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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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F-22s deploy to Europe to support allies

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

SPANGDAHLEM AIR BASE, Germany — The historic deployment of the Air Force's F-22 fighter jets to Europe is more about reassuring allies that the United States is committed to peace and stability on the Continent than it is about deterring Russia, Lt Gen. Timothy M. Ray, commander of the 3rd Air Force and 17th Expeditionary, said Thursday.

"This F-22 deployment is a testament to our commitment to a Europe that is whole, free and at peace," he said in a speech at Spangdahlem, where the Raptors were on display for the first time since arriving six days earlier for their first-ever European deployment.

"Today we take another step forward to enhance the U.S.-European strategy."

Air Force leaders have sometimes tied the deployment of the service's newest fighter aircraft to Russia's involvement in Ukraine, where government troops have been fighting pro-Russia separatists for more than a year.

But they've also played down the deterrence angle, focusing on the training benefits of the mission. Ray said the aircraft will visit other European NATO bases.

Earlier in the day, invited guests watched from a knoll by the runway as two of the Florida-based Raptors taxied before ascending into blue skies over cornfields and rolling hills in western Germany.

Four F-22s and 60 airmen from Tyndall

'In times of uncertainty, [our European allies] certainly need to know that we're here ... and that we're committed enough to bring the very best that we have.'

Lt Gen. Timothy M. Ray
3rd Air Force and 17th Expeditionary commander

Air Force Base, along with a C-17 Globemaster III from Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., arrived at Spangdahlem on Aug. 28 for a deployment expected to last through mid-September.

"Our adversaries are working tirelessly to counter our capabilities," Ray said. "Our ability to react, our fortitude to support our NATO allies, and our ability to deliver combat air power at the time and place of our choosing must be clearly understood," he said.

Ray didn't mention Russia in his speech, and he sidestepped reporters' questions about whether this deployment was directed at Russia.

A reporter asked what message the deployment sent to Russia.

"Well, we're here," he said.

Was this deployment aimed at deterring Russia?

"Russia's going to think what Russia

thinks, so whatever we do, it really doesn't matter as far as what the Russians think," he said. "What really matters is what our European allies think."

Is the current situation in Europe similar to the Cold War?

"I believe the conditions of the Cold War were somewhat different than now," he said. "What does matter here is that our European allies are very clear what our commitment is."

"So in times of uncertainty, they certainly need to know that we're here ... and that we're committed enough to bring the very best that we have."

Air Force Lt. Col. Daniel Lehoski, commander of the 95th Fighter Squadron, of which the Raptors are part, said the F-22 is special because of its superior technology, speed and "its ability to get in undetected."

The aircraft has deployed throughout Asia and various places across the United States, he said. The deployment to Europe will train F-22 pilots, maintainers and support personnel in how "to provide that air dominance here in Europe."

The Raptors turned heads even among airmen at Spangdahlem, who are much more used to seeing Spangdahlem-based F-16s.

"It's amazing," said Tech. Sgt. Jose Cardenas, of the 52nd Dental Squadron. In his more than 10 years in the Air Force, he's "never really seen a fifth-generation fighter in action or in person. It's really impressive, especially when you see an older generation fighter next to it."

Child abuse, neglect on the rise in military families

The Washington Post

Confirmed cases of abuse and neglect of military children increased markedly in 2014, Defense Department data showed Wednesday, prompting concerns among Pentagon leaders about efforts to safeguard the nation's more than 1 million military children.

In fiscal year 2014, officials tracking family violence within the military confirmed 7,676

cases of child abuse or neglect, an increase of 10 percent from the previous year, according to annual statistics on child abuse and domestic violence. Confirmed cases of neglect — which excludes physical and sexual abuse — rose by 14 percent, military officials said.

The data, which has not been released publicly and was obtained by The Washington Post, contrasts with a yearslong decline in child abuse and ne-

glect among civilian families nationwide.

"It really did get our attention," a Defense Department official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss the data. But officials equally acknowledged that they don't fully understand the reasons behind — or the significance of — the increase in 2014 abuse figures.

The number of abused and neglected military children

dropped steadily from 2004 until 2008, when it began to rise again.

David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire, said the rate of abuse among military families, at 5.6 victims per 1,000 children, remains well below that for the general population, which is around 9 per 1,000 nationally.

Army ends all Ranger School curbs on women

The Washington Post

The Army announced Wednesday that it is opening its famed Ranger School to women on a full-time basis, following the historic graduation last month of two female soldiers.

The school, with headquarters at Fort Benning, Ga., has been a centerpiece of the military's ongoing research on integrating women into more jobs in combat units. Capt. Kristen Griest, 26, a military policy officer, and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver, 25, an Apache helicopter pilot, became the first women to graduate from the school Aug. 21 after spending months alongside men enduring the grueling training.

Army Secretary John McHugh said in a statement that the service must ensure that the opportunity afforded to Griest and Haver is available to "all soldiers who are qualified and capable," and that the Army is continuing to assess how to select, train and retain its best soldiers. Gen. Mark A. Milley, the service's top officer, added in the same statement that combat readiness remains the Army's top priority.

"Giving every qualified soldier the opportunity to attend the Ranger Course, the Army's premier small unit leadership school, ensures we are maintaining our combat readiness today, tomorrow and for future generations," Milley said.

The course lasts a minimum of 61 days, and can take substantially longer for anyone who is allowed to "recycle," or try one of the school's phases more than once. Many Ranger students are recycled several times.

The graduation of Griest and Haver has increased pressure on the military to integrate women into more jobs that are still closed, such as infantryman.

Navy announces uniform changes

By TYLER HLAVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy announced a slew of changes Tuesday aimed at reducing the number of uniforms a sailor needs and phasing out some clothing by Oct 1.

The biggest changes involve the Navy Working Uniform and the Navy Blue Coverall Uniform. Sailors will be required to maintain three sets of NWUs instead of four, and enlisted clothing replacement allowances will be adjusted to support the three sets with a replacement cycle of one set every 24 months.

Blue coveralls, which the Navy had already begun to phase out, will be worn only to

perform work that would soil other uniforms. The coveralls will be replaced by the Flame Resistant Coverall for daily use aboard ship, with NWUs as the standard uniform on shore.

Two sets of NBUs will continue to be issued and maintained in the sea bag for all enlisted sailors.

The Navy instituted other small uniform changes, including standardizing the double-breasted all-weather coat, authorizing the use of the cold weather parka with service uniforms and expanding the use of black knit watch caps to situations where cold weather might cause injury.

Also being eliminated are the boat cloak, dress cape, khaki windbreaker, tiara, beret

and overshoe dress uniforms for commissioned officers and chief petty officers.

Some sailors expressed concern that the changes would cost them time and make it harder to maintain a clean uniform.

"I really wish we would stay with four pairs of NWUs; it's a working uniform, and I'm already having to wash them all the time," said Seaman Mark Troncoso, whose job requires him to work with grease and paint on a regular basis. "Changing clothes is an issue. There isn't always a lot of space to change. I understand not wearing coveralls to the PX, but you should be able to at least wear them near the ship."

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UFC champ: Yes to Marine Corps Ball

The Washington Post

When Jarrod Haschert, a 22-year-old Marine stationed in Camp Lejeune, N.C., posted a video asking for Ronda Rousey to accompany him to the Marine Corps Ball, he figured the most that would come of it would be some ribbing from his friends. However, the video went viral, and it is on the verge of paying off in an unimaginable way, as the MMA superstar agreed to be his date.

Haschert put up his plea — "I hope you take this into consideration, because if you do, you will truly be making my dream come true" — on his Facebook page in August.

As of this writing, the video had been viewed more than 4.8 million times, and it got the attention of several media outlets.

On Tuesday, TMZ posted its own video, in which it caught up to Rousey, 28, in a parking lot and asked her about the Marine's request.

The UFC champion noted that going to the Ball, which will be held on Dec. 11, would have been an insurmountable problem a few days ago, when she was training for a fight to be held Jan. 2. But that fight, against Holly Holm, has been moved up to Nov. 14, meaning, "I would go, for sure," Rousey told TMZ.

"He's cute," Rousey said. "He's gotta be a gentleman, you know — I'm not a first-date kind of a girl."

Chinese flotilla reported off Alaska

Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has identified five Chinese military ships in the Bering Sea off the coast of Alaska, marking the first time the U.S. military has seen Chinese warships in the area, officials said.

The U.S. has been tracking the flotilla — made up of three combat ships, a resupply ship

and an amphibious ship — for days.

The disclosure comes as President Barack Obama wrapped up a three-day visit to Alaska and as China held a massive military parade in Beijing to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Josh Earnest, the White

House press secretary, told reporters traveling with Obama that the Pentagon has "not detected any sort of threat or threatening activities" from the Chinese ships, which are in international waters.

The Pentagon did not disclose the location of the vessels, other than to confirm they were in the Bering Sea.

Judge vacates Brady's four-game ban

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A judge let the air out of “Deflategate” on Thursday, erasing New England quarterback Tom Brady’s four-game suspension for a controversy the NFL claimed threatened football’s integrity. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell promised to appeal.

U.S. District Judge Richard M. Berman criticized Goodell for dispensing “his own brand of industrial justice” as he found multiple reasons to reject the suspension and find Brady’s treatment “fundamentally unfair.”

The Super Bowl winner has insisted he played no role in a conspiracy to deflate footballs below the allowable limit at last season’s AFC championship game, a 45-7 rout of the Indianapolis Colts.

The judge cited “several significant legal deficiencies” in the league’s handling of the controversy, including no advanced notice of potential penalties, the refusal to produce a key witness and the apparent first-ever discipline of a player based on a finding of “general awareness” of someone else’s wrongdoing.

“Because there was no notice of a four-game suspension in the circumstances presented here, Commissioner Goodell may be said to have ‘dispensed his own

brand of industrial justice,” Berman wrote, partially citing wording from a previous case.

He said a player’s right to notice was “at the heart” of the collective bargaining agreement “and, for that matter, of our criminal and civil justice systems.”

“The court finds that Brady had no notice that he could receive a four-game suspension for general awareness of ball deflation by others,” the judge wrote.

In a statement, Goodell said he will appeal the ruling “to uphold the collectively bargained responsibility to protect the integrity of the game.”

He called the need to secure the game’s competitive fairness “a paramount principle.”

NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said the league would not seek an emergency stay, freeing Brady to play while an appeals court considers the case. The Patriots open Sept. 10 against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The union’s executive director, DeMaurice Smith, said in a statement the ruling proves the contract with the NFL doesn’t grant Goodell “the authority to be unfair, arbitrary and misleading.”

“We are happy for the victory of the rule of law for our players and our fans,” he said.

Patriots owner Robert Kraft called Brady a “classy person of the highest integrity” and the penalty against him “unwarranted and unprecedented discipline.” He said the ruling was thoughtful.

Berman said the league was wrong to discipline Brady as if a deflating ball accusation was equal to using performance-enhancing drugs.

Brady was also denied equal access to investigative files, including witness interview notes, and wasn’t permitted to examine one of two lead investigators, the judge said.

The Patriots, who were fined \$1 million and stripped of two draft picks, posted a celebratory photo on Twitter of Brady pumping his fist and screaming at the Super Bowl last season.

The ruling was a surprise to some legal experts who believed Berman was merely pressuring the league to settle at two hearings when he criticized its handling of the investigation over the last eight months.

The league brought the scandal to Berman’s Manhattan courtroom within minutes of Goodell upholding Brady’s suspension, blasting the quarterback for arranging the destruction of his cellphone and its nearly 10,000 messages just before he was interviewed for the

NFL probe. The union countersued.

The league spent more than \$3 million for its investigation by prominent attorney Ted Wells, who had previously conducted NFL probes. While Wells’ 243-page report found it was “more probable than not” that two Patriots ball handling employees deliberately released air from Patriots game balls at the AFC championship game, it cited no direct evidence that Brady knew about or authorized it.

Goodell, though, went beyond Wells’ report, finding in late July as a result of testimony from Brady and others that the quarterback conspired with the ball handlers and tried to obstruct the league’s probe, including by destroying his cellphone.

The commissioner said he concluded Brady “knew about, approved of, consented to, and provided inducements and rewards” to ensure balls were deflated.

Berman attacked the league while questioning one of its lawyers at two hearings. He had repeatedly urged both sides to settle and tone down rhetoric. At a hearing Monday attended by Brady and Goodell, the judge announced that both sides had “tried quite hard” unsuccessfully to reach a deal.

Rattled Serena keeps Grand Slam bid alive

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The enormity of what is at stake for Serena Williams at the U.S. Open — the first true Grand Slam in tennis in more than a quarter of a century — hit her Wednesday.

That, she said, is why her play was so uneven in the second round at Flushing Meadows, despite facing a qualifier ranked only 110th.

And it’s why, after the 10 double-faults, two dozen other unforced errors and an all-around sloppy first set, Williams got pointers from coach Patrick Mouratoglou and headed straight to a practice court to put in work, hoping to repair what plagued her during a 7-6 (5), 6-3 victory over Kiki Bertens of the Netherlands.

“Today, I was a little tight,” Williams said. “I think it showed.”

Sure did. She got broken early. She double-faulted four times — yes, four — in one game. She didn’t manage to earn a break point against the strong-serving Bertens until the 10th game. Williams trailed 5-3 in the first set, finally broke for 5-all, but then needed to erase a 4-0 deficit in the tiebreaker.

All attributable, at least in part, to thinking about what she is trying to accomplish these two weeks.

“Until today, I was OK with it. I just got a little nervous today,” the 33-year-old American said. “But I’ve been doing totally fine. I’ve been completely relaxed, chill. I’ve been really, really fine. So I’m going to get back into the place that I was, and I’ll

be fine again.”

She has won the past four major titles, a streak that began at last year’s U.S. Open, and 21 overall. If she can win five more matches at Flushing Meadows — starting in the third round against Bethanie Mattek-Sands in an all-U.S. matchup Friday — Williams would complete the first calendar-year Grand Slam in tennis since Steffi Graf in 1988.

Also on the line for Williams: A 22nd major singles championship would equal Graf for the most in the Open era, which began in 1968, and second-most in history behind Margaret Court’s 24. Plus, Williams is trying to become the first woman since Chris Evert in 1975-78 to win four consecutive U.S. Opens.

“Right now, she’s on a mission to get a record,” said Mattek-Sands, a 30-year-old wild-card entry, “and I’m here, playing my game.”

Up and down all afternoon in Arthur Ashe Stadium, the No. 1-seeded Williams had trouble finding her game against Bertens, who only once made it as far as the third round in 14 majors.

On one point, Williams hit a 125 mph ace. On the next, she double-faulted. On one, she smacked a swinging forehand volley winner, bringing Mouratoglou to his feet in the stands. On the next, she pushed nearly the same shot wide with Bertens out of position.

Perhaps Williams was a tad rusty. In the first round, Williams’ opponent, Vitalia Diatchenko, hurt her left foot while running sprints before the match and could

barely move. Williams won 32 of 37 points in that one, which lasted about a half-hour until Diatchenko stopped playing while down 6-0, 2-0.

“I was definitely a little colder,” Williams said. “But ... that is no excuse.”

Williams complained earlier this season about a sore right elbow, and in one of her only two losses in 52 matches this season, at Toronto in August, she double-faulted 12 times.

That defeat came against Swiss teen Belinda Bencic, who is seeded 12th in New York and could face Williams in the quarterfinals. First, though, Bencic will play Williams’ older sister, Venus, in the third round after both pulled out three-set victories on Wednesday night.

The 35-year-old Venus, the U.S. Open champion in 2000-01, got past Irina Falconi 6-3, 6-7 (2), 6-2, while the 18-year-old Bencic saved three match points, cried during a changeover and argued with the chair umpire en route to coming back to beat Misaki Doi 5-7, 7-6 (3), 6-3.

After Venus finished her match, No. 1 Novak Djokovic split the first eight games against 52nd-ranked Andreas Haider-Maurer of Austria before running away with a 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 victory, then doing a towel-waving jig on court with a man brought out of the stands.

“From the 4-all moment,” Djokovic said, “I played really well.”

It was Djokovic’s 29th consecutive victory in the second round at a major, a streak that dates to 2008. Next for Djokovic is a match against Andreas Seppi of Italy.

Serena Williams knows she wants to

avoid the sort of poor beginning she had against Bertens.

“I have to start out strong if I want to stay in the tournament,” Williams said. “If not, I can go on vacation.”

Mattek-Sands made it to the third round at Flushing Meadows for the first time in 13 appearances by beating another American, CoCo Vandeweghe, 6-2, 6-1.

“You know what? Thirty is the new 21,” Mattek-Sands said.

On Thursday, struggling with dizziness and shut out in the first set, 16th-seeded Sara Errani rallied to win her second-round match.

The diminutive Italian took a medical timeout after dropping the first five games, complaining of dizziness. The soft-serving Errani was broken nine times but found a way to beat 18-year-old qualifier Jelena Ostapenko 0-6, 6-4, 6-3 in 2 hours on a hot, humid day.

Errani said she woke up not feeling well, blaming the powerful air conditioning of New York hotels.

But the 2012 French Open runner-up could rely on her experience against the 114th-ranked Latvian, who was playing in her first U.S. Open. Ostapenko was unable to hold serve once in the final set, getting broken in her final six service games.

Errani won a match despite getting “bageled” in a set for the second straight U.S. Open. She beat Venus Williams 6-0, 0-6, 7-6 (5) in the third round last year.



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Midshipmen add another goal

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Navy quarterback Keenan Reynolds would rather talk about team goals than individual accomplishments as he prepares to close out a record-setting career.

Reynolds has been asked repeatedly during preseason about his continued assault on the NCAA and Naval Academy record books. The standout senior has been consistent with his response, saying he is more interested in helping the Midshipmen reclaim the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy and capture a conference championship.

"I want to get the CIC Trophy back where it belongs and win the conference," Reynolds said.

This is a historic season for Navy, which joins the American Athletic Conference as a football-only member after playing as an independent for 134 years. Adding the Midshipmen brings the AAC to 12 teams, allowing it to conduct a conference championship game.

If Navy wins the West Division, it would play in the inaugural AAC championship game on Dec. 5, just one week before meeting archrival Army. While that would cause quite a schedule crunch and eliminate the traditional two weeks of preparation for the most important game of the year, eighth-year head coach Ken Niumatalolo believes that's a good problem to have.

"Beating Army and Air Force and winning the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy is always our No. 1 goal," Niumatalolo said. "This just adds another goal."

Some things to look for as the Midshipmen join the AAC:

Reynolds in the record books: Reynolds enters the season with 64 rushing touchdowns and needs 14 more to become the NCAA career leader. That should not be a problem for Reynolds, who set an NCAA single-season record for rushing touchdowns by a quarterback with 31 as a sophomore and added 23 more last year despite missing two games with an injury. Former Wisconsin tailback Montee Ball holds the record for career rushing touchdowns with 77.

Offensive line shuffle: Navy's triple-option will be run behind a line that features three new starters, so it may take time to develop the necessary chemistry. Left guard E.K. Binns and right tackle Joey Gaston are the lone returning starters. Senior Ben Tamburello has seized the right guard spot, but it's still uncertain who will join them up front.

Young, inexperienced linebackers: Linebackers are key playmakers in Navy's 3-4 defensive alignment, but the team is extremely young and inexperienced at that position. The Midshipmen graduated three standout starters — Jordan Drake, Chris Johnson and Obi Uzoma. Their current replacements are players that were not even starters on special teams last

season. Navy endured an unexpected loss when William Tuider, the top backup at both outside linebacker positions, quit the team at the end of the spring semester.

On sabbatical: Buddy Green, Navy's defensive coordinator since 2002, is taking this season off in order to focus on his health. Green underwent neck surgery in May and suffered a setback in his recovery during the first week of practice. Green was trying to fight through severe pain, but Niumatalolo stepped in and ordered the 62-year-old to take a sabbatical. Dale Pehrson, Navy's longest-tenured assistant at 20 years, has been named interim defensive coordinator.

Consistent success: Navy has won eight games or more in 11 of the last 12 seasons and made 11 postseason appearances during that span. The Mids have won consecutive bowl games for just the second time in program history (Armed Forces in 2013 and Poinsettia in 2014). Navy has won 13 straight against Army, outscoring its archrival 417-142 during that time.

Disciplined football: Since Niumatalolo took over as head coach in 2008, Navy has never finished lower than second in the nation in both fewest penalties and least penalty yards per game. The Midshipmen ranked No. 1 nationally in both categories in 2014, committing an average of 2.54 penalties for 24.77 yards.

Army's Monken set for season 2

Associated Press

WEST POINT, N.Y. — Army-West Point coach Jeff Monken had to sort through a lot of new players while preparing for the upcoming season.

Monken welcomed more than 70 freshmen, and 53 players on the imposing preseason roster shared a number with a teammate.

"That's a lot of freshmen. We've got a lot of guys that are going to be playing for the first time," said Monken, who now knows all of them by name. "There will be freshmen playing in several places. Hopefully, we were right. They'll grow up quick and be able to perform. Time will tell."

Monken won his first game at the helm of the struggling program, beating Buffalo 47-39 last September in his Michie Stadium debut. But Army finished 4-8 and failed in its pursuit of the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy, emblematic of supremacy among the three service academies. It also lost to Navy for the 13th straight time.

At least now he has a year under his belt at West Point.

"In the first year, it is so different than any other time," Monken said. "It's the first time you've ever taken the field with those kids. Each time we go through it, we feel like there's a better understanding of what we're trying to accomplish."

There is a big leadership void to replace with the departure of 27 letter winners, including 10 offensive starters and six on defense.

"There's a great feeling of unknown in every season," Monken said. "You just really have no idea what's going to happen, what the personality of your team's going to be until you play somebody."

Here are a couple areas to watch for Army heading into its season opener on Sept. 4 at home against Fordham:

Run baby run: Army's option attack averaged 296.5 yards rushing, fifth best in the nation last year, but there is a big void to fill. Quarterback Angel Santiago and an imposing trio of running backs — Larry Dixon, Raymond Maples and Terry Baggett combined for 1,784 yards rushing — graduated. Sophomore slotback Joe Walker (18 carries for 75 yards and two TDs in 10 games) is the only player who has seen game action at the position.

Quarterback challenge: Santiago was the main guy last season (814 yards and 10 TDs rushing with an average of 4.2 yards per carry), but backup A.J. Schurr played in 10 games, averaged 7.1 yards per carry and is healthy for his final season after sitting out spring ball with a bad throwing shoulder. He is being challenged by sophomore Ahmad Bradshaw, who did not play last year.

Where's Josh?: Junior cornerback Josh Jenkins, one of the bright spots on defense last season (a team-leading four interceptions and tied for second with 63 tackles), is out indefinitely with a head injury suffered in a fight with a teammate on Fourth of July weekend. The teammate has since resigned from West Point and Jenkins was back helping coach the defense during freshman practice. "We're just taking it day by day with him," Monken said, adding he didn't know if Jenkins would return this season.

Kershaw leads Dodgers over Giants

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Once Dodgers manager Don Mattingly crossed the foul line without signaling the bullpen in the ninth inning, Clayton Kershaw knew he was safe to finish off the San Francisco Giants.

Mattingly wanted to check on his ace, who after rolling through the first five innings, gave up two two-out hits.

Kershaw assured Mattingly he was just fine and he proved it, striking out Marlon Byrd to close out a 2-1 victory Wednesday night that increased the Dodgers' NL West lead to 6½ games.

"These guys are great hitters," Kershaw said. "They made me work the last inning. It's definitely different than a normal game because you're playing the team behind you."

Kershaw struck out 15 to set a season career high with 251 and Chase Utley hit a go-ahead homer in the sixth to complete a three-game sweep of the Giants.

"I'm sure they're happy now," Giants second baseman Kelby Tomlinson said, "but hopefully we can put it together and be the ones celebrating at the end."

The second-place Giants' fifth straight loss left them facing their largest division deficit of the season. All three defeats to the Dodgers were by one run and they have scored just 11 runs during their skid.

"Stranger things have happened," said Giants manager Bruce Bochy, who was ejected for the second straight game. "Trust me. There's a lot of baseball left."

Kershaw (12-6) beat the Giants for the first time in four starts this season. He allowed one run and six hits and walked one on a career high-tying 132 pitches for his third complete game of the season.

"That's what you want to see from one of your horses," catcher Yasmani Grandal said. "He wanted to finish out the game."

Kershaw leads the National League in strikeouts, surpassing his career-best of 248 set in 2011. His 15 strikeouts tied a ca-

reer high after having 14 against the Cubs in his previous start.

"He had 15 strikeouts? Wow," Mattingly said. "He laid the gauntlet down in the sense that it's that time of year. If you got these guys down at all you want to keep them there."

Kershaw created suspense for a crowd of 41,648 that was on its feet in the ninth. With two outs, the Giants put the tying and go-ahead runs on base after Matt Duffy and Buster Posey had consecutive singles. Kershaw pumped his arms after striking out Byrd.

"We're a good team and we're starting to play like that day in and day out," Kershaw said. "We can't relax, we got to keep our foot on the gas pedal."

Blue Jays 5, Indians 1: R.A. Dickey pitched a four-hitter to win his seventh straight decision, Josh Donaldson had three hits and host Toronto beat Cleveland.

Toronto won for the fifth time in six games and maintained a 1½-game lead over the New York Yankees in the AL East.

Yankees 13, Red Sox 8: Greg Bird, John Ryan Murphy and Carlos Beltran homered during an eight-run second inning and New York beat host Boston.

Masahiro Tanaka (11-6) pitched into the seventh inning to help the Yankees win for the fifth time in six games.

Rangers 4, Padres 3 (10): Mitch Moreland doubled in the go-ahead run in the 10th to give visiting Texas the victory.

The Rangers cut first-place Houston's lead in the AL West to two games. Texas, which has won nine of 12 games, retained its one-game lead over Minnesota for the second AL wild-card berth.

Reds 7, Cubs 4: Joey Votto hit a three-run homer in the ninth inning that was set up by third baseman Kris Bryant's two-out error, and visiting Cincinnati beat Chicago.

Angels 9, Athletics 4: Albert Pujols hit a two-run drive to make him one of four

players with 10 career 35-home run seasons, and visiting Los Angeles jumped on Oakland ace Sonny Gray.

Mets 9, Phillies 4: Ruben Tejada hit an inside-the-park homer and drove in four runs to back Matt Harvey as host New York returned to its winning ways against Philadelphia.

Orioles 7, Rays 6 (11): Chris Davis homered on a 3-0 pitch from Matt Andriese leading off the 11th inning, and Baltimore beat visiting Tampa Bay to snap a six-game losing streak.

Nationals 4, Cardinals 3: Ryan Zimmerman homered twice, then doubled home the tiebreaking run in the eighth inning and Washington snapped its nine-game losing streak at St. Louis.

Brewers 9, Pirates 4: Jonathan Lucroy drove in three runs and extended his hitting streak to a career high-tying 10 games to help Milwaukee beat visiting Pittsburgh for the fifth straight time.

Royals 12, Tigers 1: Yordano Ventura struck out 11 over seven sharp innings, and host Kansas City hit four home runs to rout Detroit.

Mariners 8, Astros 3: Rookie Shawn O'Malley had three hits, including a tie-breaking RBI single in a two-run eighth inning, and Logan Morrison padded visiting Seattle's lead with a three-run shot in the ninth.

Twins 3, White Sox 0: Tommy Milone struck out seven in seven innings and Miguel Sano hit another monster home run to help Minnesota beat visiting Chicago.

Marlins 7, Braves 3: Marcell Ozuna hit a two-run homer, Martin Prado and Jeff Mathis each had two RBIs and Miami beat reeling host Atlanta to complete a three-game sweep.

Rockies 9, Diamondbacks 4: Carlos Gonzalez homered twice, including a grand slam, and finished with a career-high seven RBIs in Colorado's victory over visiting Arizona.