The event occurred during an approved leave period for the Marine, in the early hours of Sept. 28, 2019. This is a tragic event and is being treated with great care and solemnity on the part of the command.”

No arrests have been made, the Globe reported. The Marine has not been identified.

Airmen in S. Korea try apps to curb stress

BY MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — Airmen in South Korea have been hard at work in their free time developing concepts for phone applications that could reduce the number of DUIs in the force and provide airmen a means to deal anonymously with daily stressors.

Members of Osan’s 51st Fighter Wing worked with the organization’s Innovation Engine Room, led by Master Sgt. Courtney Christiansen, to prepare their ideas, perfect their pitch and build video presentations in preparation for the Air Force Spark Tank 2020 competition. The room was created to give innovative airmen the resources and connections needed to turn their ideas into reality.

Spark Tank is an annual com-

petition in which airmen pitch innovative ideas to top Air Force leadership. The goal of the competition is to find new ways of maintaining Air Force readiness, cost effectively modernize its operation and drive innovation within its ranks, Christiansen said.

Senior Airman Emma Poveromo, an emergency room medical technician with the 51st Medical Operations Squadron, is developing a phone app that would streamline the Airmen Against Drunk Driving program for its volunteers and its inebriated users.

The program is a volunteer-based transportation service that provides a ride home for airmen who have been drinking.

Wing commander Col. John Gonzales on Friday announced that Poveromo’s design would advance to the Pacific Air

Forces competition, along with an app designed to help airmen cope with daily stressors.

First Lt. George Cooksey, a bioenvironmental engineer for the wing, has designed a social interaction application for airmen who are reluctant to talk with co-workers, leadership or mental health professionals for fear of damaging their careers.

“We have created an app to connect two anonymous airmen, either through text or voice chat, to speak open and honestly, and have a genuine human interaction without having that fear of my career will be impacted,” Cooksey said.

Only one airman can claim the winning title in February at the Air Force Association’s Air Warfare Symposium in Orlando, Fla.

Trump lashes out as Dems claim betrayal of nation

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Wednesday called for ending the Democratic-led impeachment inquiry “for the good of the Country,” claiming it was tainted with political bias, and said the whistleblower at the heart of the complaint should be “exposed and properly questioned.”

Trump’s comments, in morning tweets, came a day after the White House said in a scathing eight-page letter that it would not cooperate with the inquiry into the Ukraine scandal, saying it lacked merit.

The letter was the latest escalation in a standoff with Congress, where Democrats are vowing to hold Trump accountable for pressing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to investigate former Vice President Joe Biden and his son at a time when U.S. military aid to Ukraine had been suspended.

In a statement Wednesday, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md., said that Trump had “betrayed our nation.” Hoyer’s assessment came in a statement in response to the White House letter.

“The letter sent by the White House yesterday is the latest example of this Administration’s efforts to stonewall an investigation into the President’s abuse of power and obstruct justice,” Hoyer said. “The evidence shows that the President betrayed our nation by encouraging foreign interference in our election, undermining our democracy and national security.”

Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said Wednesday that he is seeking Republican signatures for a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., that contends that Trump’s July call with Zelenskyy does not amount to an impeachable offense.

Graham made his comments during an appearance on Fox

Survey finds greater support for inquiry

The Washington Post

A majority of Americans say they endorse the decision by House Democrats to begin an impeachment inquiry of President Donald Trump, and nearly half of all adults also say the House should take the additional step and recommend that the president be removed from office, according to a Washington Post-Schar School poll.

The findings indicate that public opinion has shifted quickly against the president and in favor of impeachment proceedings in recent weeks as information has been released about Trump’s efforts to pressure Ukrainian government officials to undertake an investigation into former Vice President Joe Biden, a potential 2020 campaign rival, and Biden’s son Hunter.

Previous Post-Schar School or Post-ABC News polls taken throughout this year found majorities of Americans opposing the start of an impeachment proceeding, with 37 percent to 41 percent saying they favored such a step. The recent

revelations appear to have prompted many Americans to rethink their position.

The poll finds that, by a margin of 58 percent to 38 percent, Americans say the House was correct to undertake the inquiry. Among all adults, 49 percent say the House should take the more significant step to impeach the president and call for his removal from office. Another 6 percent say they back the start of the inquiry but do not favor removing Trump from office.

More than 8 in 10 Democrats endorse the inquiry and nearly 8 in 10 favor a vote to recommend that Trump be removed from office. Among Republicans, roughly 7 in 10 do not support the inquiry but almost 3 in 10 do, and almost one-fifth of Republicans say they favor a vote recommending his removal. Among the critical voting bloc of independents, support for the impeachment inquiry hits 57 percent, with 49 percent saying the House should vote to remove Trump from office.

News in which he called the House impeachment inquiry “a star-chamber process.”

Graham also elaborated on his earlier invitation to have Trump’s personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, testify in front of his Senate panel.

“He’s claiming to have a lot of evidence about corruption in the Ukraine that ties back

to the Democrats that’s apart from what the House is looking at,” Graham said. “I think Rudy’s got a story to tell. I want him to tell it in my committee.”

If Trump is impeached by the Democratic-led House, a trial would be held in the Republican-led Senate to determine whether to remove him from office.

Migrant arrests surge

The Washington Post

The number of migrants taken into custody along the U.S. southern border soared to nearly 1 million during the government’s 2019 fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection data released Tuesday.

The number of unauthorized crossings from Mexico into the United States marked the highest volume in 12 years, amid a record influx of Central American families that peaked during the spring, overwhelming U.S. agents, border stations and immigration courtrooms.

Mark Morgan, the acting CBP commissioner, told reporters at a White House briefing that more than 52,000 migrants were taken into custody in September at U.S. ports of entry and between them, a decline of 18% from August.

Overall, U.S. border authorities made 977,509 arrests during the 2019 fiscal year, up 88% from last year and the highest total since 2007. Morgan called it a “staggering” increase.

“These are numbers no immigration system in the world is designed to handle,” he said.

Arrests by U.S. border agents reached an all-time high of 1.6 million in 2000, but Department of Homeland Security officials insist that the migration wave they faced this year is unlike anything in the past.

A generation ago, most of the migrants crossing the border illegally were single adults from Mexico who could be quickly processed and deported.

This year, Central American parents with children became the overwhelming majority of border crossers. Instead of seeking to evade capture, many sought out U.S. agents to surrender and stated a fear of being sent home, the first step in seeking asylum or another form of legal protection in the United States.

Judge elected 1st black mayor in Ala. capital

Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama's capital, a city once known as the cradle of the Confederacy and later the birthplace of the civil rights movement, elected its first African American mayor Tuesday.

Probate Judge Steven Reed, 45, clasped the history-making victory to be elected the next mayor of Montgomery after defeating businessman David Woods by a decisive margin. Reed won about 67% of the vote in Tuesday's mayoral runoff, according to unofficial returns.

"This election has never been about me. This election has never been about just my ideas. It's been about all of the hopes and dreams that we have as individuals and collectively in the city," Reed said in his victory speech.

Reed said his campaign was built on a coalition focused on the city's future and "all of the things that tie us together rather than those things that keep us apart."

Reed was already the first black probate judge elected in Montgomery County and was one of the first to issue mar-

riage licenses to gay couples in the state. His father, Joe Reed, is the longtime leader of the black caucus of the Alabama Democratic Party. Woods, who owns WCOV-TV, is the son of the late broadcasting executive Charles Woods, a perennial Alabama candidate for more than 30 years.

Reed will be the first black mayor of the city where Southern delegates voted to form the Confederacy in 1861. The city served as the first capital of the Confederacy.

The city also played a critical role in the civil rights move-

ment. City Hall is not far from the church once led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and is also near the spot where Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to obey bus segregation laws.

Reed will replace current Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange, who has served since 2009 and did not seek reelection.

Montgomery, a city of roughly 200,000 people, is about 60% black and has been losing population for years. Issues in the race included tackling crime, which Woods said is his top priority during a debate.

Shooting near synagogue leaves 2 dead in Germany

Associated Press

HALLE, Germany — Shots were fired outside a synagogue and into a kebab shop in an eastern German city Wednesday, Judaism's holiest day, witnesses said. Police said that two people were killed and the assailant or assailants fled.

An attacker tried to force his way into the synagogue in the city of Halle but did not get in as 70 to 80 people inside were observing Yom Kippur, a local Jewish leader said.

Police said in a tweet that the suspects fled in a car, and soon after reported that one person had been arrested. They gave no information about that person, or the suspected target or targets, or why they thought the attack may have been carried out by multiple assailants.

Officers were out in force across Halle, a city of 240,000. They initially urged resi-

dents to stay at home, and the city's train station was closed.

Several hours later, police said that there was no longer an "acute" danger to the population and residents could go back into the streets.

They didn't specify why the assessment had changed, but news agency dpa and newspaper Bild cited unidentified security sources as saying the evidence points to a lone assailant.

Federal prosecutors, who in Germany handle cases involving suspected terrorism or national security, took over the investigation.

A video clip broadcast by regional public broadcaster MDR showed a man in a helmet and an olive-colored top getting out of a car and firing four shots from behind the vehicle from a long-barreled gun. It wasn't clear what he was shooting at.

Pictures from the scene showed a body

lying in the street behind a police cordon. The body was lying opposite a synagogue, about 30 yards away from the building, dpa reported.

The head of Halle's Jewish community, Max Privorozki, told German news magazine Der Spiegel that a camera at the entrance of the synagogue showed a person trying to break into the building.

"The assailant shot several times at the door and also threw several Molotov cocktails, firecrackers or grenades to force his way in," he said. "But the door remained closed — God protected us. The whole thing lasted perhaps five to 10 minutes."

A witness interviewed on n-tv television said he had been in a kebab shop when a man with a helmet and a military jacket threw something that looked like a grenade, which bounced off the doorframe. Conrad Roessler said the man then shot into the shop at least once.

3 win Nobel in chemistry for work on lithium-ion batteries

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM — Three scientists on Wednesday were awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for their contributions to the development of lithium-ion batteries, which have reshaped energy storage and transformed cars, mobile phones and many other devices in an increasingly portable and electronic world.

The prize went to John B. Goodenough of the University of Texas; M. Stanley Whittingham of the State University of New

York at Binghamton; and Akira Yoshino of Asahi Kasei Corporation and Meijo University in Japan.

Goran Hansson, secretary general of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, said the prize was about "a rechargeable world."

In a statement, the committee said lithium-ion batteries "have revolutionized our lives" — and the laureates "laid the foundation of a wireless, fossil fuel-free society."

The Nobel committee said the lithium-ion battery has its roots in the oil crisis in

the 1970s, when Whittingham was working to develop methods aimed at leading to fossil fuel-free energy technologies.

The prizes come with a \$918,000 cash award, a gold medal and a diploma that are conferred on Dec. 10 — the anniversary of Nobel's death in 1896 — in Stockholm and in Oslo, Norway.

Prize founder Alfred Nobel, a Swedish industrialist who invented dynamite, decided the physics, chemistry, medicine and literature prizes should be awarded in Stockholm, and the peace prize in Oslo.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Couple accused of stealing timber

LA DERIDDER — A Louisiana couple was accused of stealing more than \$35,000 worth of timber.

According to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, enforcement agents received a complaint from a landowner who hired Ricky Cooley, 51, to harvest timber on their 50 acres of land in Vernon Parish.

Department spokeswoman Veronica Mosgrove said during the investigation agents found 34 loads of timber that Cooley and his wife, Priscilla Cooley, 48, allegedly hid and did not pay the landowner for. The timber was valued at \$36,095.

Goat rams door, naps inside bathroom

OH ASHLAND — An Ohio homeowner is dealing with the aftermath of a large goat that broke into her home by ramming through a sliding glass door and then settling down for a nap in a bathroom.

The Ashland Times-Gazette reported Logan Keathley returned to his family's Sullivan Township home to find their German shepherd agitated and the house reeking. That's when he discovered a goat who had escaped from a farm napping in a bathroom.

Ashland County sheriff's deputies grabbed the goat by the horns and led him outside.

Naked man found singing in kitchen, drinking milk

PA ERIE — Authorities said a Pennsylvania home-owner who heard someone singing inside his home found a naked man drinking

milk in his kitchen.

Erie police said the homeowner heard the singing around 3 a.m. He grabbed his pistol and went to investigate and soon found the man sitting on the kitchen floor.

The homeowner called police and the man was taken into custody. It wasn't clear how he entered the home or how long he had been in the residence.

Frozen bagels scorched when semi catches fire

IN RENSSELAER — A load of frozen bagels ended up toasted and strewn along a northwestern Indiana highway after a semi-trailer's rear axle caught fire.

State police said an off-duty trooper noticed smoke pouring from the rear of a box trailer being hauled by a semi along northbound Interstate 65.

The southbound trooper turned around, but by the time he stopped the truck, its trailer's brakes were burning as the flames spread into its 38,000-pound load of frozen bagels.

Crooks steal duffel bag full of snakes

CA SAN JOSE — A California reptile lover said thieves who made off with his duffel bag probably thought they were taking swag. But it was full of snakes.

Brian Gundy, who breeds and sells reptiles through his business, For Goodness Snakes, had given a presentation at Martin Luther King Library in downtown San Jose and left his gear in a parking garage to get his car.

When he returned, he found a duffel bag containing three pythons and a lizard was gone.

Gundy told KRON-TV two snakes were later found in a dumpster.

Reality star reports jewelry stolen from car

GA ATLANTA — A reality television star and the wife of rapper T.I. said \$750,000 dollars' worth of jewelry, including wedding rings, was stolen from her Lamborghini outside of an Atlanta bar.

News outlets reported Tameka "Tiny" Harris told Atlanta police that the rings, as well as watches and stud earrings, were among the pricey pieces missing when she returned to her car after an event. She told officers she left a blue velour bag on her center console with the jewelry inside and later discovered it was gone.

The theft is being investigated.

Trappers capture record python

FL BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE — Officials said Florida trappers captured a record-setting python as part of an effort that encourages hunters to remove the invasive snakes from the Everglades.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission said the 18-foot, 4-inch-long female python weighed 98 pounds, 10 ounces. A statement by the Fish and Wildlife Commission said it was the largest snake captured by the new Python Action Team.

Hatchery accused of salmon abuse

ME BINGHAM — Maine officials are investigating an aquaculture hatchery in the wake of an undercover group's allegation of improper treatment of fish at the facility.

Compassion Over Killing, a

Washington, D.C.-based animal welfare group, released hidden-camera footage that shows workers at the hatchery stomping on the fish, among other irregularities.

The Bangor Daily News reported Maine's state Animal Welfare Program has an open case with Canadian fish farming giant Cooke Aquaculture, which operates the hatchery.

'Mummified' body leads to charges against 3

TN KNOXVILLE — Police in Tennessee said the discovery of a body in a "mummified state" in a shed behind a residence led to charges against three people.

News outlets reported Knoxville police said that officers responded to a report of a possible homicide and while searching the property found the body wrapped in a tarp.

Authorities said three people at the residence were charged with abuse of a corpse and tampering with evidence: Tommy Wayne Rose, 62; Deborah Maria Gister, 41, and Christina Barbara McCormack, 48. All have denied having any knowledge of the death.

Pumpkinfest winner weighs 1,832.5 pounds

ME DAMARISCOTTA — The biggest pumpkin at the weigh off at the Damariscotta Pumpkinfest came in at a cool 1,832.5 pounds.

Edwin Pierpont, of Jefferson, gets credit for growing the massive gourd.

The pumpkins were displayed, carved, painted and made into boats for the boat race in the town's harbor.

From wire reports

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Revived Rays force Game 5 with Astros

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The Tampa Bay Rays never doubted themselves, even with Justin Verlander looking to end their season.

Willy Adames homered and made a sensational relay throw from shortstop, and the Rays chased the Houston ace early in beating the Astros 4-1 Tuesday night to even their AL Division Series at two games apiece.

With their second victory in two days over one of baseball's best pitchers, the Rays believe the rest of the country is finally getting a taste of what they're capable of accomplishing.

"Hey, I hate to say it: About time, because we have a really good team over here," Tommy Pham said.

"To win 96 games in this division (the AL East) with New York and Boston is an impressive feat," he added. "All year, we've been getting talked down. And now, with the last two games, the way we played, the whole world has seen how good of a team we are and how well-rounded we are."

The series shifts back to Houston for a deciding Game 5 on Thursday night. Astros star Gerrit Cole is scheduled to

pitch for the heavily favored AL West champs, who led the majors with 107 wins this season and have one more chance to close out the feisty Rays. Tyler Glasnow is expected to start for Tampa Bay.

The winner plays the New York Yankees in the AL Championship Series.

Pham homered for the second time this postseason and Ryan Yarbrough combined with five other pitchers on a six-hitter for Tampa Bay. Cy Young Award winner Blake Snell came out of the bullpen for his first career relief appearance, holding off Houston in the ninth inning to earn the save.

Verlander, starting on short rest after dominating the wild-card Rays in Game 1, looked uncomfortable on the mound at Tropicana Field and was pulled in the fourth after giving up four runs.

Verlander, whose eight career ALDS victories are a major league record, yielded three runs in the first. Adames homered leading off the fourth to make it 4-0, and the eight-time All-Star didn't make it through the inning.

"A good approach for those guys in the first, and then hon-

estly, I need those infield singles to be caught. When you don't have it, you need the balls that are put in play to go your way, and they didn't," said Verlander, who only started on short rest three other times during his career, including the 2011 ALDS, when he started Games 1 and 3 after Game 1 was suspended in the second inning.

"Obviously, not the way you would script it," he added. "It sucks."

The Rays helped themselves by playing stellar defense, especially with the Astros threatening to cut into their three-run deficit in the fourth.

With speedy Jose Altuve on first base, Yordan Alvarez hit a long double that short-hopped the center field wall. Two-time Gold Glove winner Kevin Kiermaier quickly grabbed the ball and fired to his cutoff man, Adames. He turned and executed a perfect relay home just in time to nail Altuve trying to score.

"That was probably the most incredible relay throw from an infielder I've ever seen," Kiermaier said. "That was such a huge moment for us, huge momentum shift, and it just doesn't get any better than that."

Avisail Garcia had four hits for Tampa Bay, and Pham added three.

Rays opener Diego Castillo struck out the first three batters and went 1²/₃ innings. He was followed by Yarbrough, who worked two scoreless innings to get the win. Nick Anderson handed off to Colin Poche, who gave up an eighth-inning homer to Robinson Chirinos.

Emilio Pagan and Snell finished up for the Rays, who have rebounded from losing the first two games of the series on the road to Verlander and Houston's other main headliner, Cole.

"A lot of credit to them for their preparation and putting themselves in this position," Cole said. "I certainly think they've earned it. ... They've played calm, cool and collected."

Altuve drew a one-out walk and Alex Bregman singled to help the Astros bring the potential tying run to the plate in the ninth.

Snell, who started Game 2, entered and struck out Alvarez before retiring Yuli Gurriel on a sharp grounder up the middle — exactly where the Rays were playing him — to end the game.

Bullpens turn into 'blowpens' during division series

Associated Press

Kyle Gibson kept hoping he'd someday pitch in October, take the mound in a big game when the whole sport was watching. Last week, he got that chance.

Summoned late at Yankee Stadium, the 31-year-old Minnesota right-hander entered the AL Division Series opener. The result — one inning, three runs on three walks, a hit and three stolen bases.

"First postseason opportunity, didn't go how I thought it was going to go," he said.

He's not alone.

National League closers Carlos Martinez, Mark Melancon and Sean Doolittle were tagged. All-Star setup man

Ryan Pressly struggled, and \$140 million starter Patrick Corbin was shelled in a different role.

Bullpens? More like blowpens as playoff relievers across the majors got rocked.

Their totals so far in the ALDS and NLDS: 100 innings, 65 earned runs and a 5.85 ERA.

The most effective reliever this month? Max Scherzer, the three-time Cy Young Award winner who struck out all three batters he faced at Dodger Stadium.

And remember, Scherzer and the Washington Nationals made it this far only after rallying late against Milwaukee

closer Josh Hader in the NL wild-card game.

Not exactly what fans were expecting, seeing how relievers for the eight teams that made this round combined for a 4.12 ERA in the regular season.

Then again, it's not the regular season.

"When you pitch in the postseason, you're kind of fighting — you're fighting emotions, you're fighting, like, you're pretty energetic physically, a lot of times," successful Tampa Bay starter Charlie Morton said. "It's obviously October, it's the end of the regular season. You're kind of in a spot where you really haven't been all year."

Aroldis Chapman and the

New York Yankees were about the only relief corps to escape unscathed, allowing three earned runs in 131³/₃ innings. Chapman threw a called third strike past Twins slugger Nelson Cruz to finish off a 5-1 win Monday night for a three-game sweep.

"I think the really important part of it has been that we've been healthy," Chapman said through a translator.

The Dodgers watched their 'pen give up five runs in 51³/₃ innings Monday during a 6-1 loss at Washington. That sent their series back to LA for a deciding Game 5, with Walker Buehler set to start Wednesday — and longtime lefty ace Clayton Kershaw ready to relieve.

Pats offense regains footing in blowout

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Following a 16-10 win at Buffalo in Week 4, questions began to crop up about the New England Patriots' offense that struggled to get the ball in the end zone in their first serious test of the season.

The Patriots had the perfect opponent in Week 5 to have a bounce-back game.

New England's offense dominated in a 33-7 thumping of the Washington Redskins on Sunday, getting contributions from both the passing and rushing games.

Tom Brady threw for a season-high 348 yards and three touchdowns. Receiver Julian Edelman caught eight passes for 110 yards and a score. And after some criticism from the coaching staff in recent weeks, second-year running back Sony Michel rushed for a season-high 91 yards and a TD.

It complemented a defense that continues to force turn-

overs and make it difficult for opponents to get in the end zone.

Receiver Josh Gordon, who added five catches for 59 yards in Sunday's win, said getting a season-best 130 yards out of the rushing game was big for everyone's confidence.

"The game is easier when you're running the ball," Gordon said. "The routes become easier, not nearly as tired and morale is high. We're just happy the offensive line was pushing downfield and the running backs were running hard. It's good ol' fashion football and when you're playing the game, you love to see it."

It all added up to a 5-0 start for the fifth time in team history and the fourth time under Bill Belichick (2004, 2007, 2015, 2019).

The caveat is that four of New England's victories have come against teams that are a combined 1-17 (Steelers, Dolphins, Jets, Redskins). Still, two of the three previous times the Patri-

ots won their first five games during the Belichick era they went on to the Super Bowl.

What's working

The Patriots continue to pile up sacks this season. The defense had six sacks against Washington, its fourth straight game with at least five sacks. It marks the first time in team history that New England has had at least five sacks in four straight games. The Patriots have a league-high 24 for the season.

What needs help

The offensive line did a much better job keying the run, but Brady was sacked four times in the first half. He hadn't been sacked that many times in a regular-season game since Week 3 of the 2017 season.

Stock up

Tight end Ryan Izzo had only

two catches for 39 yards, but one was for a 10-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter. It was the first TD catch for a Patriots tight end this season.

Stock down

Kicker Mike Nugent didn't make the best first impression in his debut in place of Stephen Gostkowski, who was placed on injured reserve last week. Nugent missed his first extra-point attempt following New England's first touchdown. He also needed an assist from the upright to make another one. For the game he connected on both of his field-goal attempts and was 3-for-4 on extra points.

Gostkowski missed four extra points in four games before going on IR. With Nugent's miss that's five misses in five games. New England signed Younghoe Koo to the practice squad as well last week, so it's possible he could get a closer look from coaches this week.

SMU on the rise after big comeback against Tulsa

Associated Press

DALLAS — SMU finally loosened up and is now moving up in the rankings. The Mustangs are already bowl eligible halfway through the regular season.

With an open date this week, there is some extra time to ponder the changing momentum and an incredible comeback — both in the last game, and in the program overall in three decades since resuming play after the NCAA death penalty.

"It's fun when you have a team like this," second-year coach Sonny Dykes said after SMU overcame a three-touchdown deficit and beat Tulsa 43-37 in triple overtime. "If our guys will just keep believing and keep fighting, this will be one of many comebacks like this that we'll end up making at some point. ... Once you kind of figure that out, then you're

never out of a ballgame."

The Mustangs, 6-0 for the first time since the Pony Express days, moved up three spots to No. 21 in the new Associated Press poll Sunday, a week after getting ranked for the first time since 1986. All six of their wins are against FBS opponents.

Tulsa, which kept SMU from getting bowl eligible with a win in last year's finale, took a 30-9 lead into the fourth quarter Saturday night. The Golden Hurricane (2-3) had that big lead despite three interceptions in the first half by Zach Smith, one returned 64 yards by Ar'mani Johnson for SMU's first touchdown and another in the end zone just before halftime.

"We just stayed the course and played SMU football," said James Proche, who had an incredible leaping catch for the game-ending 25-yard touchdown thrown by Shane Buechele in the third overtime.

Dykes felt his players were a little tight in the first half, and acknowledged that he probably was a bit as well.

The coach had talked to officials before the game about some pre-snap things he felt Tulsa's defense did, and got upset when SMU got penalized for a false start in the first quarter. He got an unsportsmanlike penalty when trying to get the attention of the referee, then called a timeout and was heard using an expletive though the ref's live mic.

"We all try to kind of ignore some of the noise, and when our players are not used to maybe some of the attention that we got," Dykes said. "We played a little tight the first half, I thought I probably coached a little tight. ... I think the players probably fed off me, so I told those guys, the first half is on me, the second half, just relax and play football."

Eric Dickerson and Craig

James were senior running backs the last time SMU was 6-0, in 1982 on the way to an unbeaten 11-0-1 season.

The Mustangs are already eligible to go to a bowl for only the sixth time in 31 seasons since returning from the two years (1987 and 1988) they didn't field a team after the crippling NCAA sanctions.

"It's good that we're going to go a bowl game, but I think we all kind of felt like we would," Dykes said.

Buechele, the former Texas quarterback still with another season of eligibility in 2020, is the American Athletic Conference leading passer at 277.5 yards per game. The Mustangs also have Xavier Jones (league-high 12 rushing TDs, second with 107.7 yards per game) and two of the league's top receivers — Proche (league-high 7.5 catches per game) and Reggie Roberson Jr. (second with 90.8 yards receiving).

Krzyzewski: It's time for NCAA reforms

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Mike Krzyzewski believes it's time for college sports to get in step with the times when it comes to paying athletes, though the Duke coach said getting there raises a lot of challenging questions.

Krzyzewski said Tuesday at ACC media day that college sports can no longer stick its head in the sand on that issue and others.

"We need to look at that, as a whole issue, not just this one thing for image and likeness," Krzyzewski said. "What's best for these kids? We need

to stay current with what's happening."

The pay-for-play discussion has gained momentum since California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law that goes into effect in 2023. The law allows athletes at universities in California to make money from their images, names or likenesses.

"I'm glad it was passed because it pushes the envelope a little, it pushes the issue," Krzyzewski said. "But I don't want to answer just for that. I'd like to see, 'OK, let's take a look at all the things that need to be done. Will we do them? How can we do them?' I don't have the answer.

"But I'd like to have a bunch of people get together over a period of time and play catch-up with what we probably should have been doing more of a decade or two ago."

Commissioner John Swofford and many of the league's other high-profile men's basketball coaches say that allowing college athletes to profit from endorsement deals is reasonable — even if nobody seems to have a simple solution to a highly complex problem.

Swofford said the California law is "extreme" and that he would prefer to see it resolved on a national level rather than

by individual states.

He also expressed some concern, saying "We have to be really careful about unintended consequences that can come with it. I don't think we can look at it in a pure silo of a couple of sports. I think we have to look at the whole picture and the impact on Olympic sports, women sports."

Krzyzewski predicted dozens of states will follow suit with similar legislation.

He said college athletics has been too reactionary in dealing with changes as opposed to proactively seeking reforms to the collegiate model.

NHL roundup

Hurricanes off to best start in franchise history

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Ryan Dzingel scored two goals and the Carolina Hurricanes beat the Florida Panthers 6-3 on Tuesday night for their fourth straight victory to begin the season, equaling the best start in franchise history.

Teuvo Teravainen and Jordan Staal each had a goal and an assist for Carolina, which scored four times in the first period and opened a 5-0 lead after 21½ minutes.

"The start was great. Really, that's where the game was won for us," coach Rod Brind'Amour said.

Dougie Hamilton also scored, and Sebastian Aho added an empty-net goal. James Reimer stopped 47 shots against the team that traded him last summer.

Andrei Svechnikov and Haydn Fleury each had two assists as the Hurricanes matched the 4-0-0 start by the Hartford Whalers in 1995-96, before the club moved to Carolina.

Evgenii Dadonov, Keith Yandle and MacKenzie Weegar scored for the Panthers. Aleksander Barkov had two assists.

Stars 4, Capitals 3 (OT):

Tyler Seguin scored in overtime to give visiting Dallas its first win of the season.

Seguin ended the Stars' season-opening, three-game losing streak 43 seconds into overtime off a pass from linemate Alexander Radulov. Dallas avoided a four-game skid to open a season that would've matched a franchise worst.

Radulov scored in the third period and Nick Caamano had the first of his NHL career. The Stars bounced back from Nicklas Backstrom's tying goal for Washington with 30 seconds left in regulation.

Bruins 4, Golden Knights 3: Brad Marchand had two goals and an assist to lead visiting Boston over Vegas.

The Bruins improved to 3-0-0 on their four-game road trip to start the season, all against Western Conference teams. Boston has outscored Dallas, Arizona and Vegas 7-4, and won its first three games for the first time in the past 18 seasons.

David Pastrnak and Torey Krug also scored for the Bruins, and Tuukka Rask made 31 saves. Rask moved into 49th place with his 267th career win.

Jets 4, Penguins 1: Ville Heinola scored his first NHL goal to lead visiting Winnipeg past Pittsburgh.

The Jets got their first win in Pittsburgh since returning to the NHL as an expansion team in 2011.

Tucker Poolman scored his second NHL goal and Neal Pionk his second of the season as three defensemen scored for an inexperienced Jets blue line, which combined for 350 career NHL games.

Predators 5, Sharks 2: Roman Josi scored two goals to lead host Nashville past San Jose.

Kyle Turris, Filip Forsberg and Dante Fabbro also scored for the Predators, who have won two of three to start the season.

Brent Burns had a goal and an assist and Evander Kane also scored for the struggling Sharks, now 0-4.

Ducks 3, Red Wings 1: Nick Ritchie scored the tiebreaking goal midway through the third period, and visiting Anaheim beat Detroit.

The Ducks improved to 3-0, matching the best start in franchise history. Anaheim also

won its first three in 2006-07 and last season.

Jakob Silfverberg had a goal and an assist and Rickard Rakell also scored for the Ducks. John Gibson made 31 saves.

Oilers 5, Islanders 2: James Neal had his first career four-goal game and visiting Edmonton beat New York.

Zack Kassian also scored as Edmonton won its first road game of the season and improved to 3-0 for the first time in 11 years. Connor McDavid had three assists, Leon Draisaitl added two and Mikko Koskinen stopped 25 shots.

Anthony Beauvillier and Matt Martin scored for the Islanders.

Kings 4, Flames 3 (OT): Drew Doughty scored a power-play goal 50 seconds into overtime to give visiting Los Angeles the victory over Calgary.

The Kings picked up their first win after falling 6-5 in their season opener to the host Edmonton Oilers on Saturday.

Tyler Toffoli had a goal and an assist, with Sean Walker and Ilya Kovalchuk also scoring for Los Angeles. Jack Campbell made 26 saves.