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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Russia sends fighter jets into Syria

Associated Press

LONDON — The United States is disturbed by Russia's movement of tactical aircraft to Syria, Secretary of State John Kerry said Saturday, acknowledging that the jets could pose a threat to American and allied military forces.

U.S. officials say Russia moved a small number of fighter jets to a base in Syria on Friday, hours after Defense Secretary Ash Carter talked with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in the first military contacts between the two countries in some time.

"Clearly, the presence of aircraft with air-to-air combat capacity ... and surface-to-air missiles raise serious questions," Kerry said, responding to a question after meeting with British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond. The Russians have deployed at least one such system, according to an American official, who was not authorized to discuss military matters and spoke on

'Clearly, the presence of aircraft with air-to-air combat capacity ... and surface-to-air missiles raise serious questions.'

John Kerry
secretary of state

condition of anonymity.

Russia says its recent military buildup in Syria is designed to fight the Islamic State group. While the Islamic State lacks an air force, the Russian aircraft are capable of striking ground targets and providing close air support for ground forces, a U.S. intelligence official said. The official was not authorized to discuss military matters and spoke on condition of anonymity.

Russia's military moves in Syria are its first major expeditionary force deployment outside the former Soviet Union since the war in Afghanistan, the official said.

Kerry said the military-to-military talks with the Russians are designed to make sure there

are no incidents between Russian and American forces. The discussions also amount to a tacit acceptance of the Russian buildup, after weeks of warnings from Washington against any Russian escalation in Syria.

In another apparent concession, Kerry stated explicitly that the U.S. could accept a resolution to the Syrian war that allowed President Bashar Assad to remain in place for a time before departing, as the U.S. long has wanted.

"We're not being doctrinaire about the specific date or time — we're open," Kerry said, adding that Assad doesn't have to leave "on day one, or month one, or whatever." He later added that the U.S. considered Assad a

magnet for the foreign fighters who are filling the Islamic State group's ranks.

"So there's a lack of logic," Kerry said, for the Russians to say "they are bringing in more equipment to shore up Assad at the same time they say they are going after" the militants.

Meantime, a Syrian rebel group claims it fired rockets at a coastal air base said to be used by Russian troops. In a video posted Friday, members of the Islam Army warn the Russians that they will not enjoy peace in Syria. The fighters are then seen loading and launching multiple rockets from a mountainous area.

Kerry and Hammond said they also discussed the situations in Yemen, Libya and Ukraine. Also, Kerry urged restraint in response to days of clashes around the Jerusalem holy site known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and to Jews as the Temple Mount.

"All of us join together in urging everybody to keep the calm," Kerry said.

Officials: Dunford recommends limits on women in combat

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The commandant of the Marine Corps is recommending that women be excluded from competing for certain front-line combat jobs, U.S. officials say, even as other military services are expected to allow women to serve in battlefield posts.

Officials said Friday that Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford submitted his recommendation to Navy Secretary Ray Mabus a day earlier. Mabus has made it clear he opposes the proposal and has recommended that women be allowed to compete for any Navy or Marine Corps combat jobs.

The developments have raised questions about whether Mabus can veto the Marine Corps proposal to prohibit women from

serving in certain infantry and reconnaissance positions. And it puts Dunford, who takes over this week as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the position of defending an exclusion in his own service that the Army, Navy, Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command have suggested isn't warranted in theirs.

The Marines in the past week have been publicly and privately laying the groundwork for the Corps to maintain the current rule that excludes women from infantry and some ground combat jobs.

Officials say the Army, Navy and Air Force are expected to allow women to serve in all combat jobs and will not ask Carter for any exceptions. They say that Special Operations Command is also likely to allow women to compete for the most de-

manding military commando jobs, including the Navy SEALs.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

Mabus on Monday made his position clear. "I'm not going to ask for an exemption for the Marines, and it's not going to make them any less fighting-effective," he said, adding that the Navy SEALs also will not seek any waivers. "I think they will be a stronger force because a more diverse force is a stronger force. And it will not make them any less lethal."

Carter has asserted that anyone, regardless of gender, who meets the standards and requirements for a job should be allowed to do it.

Militants kill 29 in Pakistan

Associated Press

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — Suspected Taliban militants launched a brazen attack on a Pakistani military base on Friday, killing 29 people, including 16 who were gunned down inside a mosque during prayers.

The Pakistani army quickly blamed militants from neighboring Afghanistan, which Islamabad routinely accuses of harboring terrorists who launch attacks across their porous border.

All 13 attackers were killed after an hourslong firefight at the Camp Badaber, a base on the outskirts of the northwestern city of Peshawar, army spokesman Gen. Asim Saleem Bajwa said. In addition to the dead, another 29 people were wounded.

Pope starts 10-day trip to Cuba, US

Associated Press

HAVANA — Pope Francis began a 10-day trip to Cuba and the United States on Saturday, embarking on his first trip to the onetime Cold War foes after helping to nudge forward their historic rapprochement.

He will be offering a show of solidarity with Cubans and making clear that Hispanics in the United States are the bedrock of the American church.

The visit boasts several firsts for history's first Latin American pope: Francis, 78, will become the first pope to address the U.S. Congress and he will also proclaim the first saint on U.S. soil by canonizing the controversial (and Hispanic) missionary, Junipero Serra.

Fanning nominated as Army chief

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama on Friday nominated Eric Fanning to be the next secretary of the Army, along with new undersecretaries for the Navy and Air Force.

Fanning served as the acting Army undersecretary since February, led the Air Force temporarily and worked closely with Defense Secretary Ash Carter when he took over the Pentagon. If confirmed, Fanning will be the first openly gay Army secretary.

The nomination comes after Obama picked Patrick Murphy, an Iraq War veteran and former lawmaker who authored the “don’t ask, don’t tell” repeal, in August to become Army undersecretary.

“Eric brings many years of proven experience and exceptional leadership to this new role. I am grateful for his commitment to our men and women in uniform, and I am confident

he will help lead America’s soldiers with distinction,” Obama said in a statement. “I look forward to working with Eric to keep our Army the very best in the world.”

Fanning, who did not serve in the military, started out in politics and rose from jobs at a Washington communications firm and a think tank to hold top civilian jobs in the Pentagon.

He served as Air Force secretary for less than a year and was tapped as special assistant to Carter, building the new defense secretary’s leadership team and overseeing the office’s daily activities, according to his Pentagon biography.

His nomination marks another major milestone for the U.S. military as it undertakes historic shifts in treatment of sexuality and gender, such as the integration of women into combat roles and the recent decision to open the services to transgender troops.

Murphy, a former paratroop-

er and former Democratic lawmaker, championed national security as well as gay and transgender rights during his time in the House from 2007-11 and as a senior fellow at a progressive Washington think tank.

The president also on Friday nominated Janine Davidson, an Air Force veteran, as the next Navy undersecretary.

Davidson is a senior fellow for defense policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, a Washington think tank. She served as an aircraft commander and senior pilot for C-130 and C-17 cargo aircraft and more recently a college professor.

Lisa Disbrow was nominated as Air Force undersecretary, where she has served in a temporary capacity since April. She was on active duty from 1985 to 1992 and was as an Air Force operational planner, electronic intelligence analyst and programming officer, according to the White House.

Testimony: Bergdahl odd, idealistic

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

SAN ANTONIO — The two-day hearing looking into the desertion and misconduct case against Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl challenged common perceptions about the soldier, what his plans were when he left the post, how he behaved and was treated in captivity, and the consequences of his actions.

During the hearing to help determine whether Bergdahl should be court-martialed, he was described as odd and idealistic, and showed he was held in harsh captivity in Pakistan for five years and has surprising allies.

Most notable is the major general who did the exhaustive investigation that led to the charges against Bergdahl. He testified, voluntarily, for the defense, that the soldier, whom

he called “unrealistically idealistic” should not go to jail.

“It would be inappropriate,” said Maj. Gen. Kenneth Dahl, whose team for two months investigated the matter, interviewing 57 witnesses, including Bergdahl. Dahl’s investigation concluded that Bergdahl had left the base on June 30, 2009, trying to engineer an audience with a general officer to report what he thought was incompetent leadership that was putting troops at risk.

The investigation also concluded that no troops had died in the search for Bergdahl.

And a senior official with the Defense Department organization that debriefs U.S. hostages and prisoners of war — a former military survival instructor who has debriefed 125 such people, including Jessica Lynch — wiped away tears as he described during testimony

the extreme misery and degradation Bergdahl had endured, how Bergdahl had resisted in accordance with the code of conduct, and how much he respected Bergdahl.

“His resistance, his will to serve his country honorably in captivity ... Nobody knows Bowe Bergdahl’s story,” said Terrence Russell, senior program manager for the Joint Personnel Recovery Center at Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Wash.

Captured about 12 hours after leaving his combat outpost in eastern Afghanistan in June 2009, Bergdahl told Russell he was beaten with hoses and cables, chained spread-eagled to a bed, starved, humiliated and finally kept in a metal cage before his release last year in a controversial prisoner swap.

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No. 9 Seminoles score shutout

Associated Press

BOSTON — Florida State quarterback Everett Golson escaped not one, but two defenders who had a chance to sack him for a first-half safety.

It was the closest Boston College came to scoring.

Cornerback Jalen Ramsey returned a fourth-quarter fumble 36 yards for a touchdown, and No. 9 Florida State's defense shut down the Eagles in a 14-0 victory Friday night.

It was Florida State's first shutout on the road since 2003.

"I'm very proud of our team," coach Jimbo Fisher said. "There were questions if we could do that. If they don't score, you're not going to lose. That's for sure."

The Seminoles (3-0, 1-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) marched easily down the field on their opening drive, but then struggled against a BC team that had beaten a pair of FCS opponents. Golson completed 15 of 24 passes for 119 yards and a touchdown to help Florida State run its ACC winning streak to 25.

The Eagles (2-1, 0-1) still trailed only 7-0 when Jon Hilliman took a handoff in the backfield and had the ball stripped by linebacker Terrance Smith. Ramsey picked it up and scored to make it 14-0 with 12:20 to play.

"I was just running to the ball like the coaches tell us to do," Smith said. "I went to make the tackle, and he spun right into it and it came out."

On BC's next possession, quarterback Darius Wade was knocked out of the game with what appeared to be a serious left ankle injury. The play also was initially ruled a fumble, but the ball was returned to BC on review.

"I don't know how severe it is, but it didn't look good," BC coach Steve Addazio said.

Jeff Smith took five snaps at quarterback before he was replaced by Troy Flutie, the nephew of the 1984 Heisman Trophy winner. Flutie led the Eagles into Florida State territory for just the third time in the game, but BC turned the ball over on downs at the 41.

The Seminoles ran out the clock. "We wanted to set a precedent on defense, and to do that and have the first (road) shutout since 2003 is big time," Smith said. "It shows the growth and development of the defense, and I feel like we're going to have a pretty good year."

After gaining 636 and 441 yards of total offense in its first two games, Florida State had just 217 on Friday to 195 for Boston College. But the Seminoles also forced two turnovers, downed a punt at the 1-yard line and avoided being pinned on their own goal line when the BC player

who downed the ball stepped on the goal line.

"There's a small margin in there," Addazio said. "The game should have been a 7-0 game in the fourth quarter with a chance to win it. And we didn't get that done. I'm angry about the turnovers right now. That's going to get fixed."

Dalvin Cook, who was second in the nation with 422 yards in Florida State's first two games, had just 54 on Friday on 15 carries.

Golson completed all five pass attempts for 50 yards on the opening drive, finishing it off with a 9-yard touchdown pass to Travis Rudolph. Golson also put a hit on BC defensive end Kevin Kavalec that knocked him out of the game with an apparent concussion.

Robert Aguayo missed a 42-yard field goal attempt in the second quarter — just the fifth miss in 56 tries in his career.

BC was shut out one week after beating Howard 76-0 in a game where the coaches decided to shorten the second half by 10 minutes. The Eagles' never got past the Florida State 39, but they almost scored in the second quarter when Golson eluded two defensive linemen, Harold Landry and Connor Wujciak, in the end zone.

"Somehow he ran out of that safety," Addazio said. "Give credit to Golson. I thought he played a great game tonight."

Tiger out until 2016 after 2nd surgery

Associated Press

With his game ailing, Tiger Woods announced he underwent a second microdiscectomy surgery on his back.

"This is certainly disappointing, but I'm a fighter," Woods said. "I've been told I can make a full recovery, and I have no doubt that I will."

Woods made the announcement on his website and reported the microsurgical procedure — intended to relieve pain from a pinched nerve — was performed late Wednesday in Park City, Utah, by neurosurgeon Dr. Charles Rich.

Woods was discharged Thursday.

The 14-time major champion has not won one of golf's four biggest events since the 2008 U.S. Open. Woods also has won more than 100 events worldwide, but none since the 2013 WGC-Bridgestone Invitational.

Woods said he would be forced to cancel planned appearances at three events — the Frys.com Open at Silverado in California and the Bridgestone America's Golf Cup in Mexico City next month and his own Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas in early December.

"I'd like to send my regrets to Frys and all those associated with the America's Golf Cup ... I will be attending my foundation-hosted Hero World Challenge but won't be able to play," Woods said.

After experiencing lingering discomfort in his back and hip, Woods, now 39, elected to have surgery in hopes of returning to the PGA Tour early in 2016. He is scheduled to begin rehabbing within a week.

"I appreciate the fans' concern and support," he said. "This is unfortunate, but these things happen. I've been injured before and played again. It won't be any different this time."

In his last tournament, Woods had a season-best 10th-place tie at the Wyndham Championship in North Carolina. It was a difficult season for Woods. He withdrew from the Farmers Insurance Open after just 11 holes in February with back discomfort and took an indefinite break from golf.

He made his return at The Masters in April and finished tied for 17th. But he missed the cut at the remaining three majors of the season — the U.S. Open, British Open and PGA Championship. Woods did not qualify for the Fed Ex Cup playoffs.

Day forges 5-stroke lead after 2 rounds

Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — As Jason Day's long eagle putt at the last hole rolled down the hill and toward the hole, every revolution of the ball only added to the sense of inevitability.

When it disappeared into the cup for an 8-under 63, a PGA Tour record-tying 36-hole score of 18 under and a five-shot lead at the BMW Championship, Day pumped his fist as playing partners Jordan Spieth and Rickie Fowler broke into widening grins and then applause.

Their expressions said it all about golf's man of the moment: Day is making everything that matters.

"I feel like I should be paying to come watch some of this," said Spieth, tied for fifth at 11 under. "It was special."

Special enough, anyway, that Day's closest pursuers, rookie Daniel Berger and Brendon Todd, shot 64 and 63, respectively, on a rain-softened Conway Farms layout and still couldn't make up any ground. Yet Day's day could have been more special still.

After heavy rain forced a suspension of the opening round, Day returned to Conway Farms early Friday needing to hole a 44-yard wedge shot for an eagle that would have given him a 59 and tied another tour record. Instead, he hit a low pitch that skidded to a stop 10 feet from the hole and narrowly missed and settled for a 61.

"I came in this morning and obviously

didn't shoot 59 and felt like everyone was disappointed in me," Day chuckled.

He was kidding, but just barely. Day has won three times — including his first major, the PGA Championship — and is an aggregate 97 under in tournament play since a narrow miss at the British Open in late July.

"I don't know how else to explain the way I've been playing. I feel very free, like there's no stress. There's obviously stress," Day added a moment later, "but I'm enjoying it."

After shooting 32 on the front nine to start the second round, the Aussie strung together four birdies in a six-hole stretch on the back, then capped it off with an 43-foot putt for eagle at No. 18. But he was far from the only golfer on a roll.

With little wind and receptive greens and fairways, the field averaged 3-under 68 and world No. 1 Rory McIlroy said even that seemed generous.

Citing the conditions, the length of Conway Farms (it played at 6,892 yards Friday) and the number of par-4 holes reachable with a driver, "the par for us out here should be 67 or 66," added McIlroy, who shot 65 and called it only "a decent score."

Berger, too, might have done better if not for a lost ball at No. 14, which led to his only bogey of the day.

"We had plenty of people definitely helping us look, probably 25 people" Berger said. "At one point, I offered the

crowd \$500 if they could find. Seriously, I did.

"We probably found 20 balls," he added ruefully.

Solheim Cup: At St. Leon-rot, Germany, Melissa Reid started her birthday with an 18th-hole birdie and Lexi Thompson answered with another Saturday as the United States halved both suspended fourball matches to leave Europe with a 5-3 lead in the Solheim Cup.

Bad light suspended play Friday, when Carlotta Ciganda pulled her and English partner Reid even with Americans Thompson and Cristie Kerr before the final hole.

Reid piled the pressure on Thompson with her birdie putt, only for the 20-year-old to deliver her seventh birdie in a round that also included an eagle to tie the match.

In the other suspended match at St. Leon-Rot Golf Club, Gerina Piller and Brittany Lang pulled level with German pair Sandra Gal and Caroline Masson, who had been 1 up through 15 holes, to halve their match.

In Saturday morning's foursomes, Alison Lee and Michelle Wie were playing Reid and Ciganda, Paula Creamer and Morgan Pressel were taking on Charley Hull and Suzann Pettersen, Angela Stanford and Brittany Lincicome faced Gal and Catriona Matthew, and Stacey Lewis and Piller were playing Swedish duo Anna Nordqvist and Caroline Hedwall.



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Harvick awarded pole as Chase begins

Associated Press

JOLIET, Ill. — Kevin Harvick will begin defense of his Sprint Cup championship from the pole in the opening round of NASCAR's playoffs.

Heavy rain washed out qualifying Friday at Chicagoland Speedway, and NASCAR set the field based on speeds from the only practice session of the day. Knowing that weather was likely going to be an issue, Harvick and his Stewart-Haas Racing team focused on laying down a fast lap that they could fall back on should qualifying indeed be scratched.

It was the right play, and Harvick will lead the field to green Sunday in the first race in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

"I'm just most proud of my team for having the fast race car and coming to the track and having a plan, and doing all the things they did to (anticipate) the weather," Harvick said. "They put a lot of emphasis on laying a fast lap down, just like everybody else, to get a good starting position."

It seemed like everyone had that same plan as the top four starting spots went to Chase drivers, and 12 of the fastest 15 were title contenders.

Team Penske drivers Joey Logano and Brad Keselowski will start second and third, followed by Martin Truex Jr.

Ryan Newman will start sixth, Kyle Busch seventh and Kurt Busch will go off in ninth.

Kurt Busch actually moved up one spot on the starting grid because Ryan Blaney,

who was ninth fastest in practice, did not make the race when the rain washed out qualifying. It's the third time this season Blaney has been sent home because qualifying was canceled.

"What the real bummer is, is for Ryan Blaney," Logano said. "That is a big heart-breaker for him. For the rest of us, I don't think it affects much. If you are locked in the race it doesn't really affect much."

Logano had hoped the qualifying session would go off because he believed he had a shot at winning the pole. Keselowski was satisfied with the result, though. Winner of the opening Chase race a year ago, he came from the 25th starting position to earn the automatic berth into the second round.

"We will take that and move on," Keselowski said. "Track position is impor-

tant here, but last year we were able to pass people and get up to the front. I feel like you can get there, it is just a matter of time.

"Good cars always get to the top. I feel like we have a good car though and we will start close to the front, so that is a good start."

The Joe Gibbs Racing cars will hope that's the case.

Although Kyle Busch will start seventh, his teammates didn't have the same success in practice.

Matt Kenseth was 13th fastest, Carl Edwards was 19th and Denny Hamlin was 30th.

It's a far cry from how the four JGR drivers have looked over the last 11 weeks as they cemented themselves as the favorites in the championship race.

Three home runs help power Mets past Yankees

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Lucas Duda, Daniel Murphy and Juan Uribe each homered, and closer Jeurys Familia shook off the Yankees' best shot in the ninth inning to help the New York Mets to a 5-1 victory Friday night in the opener of the Subway Series.

Rookie Steven Matz (4-0) outpitched Masahiro Tanaka (12-7), and Familia escaped his own bases-loaded jam by fanning Chase Headley for the final out at Citi Field.

This was the latest regular-season matchup between the teams, and the NL East-leading Mets held their eight-game lead over Washington with 15 to play.

The Yankees fell 4½ games behind AL East-leading Toronto.

Matz (4-0) overcame a wild start to pitch six gutsy innings, working around seven hits.

Alex Rodriguez, Jacoby Ellsbury and Brian McCann didn't start for the Yankees — who outhit the Mets 9-8 — but all of them got into the game.

The second-largest crowd in Citi Field history of 43,602 was abuzz from the start in the most meaningful games between the teams since the Yankees beat the Mets in the 2000 World Series.

Dodgers 6, Pirates 2: Zack Greinke (18-3) posted his career-high 18th victory and rookie sensation Corey Seager hit a two-run homer, leading host Los Angeles over Pittsburgh.

The Dodgers' magic number to close out San Francisco and clinch the NL West is eight. The Pirates lost their fourth in a row. Their lead for the top NL wild-card slot was cut to one game over the Cubs.

Greinke was charged with two runs and four hits in seven-plus innings. He leads the majors in ERA.

Greinke also got two hits, including a double that chased Jeff Locke (8-11).

Seager continued to make the most of his opportunity in place of injured shortstop Jimmy Rollins. The 18th overall draft pick in 2012 is 21 for 51 with two homers, six doubles and 10 RBIs since his promotion from Triple-A Oklahoma City on Sept. 3.

Mariners 3, Rangers 1: Ketel Marte grounded a two-run double on a play that led to an early ejection of Texas manager Jeff Banister, and visiting Seattle cooled off the AL West leaders. The Rangers had a five-game winning streak snapped, a night after finishing off a four-game sweep of Houston that moved them 2½ games ahead of the Astros.

Danny Farquhar (1-4) and four other relievers pitched 4 2-3 hitless innings. Tom

Wilhelmsen struck out two in a scoreless ninth for his 12th save, including Josh Hamilton as a pinch-hitter a week after the Texas slugger had arthroscopic surgery on his left knee.

Yovani Gallardo (12-11) failed to get out of the sixth inning for the fifth consecutive start.

Athletics 4, Astros 3: Danny Valencia homered twice, including a go-ahead, two-run shot in the eighth inning as visiting Oakland sent Houston to its fifth straight loss.

The Astros' skid has cost them the AL West lead. They trail Texas by 2 1/2 games, but still hold the second wild-card spot.

Valencia homered in the fourth, then connected against Pat Neshek (3-6).

Drew Pomeranz (5-5) struck out two in a perfect seventh for the win. Ryan Dull worked the ninth for his first career save.

Indians 12, White Sox 1: Carlos Santana's grand slam capped a six-run third inning off Chris Sale (12-10) and host Cleveland routed Chicago.

Cleveland has won 15 of 22 and closed within three games of Houston for the second AL wild card.

Cody Anderson (5-3) allowed one run — Melky Cabrera's fifth-inning homer — in 6 2-3 innings.

Sale was charged with seven runs, one earned, in seven innings. The left-hander, who hasn't won since Aug. 21, struck out nine and leads the AL with 259.

Cubs 8, Cardinals 3: Starlin Castro homered twice and matched his career high with six RBIs, leading host Chicago over St. Louis for its fourth straight win.

Chicago is one game behind Pittsburgh for the NL's top wild-card berth. The Cubs closed within six games of the NL Central-leading Cardinals.

Castro was 3 for 3 and walked in his third career multihomer game. He put the Cubs with a homer off Seth Maness (4-2).

Tommy Hunter (2-0) got one out for the win.

Lance Lynn lasted 3 1/3 innings. He is 0-2 with a 9.26 ERA in his last three starts for St. Louis. Manager Mike Matheny and a trainer went to the mound to speak with Lynn in the fourth.

Matheny and reliever Matt Belisle were ejected in the seventh after he hit Anthony Rizzo with a pitch. Plate umpire Dan Bellino had issued a warning after Cardinals star Matt Holliday was hit in the helmet by Dan Haren in the fifth.

Blue Jays 6, Red Sox 1: Marcus Stroman (2-0) pitched seven innings to win again and AL East-leading Toronto beat visiting Boston.

The Blue Jays increased their lead over the Yankees to 4 1/2 games.

Stroman returned last Saturday after tearing knee ligaments in spring training. He gave up one run and six hits.

Blue Jays star Edwin Encarnacion went 0 for 4, ending a club record of reaching base safely in 44 consecutive games.

Rick Porcello (8-13), who came in with a 7.36 ERA in five games at Rogers Centre, allowed five earned in six innings.

Nationals 5, Marlins 4 (10): Jayson Werth scrambled home to score on Jose Lobaton's sacrifice fly in the 10th inning and host Washington clung to its faint playoff hopes by beating Miami.

Earlier, Nationals manager Matt Williams came out of the dugout to talk to ace Max Scherzer, who used loud and colorful language to convince him into a quick U-turn.

Clint Robinson homered, singled and twice was intentionally walked for the Nationals, who remained eight games behind the NL East-leading New York Mets with 15 remaining.

Werth hit a leadoff double in the 10th against Brian Ellington (0-1) and the National loaded the bases with one out.

Lobaton hit a pop fly to shallow left and Christian Yelich's throw home was in time, but catcher J.T. Realmuto couldn't corral it. Werth reached back to touch the plate following a headfirst slide.

Casey Janssen (2-5) got the win.

Diamondbacks 2, Giants 0: Rubby De La Rosa (13-8) pitched into the sixth inning to outduel Madison Bumgarner (18-8) as Arizona beat host San Francisco.

A.J. Pollock had two hits and made a stellar defensive play in the eighth to help preserve the Diamondbacks' 10th shutout of the season. Paul Goldschmidt also had two hits and scored a run as Arizona won for the fifth straight time at AT&T Park.

De La Rosa allowed only one hit over 5 2/3 innings to beat the Giants for the third time this season.

Brad Ziegler pitched the ninth for his 27th save.

Bumgarner gave up one earned run in eight innings.

Tigers 5, Royals 4 (12): Dixon Machado hit an RBI single with two outs in the 12th inning, capping a two-run rally that sent host Detroit over Kansas City.

After the AL Central-leading Royals took a 4-3 lead in the top of the 12th, the Tigers came back. Greg Holland (3-2) walked home the tying run and Machado singled.

Drew VerHagen (2-0) got the win.

Braves 2, Phillies 1: Williams Perez (6-6) helped pitch host Atlanta past

Philadelphia in a matchup of the teams with the worst two records in the majors.

The Braves won for just the fifth time in 31 games. The Phillies have lost 12 of 15.

Perez won his second straight decision, giving up one run in 5 2-3 innings. Arodys Vizcaino retired Darin Ruf on a lineout with the bases loaded for his fifth save.

Adam Morgan (5-7) lost his third straight start.

Reds 5, Brewers 3: Touted rookie Brandon Finnegan (1-0) allowed one run in five innings to win his first major league start and Jay Bruce hit a tiereaking homer as visiting Cincinnati beat Milwaukee.

Finnegan, the prize prospect in the trade that sent Johnny Cueto to Kansas City, gave up three hits and two walks while striking out four. The lefty, who pitched in the World Series last year with the Royals, held the Brewers hitless in eight at-bats with runners in scoring position.

Aroldis Chapman pitched the ninth for his 31st save in 34 chances.

Zach Davies (1-2) lost in his fourth major league start.

Reds star Joey Votto served his suspension after his appeal got it reduced from two games to one earlier in the day. He was penalized for confronting umpire Bill Welke in a game last week.

Rockies 7, Padres 4: Chad Bettis (8-5) escaped jam after jam over five solid innings, Dustin Garneau hit a two-run double and host Colorado topped San Diego.

Jose Reyes added a late two-run single as the Rockies returned to Coors Field for a 10-game homestand — their final one of the season.

Bettis worked his way out of trouble all evening, stranding six runners while striking out six. John Axford got his 24th save in 29 chances.

Ian Kennedy (8-15) allowed three earned runs in six innings. He entered the game with a 3.02 ERA at Coors Field — the best mark of anyone who's thrown at least 50 innings at the hitter-friendly park.

Rays 8, Orioles 6: Rookie Mikie Mahtook tied a team record with five hits, Grady Sizemore had a three-run double during a six-run fifth inning and host Tampa Bay beat Baltimore.

Baltimore remained 4 1-2 games behind Houston for the second AL wild card. Steve Pearce homered twice for the Orioles.

Drew Smyly (3-2) allowed five runs and four hits over 5 2-3 innings for the Rays. Brad Boxberger gave up a solo homer to Pearce in the ninth en route to his 35th save in 41 chances.

Rookie Tyler Wilson (2-2) took the loss.