

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Obama: Russia policy 'doomed to fail'

BY TRAVIS TRITTEN

*Stars and Stripes*

FORT MEADE, Md. — President Barack Obama told troops here Friday that the United States and Russia have converging interests in fighting Islamic State militants in war-torn Syria.

But Obama warned Russia that backing Syrian President Bashar Assad against the rebels is a doomed policy and could ultimately derail any prospects for a peace settlement in the country.

The president spoke about Russian troops entering the country last week during a broadcasted question-and-answer session with troops around the world to mark the 14th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks.

"We are going to be engaging Russia to let them know that you can't continue to double down on a strategy that is doomed to fail," said Obama during the event. "If they are willing to work with us and a 60-nation coalition we

put together, there's the possibility of a political settlement in which Assad would be transitioned out and a new coalition of moderate, secular and inclusive forces could come together to restore order in the country."

Russia has long been an ally of Assad and last week was moving ships, aircraft and infantry troops into Syria as the regime struggles with a four-year-old civil war and tenacious Islamic State fighters and other Islamic militants.

Assad has been unable to regain control of vast stretches of his country from rebels despite brutal warfare that has leveled cities, targeted civilians and fueled a refugee crisis in Europe.

Obama said it is a sign that the Syrian president might be losing control.

"It appears now that Assad is worried enough that he is inviting Russian advisers in and Russian equipment in," he said.

Meanwhile, the United States has struggled with its own war against the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq. Efforts to

train and equip moderate Syrian rebels against the jihadi group have largely failed — proxy troops have quickly been killed or captured — and the effort is now being retooled by the Obama administration.

Russia, led by President Vladimir Putin, is likely to strike against the Islamic State group as part of any intervention. But Putin's forces could also come in conflict with U.S.-allied forces in the complex and long-running civil war.

"The good news is that Russia shares with us a concern about countering violent extremism and shares the view with us that ISIL is very dangerous," Obama said, using an alternative name for the Islamic State group. "So despite our conflicts with Russia in areas like Ukraine, this is an area of potentially converging interests."

Any partnership or shared interests between the U.S. and Russia in Syria would have ironic timing. The military has stepped up activity in eastern Europe, Congress has called for

arming Ukraine and regional allies are deeply nervous over Russian aggression and its annexation of Crimea last year.

Amid emerging signs of a new Cold War, the newly confirmed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford, as well as other Pentagon brass, have recently called out Russia as the biggest conventional threat to the United States.

Still, Obama said talks are ongoing and claimed Russia's military intervention in Syria will not get in the way of the U.S. war effort there. But Putin has been reluctant in the past to bend to American interests when it comes to Assad.

"I remember a conversation I had with Mr. Putin four to five years ago where I told him that was a mistake; it would make things worse as long as he continued to support Assad," Obama said. "He did not take my warnings and, as a consequence, things have gotten worse."

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## 1,100 Marines set to return to US after Australia mission

BY SETH ROBSON

*Stars and Stripes*

Eleven hundred Marines are wrapping up a six-month mission to Darwin, in Australia's Northern Territory, and will return to the U.S. next month.

The deployment, which began in April, has involved several large exercises alongside the Australian Defence Force, said Lt. Col. Eric Dougherty, Marine Rotational Force-Darwin commander.

The Marine Corps has been deploying annually to Darwin on six-month rotations since 2012. The number of Marines heading Down Under has

steadily increased, with the goal of growing the deployment to encompass a 2,500-strong Air-Ground Task Force.

This year, Marines from 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment and Combat Logistics Battalion 1 in Camp Pendleton, Calif., worked out of Robertson Barracks, while four CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters from Hawaii's Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 flew out of Royal Australian Air Force Base Darwin, Dougherty said.

The deployment kicked off with Predator Walk, an Australian-led exercise at Mount Bunday Training Area. Ma-

rines then joined Talisman Saber alongside 30,000 U.S. and Australian, New Zealand and Japanese troops across Australia. Marines also deployed out of Darwin for training in East Timor and Tonga. Last month, they participated in Crocodile Strike, another exercise with the Australians at Mount Bunday.

The Marines have built on lessons learned over the past six months, said Dougherty, who visited Darwin last year to prepare for the deployment.

"This year, there was much closer integration of fires and aviation assets in training," he said, adding that cooperation

with Australian forces is better than ever.

The Australians are building an amphibious force to work with new landing helicopter dock ships — the Canberra and the Adelaide — that look a lot like mini-aircraft carriers. Some of the Darwin Marines were on the Canberra last week for Sea Explorer, a training exercise off the North Queensland coast, Dougherty said.

The Marines have been granted up to seven days' liberty, and some have visited bucket-list destinations such as Sydney and the Great Barrier Reef, he said.

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# Germany awash in migrants

Despite criticism, chancellor maintains it's 'the right thing to do'

Associated Press

BERLIN — Climbing aboard fast, efficient trains and heading toward clean, safe beds, migrants by the thousands headed into Germany on Saturday, with the southern city of Munich expected to see 10,000 in one day alone.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, fending off criticism from conservative critics, insisted that agreeing to take in those seeking asylum was "the right thing to do."

While Merkel's deputy warned that the country is "reaching limits," European nations traded jibes over how to deal with the influx. Hungary's hard-line prime minister proposed that the European Union step up aid to Syria's neighbors to stem the flow of refugees from camps there, and declared there is no "right to a better life."

Aydan Ozoguz, a senior German government official responsible for immigrant issues, said "the pace at which people are fleeing from the region is breathtaking."

Still, she was cautious about a statement Friday by her country's foreign minister that 40,000 migrants were expected in Germany over the weekend.

"We'll have to see whether this figure really comes true," she said.

Some 450,000 migrants have arrived in Germany this year. The country is expecting at

least 800,000 in 2015 — by far the most in the 28-nation EU.

The welcome mat for migrants in Germany contrasts sharply with the dangerous seas they faced to get to Greece, the tear gas from Macedonian police, the razor-wire fences, crude migrant camps and burly police in Hungary and, at times, train-service shutdowns along the route.

Munich has been the main point of entry for migrants reaching Germany from Hungary and Austria. Mayor Dieter Reiter said the city was reaching the limits of its capacity, and officials said it was considering putting up big tents to house some of the new arrivals.

Some 3,600 migrants had arrived in Munich by late morning Saturday, and a total of 10,000 or more were expected in the course of the day, said Simone Hilgers, a spokeswoman for the Upper Bavaria region's government. That would compare with the 5,800 counted on Friday.

At least two special trains were expected to take some of the migrants on to other parts of Germany. Hilgers said Bavarian officials were in constant contact with other states to find places for the newcomers and more buses to transport migrants.

The northern state of Lower Saxony said it plans in the future to have trains from Austria run to the town of Bad Fallingb., from where migrants could be distributed across northern Germany.

## Review finds 'serious' complaint about Fogle

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The Subway restaurant chain said it received a "serious" complaint about Jared Fogle when he was the company's spokesman but that the complaint did not imply any criminal sexual activity.

The company announced in a statement Friday that it has completed an internal investigation into whether it was alerted to concerns about Fogle, who agreed last month to plead guilty to allegations he paid for sex acts with girls as young as 16 and had received child pornography. The company has severed its ties to him.

Subway's investigation included a review of more than a million online comments and interviews with past and present employees and managers with both the company and an advertising fund, the statement said.

Subway spokeswoman Kristen McMahon said the company received the "serious" complaint in 2011 from former Florida journalist Rochelle Herman-Walrond, who said she worked with the FBI to record Fogle expressing interest in sex with minors. The statement said that while the complaint "expressed concerns about Mr. Fogle," it included "nothing that implied anything about sexual behavior or criminal activity involving Mr. Fogle."

McMahon wouldn't elaborate on the nature of the complaint.

Nevertheless, Subway said it regrets the complaint was "not properly escalated or acted upon."

"It is important to note that the investigation found no further evidence of any other complaints of any kind regarding Mr. Fogle that were submitted to or shared with SUBWAY," the statement said.

It's unclear how Herman-Walrond knew Fogle, who lives in suburban Indianapolis.

### Marine killed in Calif. base rollover identified

SAN DIEGO — Officials say the Marine killed in a truck rollover during training at a California base was a corporal from Louisiana.

The Marine Corps said in

a statement Friday night that the man who died in Thursday night's accident at Camp Pendleton is Cpl. Bryan Michael Lauw, 21, of Denham Springs.

The statement said Lauw was an anti-tank missileman from the 1st Marine Division who during his career had served aboard an amphibious assault

ship in Central America and South America.

Eighteen other Marines were injured — six of them critically — when a multiton truck carrying them during a routine training exercise flipped on a paved road at the base.

From The Associated Press

## Burst of violence rattles DC's Union Station

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An apparent domestic dispute halted trains at Washington's Union Station and led to momentary fears of a terrorist attack on the anniversary of Sept. 11.

In Friday's outbreak of violence, a man stabbed a woman before he was chased and fatally shot by a security guard.

Neither the man nor the

woman has been identified. The man died in a hospital Friday. The woman also was hospitalized, but her condition was unknown.

The commotion frightened commuters who already were wary on the 14th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorism attacks.

"I saw people running, and I just started running. It sounded like it was right next to me," said Ursula Lauriston, who

was ordering lunch at one of the dozens of restaurants and shops in the station. "People were completely confused as to what was going on, and no one knew whether to run or hide."

Police said there was no apparent connection to the Sept. 11 anniversary.

"Obviously, with this being 9/11, fears were heightened and escalated," D.C. police Commander Jeff Brown said.

## No. 24 Utah tops Utah St.

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah entered the season with a star running back, a staunch defense and a pair of dependable kickers. The need was consistent, efficient play at quarterback.

The No. 24 Utes got exactly that from senior starter Travis Wilson — for five quarters.

Devontae Booker ran for 120 yards and a touchdown and the Utes beat Utah State 24-14 on Friday night in a victory marred by Wilson's left shoulder injury.

"That's the nature of the game," Utah coach Kyle Whittingham said. "A guy goes down and the next guy's got to step up. I asked Kendall to just move the football team and take care of the football."

"We'll get more information tomorrow, but Travis is pretty sore right now."

The Utes (2-0) lost Wilson in the second quarter. He returned to the sideline with ice on his non-throwing shoulder and his arm in a sling. He was injured at the end of a 38-yard run that set up Booker's touchdown that gave Utah a 14-7 lead.

Utah defensive lineman Hunter Dimick also went down with a leg injury in the second quarter. He earned a Pac-12 honorable mention in 2014 after posting 10 sacks and is one of the leaders of the defense.

Whittingham wouldn't give specifics about the injuries, but said neither was season-ending.

Kendal Thompson replaced Wilson and threw for 56 yards and ran for 23 and a touchdown. He made two starts in 2014 and had replaced an erratic Wilson before he went down for the season with a knee injury. The competition to start was open in the fall, but Thompson couldn't surpass Wilson.

Chuckie Keeton passed for 256 yards and two touchdowns and also threw two interceptions for Utah State (1-1). He ran for 46 yards. Keeton tied the Utah State career touchdown passes record with a 15-yarder to Zach Van Leeuwen. Jose Fuentes set the record in 2002.

"They didn't really do anything to slow us down. We slowed ourselves down," Keeton said. "They played a good game but, at the end of the day, the offensive side of the ball is 11 people playing as one. Sometimes we had 10, sometimes we had nine."

Nick Vigil and LT Filiaga tied for a Utah State-high 12 tackles.

The Utes rode Booker with 31 rushes as the team finished with 195 yards on the ground on 44 touches. Wilson gave Utah its first points with a 12-yard run to the pylon, including a leap over a defender.

Utah only threw 22 passes, but diminutive receiver Britain Covey continued to shine in his second career game. The 5-foot-8, 166-pounder led the Utes with six catches for 61 yards and added a 30-yard punt return. Covey has proven to be one of Utah's most exciting players through two games, making a defender miss almost every time he touches the ball. His punt return had fans jumping out of their seats.

Utah travels to face Fresno State for its first road game next week.

Utah State also hits the road to play Washington.

# Vinci ends Serena's Slam bid

Associated Press

No one saw this coming.

Not with Serena Williams so close to tennis' grandest of feats, to one of the greatest achievements in any sport, on her home court at the U.S. Open no less.

Not even Roberta Vinci, the unheralded Italian on the other side of the net.

Asked if she thought she had any chance of pulling off the momentous upset, one that deserves to be ranked right up there with Buster Douglas knocking out Mike Tyson and the U.S. beating the Soviets in the Miracle on Ice, Vinci replied with admirable honesty.

"No," she said, shaking her head. "When I wake up, I say, 'OK, I am in the semifinals today. Try to enjoy it. Don't think about Serena.' I didn't expect that I (would) win."

But win she did, finishing it off with another of her deft little shots that skidded just out of Williams' reach.

With that, the Grand Slam was done.

The letdown could be felt far beyond Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Love her or hate her, Williams' quest to become the first player in 27 years to capture all four major championships — Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon and U.S. Open — in a calendar year was one of those truly defining moments, the kind that most of us want to be part of in some small way even if we don't know the difference between deuce and a drop shot.

Now what?

"I just can't believe it," said 18-time major champion Chris Evert, speaking on ESPN's telecast but really speaking for us all.

Williams was in no mood to bare her soul when it was over.

This hurt is going to take some time to heal.

"I don't want to talk about how disappointing it is for me," she said at a terse post-match news conference that lasted barely three minutes. "If you have any other questions, I'm open for that."

One can't help but wonder how long it will take for Williams to bounce back from what is surely the most gut-wrenching defeat of her career. She remains just one major title behind Steffi Graf's 22, the most in Open era, so there's still an enticing goal to spur her on.

But time is not Serena's side. A couple of weeks shy of her 34th birthday, she can't afford to wallow for long in Bill Buckner-like misery.

Maybe if she had been beaten by another of the top women players, it would've been a bit easier to accept. But the 32-year-old Vinci was unseeded and playing in the semifinals of a major for the first time in her career.

After they split the first two sets, the Italian seemed to realize she had nothing to lose.

Williams, on the other hand, had everything to lose.

It showed.

Tied at three games apiece in the deciding set, Williams double-faulted twice. Then she uncorked a 126 mph ace — her fastest serve of the tournament — to get to deuce. Her last hurrah, it turned out. She hit the next one into the net, and then went long for another of what would grow to 40 unforced errors in the match.

The sport's greatest closer was overwhelmed by history, no matter much

she tried to spin it a different way to reporters.

"I told you guys I don't feel pressure," Williams insisted. "I've never felt pressure."

Her play suggested otherwise.

As the match wore on, her legs seemed to get heavier and heavier. She kept getting caught flat-footed, struggling to get in the proper position to hit shots. Vinci, on the other hand, raced around the court, sending back everything Williams threw her way.

"In my mind I say, 'Put the ball on the court. Don't think about Serena in the other court. And run. Put the ball in the court and run,'" Vinci said.

"Then," she added, breaking into a big grin, "I won."

Williams' loss does nothing to diminish her amazing accomplishments. Few athletes have stayed at the pinnacle for such an extended period of time. No one in tennis, that's for sure. She won her first major title at the 1999 U.S. Open, just before her 18th birthday. Nearly 16 years later, she captured her 21st this past July at Wimbledon, capping a run of four straight major titles going back to last year.

A Serena Slam.

Not a Grand Slam.

"I felt really happy to get that win at Wimbledon," she said, trying to muster a smile. "I did win three Grand Slams this year. And, yeah, I won four in a row, so that's pretty good. So yeah, it's definitely a positive."

With that, she bolted for the door.

A few minutes later, she hopped into the backseat of a black SUV and was gone.

We all felt her pain.

## No. 1 Djokovic, No. 2 Federer in final

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — At 34, and more than three years removed from his most recent Grand Slam title, Roger Federer arrived at this U.S. Open with some changes in store.

There's his much-discussed "SABR" — "Sneak Attack By Roger" — tactic, in which he half-volleys the occasional second-serve return. He skipped a hard-court tuneup tournament last month, choosing to rest and prepare. And he's now completely comfortable with the larger racket head he had experimented with off and on in the past.

Add it all up, and he might just be playing as well as ever, which is saying something for a guy that owns a record 17 major titles.

Federer moved into his first U.S. Open final since 2009 with the latest in a string of dominating performances, overwhelming longtime pal and Swiss Olympic and Davis Cup teammate Stan Wawrinka 6-4, 6-3, 6-1 on Friday night.

"What's it been now? Six years I haven't been in the final? Sounds like a big deal," Federer said. "Not that long ago, my opinion."

As for the quality of his play over the past two weeks — he has won all 18 sets he's played, dropped only 62 games, and been broken only twice in 81 service games — Federer said: "It's definitely very good. Maybe my best, I'm not sure. ... I'd love it to work just one more time."

That would be in Sunday's final, which is a blockbuster: The No. 2-seeded Federer meets No. 1 Novak Djokovic, owner of nine major titles himself.

Believe it or not, Djokovic's match Friday was even less competitive. He beat defending champion Marin Cilic 6-0, 6-1, 6-2, the most lopsided semifinal in New York in the Open era, which started in 1968.

"There's a lot on the line always when we play against each other," said Federer, who beat Djokovic in the 2007 U.S. Open final but lost semifinals to him in 2010 and 2011, both 7-5 in the fifth set.

It is their record-tying 42nd career matchup overall — only Djokovic and Rafael Nadal have played each other that often in the Open era — and Federer leads 21-20. He won their most recent match, on a hard court last month at the Cincinnati Masters. This will be their sixth meeting of 2015, all in finals, and Djokovic has won three, including the Wimbledon final two

months ago.

"We all know how consistent he is and how good he is in the latter stages of Grand Slams and any other big tournament," Djokovic said. "He always makes you play your best."

For Djokovic, it's his sixth trip to the final at Flushing Meadows. He's only won one, in 2011.

Federer won five consecutive U.S. Opens from 2004-08; he lost to Juan Martin del Potro in the 2009 final.

Since then, Federer has won two majors, at the Australian Open in 2010 and Wimbledon in 2012. Djokovic's tally in that same span? Eight trophies.

But nowadays, Federer's movement is as good as ever. His serve is a perfect mix of power and placement. And his return game now features the "SABR," which came about accidentally during a practice session.

Wawrinka had a rather simply explanation for what was so difficult for him Friday, when Federer won 80 percent of his first serve points and limited himself to 17 unforced errors.

"Basically, it's him," the fifth-seeded Wawrinka said. "The way he's playing."



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# Basketball Hall enshrines 11

Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — John Calipari never could have been a Hall of Famer on his own ability.

"I never grabbed a rebound," he said. "I never scored a point. I never had an assist."

But he's had some incredible players.

And when he was enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on Friday night, he insisted many of them join him.

From Marcus Camby, who helped him build a program at Massachusetts, to Anthony Davis and DeMarcus Cousins, who solidified a powerhouse at Kentucky, Calipari was backed by dozens of the players who have made him one of college basketball's most successful coaches.

"As you can see, I have been blessed to have all those opportunities," Calipari said, "but the reason I stand here is more about the players I've coached."

Also enshrined Friday were former NBA stars Spencer Haywood, Jo Jo White and Dikembe Mutombo, women's basketball great Lisa Leslie and referee Dick Bavetta. Tom Heinsohn was inducted as a coach after already being enshrined as a player, joined by former coaches George Raveling and Australia's Lindsay Gaze, plus ABA star Louis Dampier and early

African-American player John Isaacs.

Calipari was the last of the 11-member class of 2015 to speak in the ceremony inside Symphony Hall, not far from where he got his first head coaching job at 29 at the University of Massachusetts.

There was a brief stint with the NBA's New Jersey Nets before he went to the University of Memphis and now Kentucky. Final Four appearances at the first two stops were vacated by NCAA penalties, but he got a national title in 2012 with the Wildcats.

He's done it often with one-and-done players, who stay in college for a season before bolting for the NBA.

Those players owe a debt of gratitude to Haywood.

His battle with the NBA that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1970 knocked down the age requirement that required players to be four years removed from high school. Once in the league, he went on to play 12 seasons, make four All-Star teams and win a championship.

Mutombo was a fierce defender and shot blocker for 18 seasons. He said he was proud to have been the third African to play in the NBA, "to come to the U.S. with nothing and now I'm part of the NBA history."

And he's giving back, opening a hospital in his homeland of Congo that he said

has served 140,000 people. He twice won the NBA's J. Walter Kennedy Citizenship Award and now works for the league as a global ambassador.

Bavetta never missed an assignment while working 2,635 regular-season games over 39 NBA seasons. He had the crowd inside the building chant "Oh no, bad call, get a job!" before his speech.

"I'm not used to people telling me how great a referee I was, how nice it is to see me," he said.

It was a big night for the home state. Calipari had plenty of UMass fans screaming for him as he entered the building. Heinsohn won two titles as a coach on a team that included White, who had surgery to remove a brain tumor in 2010.

It was also a celebration for Kentucky. Dampier played for the Wildcats and went on to nine seasons with the ABA's Kentucky Colonels, helping them win the 1975 title.

He was followed on stage by Calipari, who acknowledged his own coaches in high school and college, his assistants, and eventually the players — some of whom may end up back in Springfield for their own Hall of Fame inductions someday.

"The journey that I've been on, I've been so blessed and it's been an incredible journey," Calipari said.

## Elliott holds off Busch for Xfinity win

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. — Chase Elliott got away from pole-sitter Kyle Busch on a restart with 26 laps to go Friday night and won the NASCAR Xfinity race at Richmond International Raceway to end a 39-event winless streak.

Busch, starting fourth to Elliott's first on the restart, appeared to make contact with the defending series champion, but Elliott was able to get away enough so that Busch could never put a bumper on him again, allowing a long-awaited celebration in Victory Lane.

"That's just racing sometimes and sometimes things just don't go your way," Elliott said about his struggles. "We've had a couple of opportunities this year to win races and I've done my fair share of messing that up."

Elliott jumped from third to second in the season standings, 21 behind 10th-place finisher Chris Buescher eight races remaining.

"Chase did a great job," team owner Dale Earnhardt Jr. said. "It's been a difficult season for them but I think that they may be starting to get their legs and start to maybe make a run and put some pressure on those guys."

It was the first time in the last 23 races at Richmond that the winner wasn't a Sprint Cup Series regular. The last regular competitor in the lower series to win on the 0.75-mile, D-shaped oval was Busch back in 2004. It also was Chevrolet's 400th victory in the series.

Busch was second, followed by Brian Scott, Joey Logano and Erik Jones.

One of the stories of the race was Josh Berry, a Late Model racer who made only his third career start in the Xfinity Series and looked like a seasoned veteran in the No. 88 Chevrolet for JR Motorsports. He ran down pole-sitter Busch with about 50 laps to go for fifth place, passed Logano a short time later for fourth and had the strongest car on long green-flag runs.

"When I passed Kyle Busch, I was like, 'Holy cow, I just passed Kyle Busch,'" Berry said.

Busch was complimentary, too. "He did a great job. Drove by me." Busch said.

But Berry's team struggled on pit road all night, and when a caution flew with him running fourth with just over 30 laps to go, he emerged from pit road running ninth and without enough time to make enough of a comeback. He rallied to finish seventh.

"I need to do better on the restarts and I need to do better on pit road," Berry said.

Busch had the fastest car on fresh tires early in the race, and was one of the best on short runs all night, but his car faded during long green-flag segments, forcing him to play catch up repeatedly.

# Jays hit 5 HRs in rout of Yankees

Associated Press

NEW YORK — David Price sauntered through the clubhouse in that plush new robe several Toronto players were wearing — sharp blue with the team logo and his name and number on the back.

Manager John Gibbons had his feet propped up on his desk as he carved into a juicy rib-eye steak that sat in his lap.

No doubt about it, after blowing out their closest challengers in the AL East on Friday night, the Blue Jays are beginning to look pretty comfortable.

Russell Martin homered twice and drove in four runs against his former team, and Toronto went deep five times to beat the New York Yankees 11-5 in the opener of their weekend showdown for first place.

"We definitely feed off one another, for sure. It's just our lineup, it just has a lot of depth," Martin said. "I don't think the opposing pitchers feel like they have any breathing room out there. It's just one after the other."

Josh Donaldson and Justin Smoak hit two-run shots in a five-run first inning to build a big lead for Price. Edwin Encarnacion added a titanic drive after the Blue Jays chased rookie starter Luis Severino in the third.

Seeking its first playoff appearance in 22 years, Toronto increased its division lead to 2½ games over New York. The teams were to play a rare single-admission double-header at Yankee Stadium on Saturday to make up Thursday night's rainout. The four-game series concludes Sunday.

Didi Gregorius hit a three-run homer and knocked in four for the Yankees, who can fall back on their lead in the wild-card race. But they want to win the AL East and avoid the win-or-go-home scenario of a wild-card game.

Handed an 8-1 lead, Price (15-5) lasted only five innings because he needed 96 pitches to get that far.

"We figured, you know what? If we can't protect a seven-run lead, we don't deserve to win," Gibbons said. "And our

bullpen was rested."

The ace left-hander struck out seven and improved to 6-1 with a 2.28 ERA since the Blue Jays acquired him in a July 30 trade with Detroit. He has defeated the Yankees twice in three starts with Toronto.

Price is 6-0 with a 2.01 ERA in his last eight starts at Yankee Stadium.

**Mets 5, Braves 1:** Yoenis Cespedes hit a home run and drove in three runs and rookie Steven Matz pitched five strong innings as New York won its fifth in a row with a victory over host Atlanta.

With Washington losing to Miami 2-1, the Mets lead the NL East by a season-high 8½ games.

"We have 21 left," said Mets manager Terry Collins. "We have to go out and play the games. We have to win games. I'll be happy when we have an 8½ game lead with eight to play."

**Cubs 5-7, Phillies 1-3:** Jake Arrieta pitched eight strong innings for his major league-leading 19th win, and Starlin Castro homered to lead Chicago past host Philadelphia in the first game of a doubleheader.

In the second game, Kyle Schwarber homered twice to lead the Cubs to a sweep of the doubleheader.

**Marlins 2, Nationals 1:** NL batting leader Bryce Harper struck out three times and stranded five runners, and visiting Washington lost its fourth straight game.

The Nationals out-hit the Marlins 7-5 but went 0-for-6 with runners in scoring position, and their lone run was unearned.

**Pirates 6, Brewers 3:** Chris Stewart had three hits and three RBIs, and Charlie Morton pitched six strong innings as Pittsburgh ended its seven-game losing streak against visiting Milwaukee.

Stewart tied his career high with his third three-hit game of the season and the fifth of his nine-year career.

**Cardinals 2, Reds 2 (Susp.):** Heavy rain forced the St. Louis at Cincinnati game to be suspended in the top of the eighth inning.

It was slated to be resumed Saturday, with the regularly scheduled game to follow.

It was Cincinnati's first suspended game this season — three have been rained out.

**Twins 6, White Sox 2:** Trevor Plouffe hit a pair of solo homers, including a tie-breaking shot in the eighth, to lead visiting Minnesota over Chicago.

Minnesota remained one game behind Texas for the second AL wild card spot.

**Orioles 14, Royals 8:** Nolan Reimold and Steve Clevenger both hit grand slams during a 10-run eighth inning, and host Baltimore beat Kansas City for its third straight victory.

**Rays 8, Red Sox 4:** Asdrubal Cabrera and J.P. Arencibia hit two-run homers in a five-run eighth inning and host Tampa Bay beat Boston.

**Rangers 4, Athletics 0:** Colby Lewis took a perfect game into the eighth inning before settling for a two-hitter, leading Texas past visiting Oakland.

**Diamondbacks 12, Dodgers 4:** Wellington Castillo, Paul Goldschmidt and Nick Ahmed homered for host Arizona, who cruised to a victory over Los Angeles.

**Rockies 4, Mariners 2:** Dustin Garneau snapped a scoreless tie with a three-run homer in the seventh and Chad Bettis pitched three-hit ball over seven innings, leading Colorado over host Seattle.

**Angels 3, Astros 2:** Los Angeles parlayed a fielding error by visiting Houston pitcher Dallas Keuchel into three unearned runs in the second inning and went on to beat the AL West-leading Astros, reducing their deficit to 4½ games.

**Giants 9, Padres 1:** Jake Peavy allowed two hits over seven innings, Marlon Byrd had three hits and drove in a run and host San Francisco beat San Diego.