

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## Were Ranger School standards relaxed?

Lawmaker calls for Army's records to ensure all the soldiers 'deserved to pass it'

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — An Oklahoma congressman is pressing the Army to turn over records showing two soldiers who made history last month as the first women to pin on the coveted Ranger Tab were not given special treatment.

Rep. Steve Russell, a retired infantry commander and Ranger, sent the request to Army Secretary John McHugh earlier this month saying he wants to see all test evaluations, peer reviews and injury reports, as well as a raft of other documents.

The congressman's staff told a Georgia newspaper there are allegations from within the Ranger School that standards were relaxed for the two women, Capt. Kristen Griest and 1st Lt. Shaye Haver.

A third female soldier is now enrolled in the elite program.

"Our office recently received information from some people with the Ranger School who alleged they were not held to the same standards," Daniel Susskind, communications director for the congressman, told the Ledger-Enquirer. "We asked for the records to make sure that all of the people who passed the course deserved to pass it."

A copy of the Sept. 15 letter to McHugh was obtained by Stars and Stripes but Russell's staff did not immediately return requests for comment.

Russell gave the Army until Friday to provide documents on the two graduates as well as all female candidates who entered the school in May.

"In order to ensure that the Army retains its ability to defend the nation, we must en-

sure that our readiness is not sacrificed," he wrote in the letter, which does not specifically mention allegations of unfair treatment.

Russell, a freshman Republican, completed Ranger School and received his tab in the mid-1980s. He spent 21 years in the Army, a career that included commanding infantry troops in Iraq, and he retired as a lieutenant colonel, according to his published biography.

The Army on Wednesday did not provide details on when or how it will respond to Russell's request.

"The Secretary has received the letter and will respond accordingly," Lt. Col S. Justin Platt, an Army spokesman for McHugh, wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes.

The Army decision to allow women into Ranger School for the first time created con-

troversy and critics doubted they could pass muster. Online rumors swirled over relaxed standards in the weeks before and after Griest and Haver were pinned at a Fort Benning graduation ceremony Aug. 21.

At the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Austin Miller, the commander of the Maneuver Center of Excellence, denied any special treatment of the women. He addressed the critics, saying he has been challenging them to "re-qualify" as Rangers.

"To date we've not had takers who want to come and revalidate their tabs," Miller said. "There was no pressure on me from above to lower any standards. These soldiers graduating today accomplished it with the very same standards of Ranger School as those before them."

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## Navy: Sea trials delayed for Ford aircraft carrier

(Newport News, Va.) Daily Press

Tests of shipboard systems onboard the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford are taking longer than expected and it will delay sea trials by several weeks, the Navy said Tuesday.

"The Navy has identified a slight deterioration in the required progress on the [Ford] shipboard test program," stated a news release from the office of Sean Stackley, assistant Navy secretary for research, development and acquisition. "As a result, the sea trial schedule will be delayed about six to eight weeks."

The Ford is currently pier-

side at Newport News Shipbuilding, where it is 93 percent complete. The Navy was scheduled to take delivery of the first-in-class ship on March 31, 2016. The news release said "the exact impact on ship delivery will be determined based on the results of sea trials."

The delay "provides the most affordable path to delivery," the news release said. Critics have singled out the Ford for its \$12.9 billion price tag, a cost partly associated with new technology that makes it vastly different from the current fleet of Nimitz-class carriers.

During a tour of the ship

Tuesday, sailors expressed confidence about work on major systems, including the electromagnetic catapults that will replace the steam-powered catapults featured on Nimitz-class ships.

Before the Navy announced the delay Tuesday, the Ford's commanding officer cited a lag in progress on the technology side, but did not characterize it as serious.

"It's taken a little bit longer, really for a host of systems," said Capt. John Meier. "That's not wholly unexpected for new technology. We haven't found any deal-breakers, if you will. It's just challenges with the

new technology, working those bugs, but making great progress. It's just a little slower than we would have liked."

About 1,700 sailors are now living and working aboard the ship. The full crew will number about 2,600. Newport News shipbuilders are finishing compartments and turning them over to the crew, and that process remains on schedule, the Navy said.

Tuesday's announcement comes as the Senate Armed Services Committee is scheduled to get an update on the Ford carrier program. The hearing is scheduled for Oct. 1.

## EU grapples with migrant influx issues

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — The deeply-divided leaders of the European Union have been called to an emergency summit Wednesday to seek long-term responses to the continent's ballooning migrant crisis, a historic challenge that EU President Donald Tusk said the bloc has failed dismally to meet so far.

Among the outstanding issues that Tusk, the summit's official host, wants addressed: increasing assistance to EU member nations that are receiving the brunt of the migrant influx, and greater cooperation with non-EU countries in the Balkans and Turkey, which is now home to almost 2 million refugees — many of whom have fled Syria's civil war.

Tusk, who recently visited the Middle East, also wants to discuss diplomatic efforts to end the Syrian conflict.

# VA whistleblowers see no gains

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Department of Veterans Affairs continues to retaliate against whistleblowers despite repeated pledges to stop punishing those who speak up, a group of employees said Tuesday. One called the department's office of inspector general a "joke."

VA whistleblowers from across the country told a Senate committee that the department has failed to hold supervisors accountable more than a year after a scandal that broke over chronic delays for veterans seeking medical care and falsified records covering up the waits.

Shea Wilkes, a mental health social worker at the Shreveport, La., VA hospital, said agency leaders are "more interested in perpetuating their own careers than caring for our veterans."

Wilkes, who helped organize a group known as VA Truth Tellers, said "years of cronyism and lack of accountability have

allowed at least two generations of poor, incompetent leaders to plant themselves within the system," harming treatment for veterans.

"Until we are able to protect whistleblowers and potential whistleblowers, the true depth of the corruption within the VA will not be known," Wilkes said, calling the VA's office of inspector general a "joke." The office has not had a permanent leader since December 2013.

Republicans and Democrats on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee called the testimony appalling and urged President Barack Obama to appoint a permanent inspector general at the minimum.

Sen. Ron Johnson, the panel's chairman, said the appointment would be a "basic first step" to help ensure the office is transparent and independent. Johnson, R-Wis., said the VA "has a cultural problem" of retaliating against whistleblowers that must be fixed.

Dr. Carolyn Clancy, chief medical officer for the Veterans Health Administration, the agency's health care arm, said the responsibility to protect whistleblowers "is an integral part of our obligation to provide safe, high-quality health care. Retaliation against whistleblowers who have demonstrated the moral courage to share their concerns is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated."

But Johnson said the VA was not living up to those ideals. Whistleblower retaliation and abuse of authority by management at the Tomah, Wis., veterans hospital "created a culture of fear among the staff that compromised veteran care," he said. If hospital leaders and the inspector general's office had listened to whistleblowers, Marine Corps veteran Jason Simcakoski "may have not been prescribed the lethal mixture of 13 different medications that killed him" last year, Johnson said.

## Pope embraced by DC crowds

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Plunging headlong into the issues of the day, Pope Francis opened his visit to the United States with a strong call Wednesday for action to combat climate change, calling it a problem that "can no longer be left to a future generation." President Barack Obama, in turn, hailed the pontiff as a moral force who is "shaking us out of our complacency" with reminders to care for the poor and the planet.

The White House mustered all the pageantry it had to offer as the pope arrived before an adoring crowd of thousands and a nation that seemingly cannot get enough of the humble pontiff who is rejuvenating American Catholicism while giving heartburn to some of its conservatives.

Cheering crowds, with some people holding out babies for

blessings, jammed a parade route along Constitution Avenue as Francis later made a leisurely loop around the streets near the White House in his open-sided popemobile — a white Jeep — for his first direct encounter with the American public.

Speaking at the White House, Francis delivered a firm message against those who doubt the science of climate change, saying that the warming planet "demands on our part a serious and responsible recognition" of what awaits today's children.

It was a message sure to please the Obama White House, and liberals in general. But the pope had something for conservatives, too, with a pointed call to protect religious liberties — "one of America's most precious possessions."

It was a welcome message to many U.S. bishops and conservatives.

## Pentagon denies reports of New Syrian Forces defections

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon on Wednesday emphatically denied allegations that any recent graduates of its much-criticized train-and-equip program to combat the Islamic State in Syria had defected or that weaponry it supplied them had fallen into the hands of an al-Qaida affiliate.

The Associated Press and other media reported earlier Wednesday that U.S.-aligned moderate rebel group Division 30 had launched an investigation into the disappearance of one of its commanding officers, Anas Ibrahim Abu Zayed. Additionally, the AP report stated, the group was investigating social media reports that some of the 70 recent New Syrian Forces program graduates who were

reinserted into the war in Syria over the weekend had handed over U.S.-provided weaponry to the Nusra Front.

Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman, said the Defense Department was in contact with the 70 fighters — the second group of graduates to return to the battlefield following U.S.-led training.

"It's patently false that there have been New Syrian Forces defections or weapons turned over to Al Nusra Front," Davis said. "... The folks that are part of the New Syrian Forces are all accounted for, as are their weapons."

Abu Zayed, according to the AP, posted on social media that he would not support coalition efforts. Davis said he could not provide specifics on Division 30 fighters; not all are part of the train-and-equip program.

# Oilers, fans putting hopes in McDavid

Associated Press

EDMONTON, Alberta — Minutes before Connor McDavid hit the ice for practice, members of the newly formed Edmonton Oilers' brain trust were already in their seats some 20 rows up in Section 116 at Rexall Place.

It was early July and just the second day of the Oilers' rookie orientation camp. McDavid — as he had done throughout his junior career in Erie, Pa. — was once again drawing a crowd that included new general manager Peter Chiarelli, new coach Todd McLellan and new team President Bob Nicholson.

There might have been 30 other prospects on hand, but most eyes were on the 18-year-old forward wearing an orange jersey with the No. 97 stitched on the back.

"The focus isn't solely on him," McLellan said. "But it's hard not to have your eyes find 97 to see what he's up to."

McDavid's hard to miss, and a reason why the Oilers seem suddenly poised for a revival after missing the playoffs for nine consecutive seasons — the NHL's longest active drought. It's a stretch in which they're now on their sixth coach, fourth GM, and seven times finished no better than 12th in the Western Conference.

Alberta's capital has been buzzing since April when the Oilers bucked the odds by winning the NHL Draft lottery, jumping two spots for the right to pick first for the fourth time in six years. The prize this time was McDavid, hailed by many as a once-in-a-generation talent.

Here, finally, was an opportunity to revive a once-proud team that had lost its

way since Wayne Gretzky and then Mark Messier were essentially sold off because the small-market franchise could no longer afford them in the NHL's pre-salary-cap era.

"I'm very McHappy now," one Oilers fan said during a television interview the night McDavid was drafted.

Someone changed the name on the sign of Edmonton's Connors Road to "Connor McDavid." And everyone seems to have a "where were you?" moment in recalling the night the Oilers won the lottery.

"I was in Calgary, staying at a hotel with a buddy of mine watching," said 40-year-old Shawn Borbandy, who wore a McDavid jersey while shopping for a second one for his dad inside the West Edmonton Mall.

"I'm up off my stool. I'm swearing and jumping around. I had to apologize to the bar manager. And then you stop and you pinch yourself," Borbandy said. "You go from a franchise that's been a laughing stock of the NHL for nine years — nine years. And he's going to turn everything around."

The expectations are sky high in an oil and cattle town that once proclaimed itself as "The City of Champions." It was an apt label during a heady run from 1978 to 1993, when the Oilers and Canadian Football League Eskimos — who once featured Warren Moon at quarterback — combined to win 12 championships.

Hardly a whisper has been heard from either since, and especially the Oilers. Hanging in the arena rafters are 22 banners spanning the 1982-83 to 1991-92 seasons commemorating five Stanley Cup championships and various Presidents, conference and division titles.

And then there's a 23rd and final banner from the 2005-06 season, when the Oilers won the West title before losing the Cup final in Game 7 to Carolina.

McDavid wasn't born when the Oilers last won the Cup in 1990, and yet the Oilers' rich history isn't lost on the suburban Toronto native. Each time he enters or exits the locker room, he must pass the glass-enclosed display case housing five shining silver Stanley Cup replicas.

"Pressure is something I've been dealing with for a long time," McDavid said. "It's something I'm comfortable with. Obviously, this is a whole different monster to deal with."

Monster?  
"Yeah, I don't know. I was trying to think of the first word that popped into my head," McDavid said, smiling. "Obviously, it's a bigger step. This isn't junior hockey anymore. This isn't even the World Juniors. This is the NHL. So there's a lot more going on."

McDavid joins a young, talented group that already features former first-round picks such as Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Taylor Hall. Though goaltending remains a question mark, the Oilers added veteran depth by signing defenseman Andrej Sekera and forward Mark Letestu in free agency.

The centerpiece of hope is McDavid, the ultra-talented, smooth-skating playmaker who scored 44 goals and 120 points in just 47 regular-season games last year.

"It's an exciting time. Obviously the last couple of years haven't gone the way that they necessarily would want to be," McDavid said. "But there's such a bright future for them. I'm just trying to do ev-

erything I can to make the team."

Humility aside, there's no question that McDavid is expected to make an immediate impact this season.

"Do I expect Connor McDavid to play here in Edmonton? I do," McLellan said, looking ahead to October. "Based on his skillset, his past, the high expectations that have been put on him at other levels, he's been able to attain that. We expect him to push for a job here and play on our hockey club."

The key is maintaining a realistic sense of perspective, given the McDavid-mania taking place around town.

"We can't go from A to M and skip all the letters in the alphabet. That would be dangerous," McLellan said. "We have to keep it real. I hope the people in Edmonton and the hockey world keep that excitement level up, because it forces us to execute and keeps us on our toes."

Though the Oilers are building a new arena and office/entertainment complex downtown that's set to open for the 2016-17 season, there are reminders of their glory days. There's a bronze Gretzky statue outside their current arena, which is located off Wayne Gretzky Drive. There's also a Mark Messier Trail.

There's only so much of the past the Oilers can lean on, said McLellan, who takes over after seven seasons in San Jose.

"Our group, the now group, the today group is about creating its own history," McLellan said. "We can be very proud, and we should be proud of everything that's happened in the past. But the past does not drive the future. We've got to drive our own future."

## Seahawks safety Chancellor ends holdout, reports

Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Kam Chancellor ended his holdout and reported to the Seattle Seahawks after missing training camp and the first two weeks of the regular season.

The Seahawks confirmed that Chancellor arrived at the team facility on Wednesday morning. It was his first appearance since June's minicamp and ended a holdout that lasted nearly eight weeks. The Seahawks are 0-2 after losses to St. Louis and Green Bay. KIRO-AM in Seattle first reported Chancellor's return.

Chancellor has potentially lost more than \$2 million with a holdout that appears to have not resulted in a new contract. It is not clear how much he will be fined.

In a text to ESPN, Chancellor wrote that he intends on dealing with his "business" after the season and that it was time to go help his teammates.

Chancellor was seeking a restructuring of his current contract to have future money paid sooner. It was part of a \$28 million, four-year extension he signed after the 2012 season, but didn't take effect until 2013. The Seahawks refused to

budge on restructuring a contract that had three years remaining, believing it would lead to a stream of players seeking new deals in the early stages of their contracts.

Chancellor, one of the league's top safeties and a leader of the "Legion of Boom" secondary, is scheduled to make \$5.1 million in base salary in 2016 and \$6.8 million in 2017.

### Dallas acquires Cassel

IRVING, Texas — Matt Cassel is headed to Dallas in a trade as the Cowboys try to bolster their depth at quarterback while Tony Romo is sidelined at least seven games because of a broken left collarbone.

The Cowboys acquired Cassel from Buffalo on Tuesday, sending a fifth-round NFL draft pick in 2017 to the Bills and getting their seventh-round pick that year.

Both teams announced the trade, and two people familiar with the deal told The Associated Press about the draft picks involved because the rounds of the picks weren't disclosed.

Brandon Weeden is expected to start for Dallas on Sunday against Arizona, but

Cassel is a veteran with far more experience than the fourth-year pro. He has 71 starts in 90 games over 11 seasons, not counting the opener this year when he took the first snap for the Bills.

The Cowboys (2-0) traded for the 33-year-old Cassel a few hours after putting Romo on the injured list. Romo was injured in last weekend's 20-10 win at Philadelphia, and the earliest he can return to the team is Nov. 22 at Miami.

### Josh McCown to start

BEREA, Ohio — Josh McCown will start at quarterback for the Browns on Sunday against Oakland, moving back into the lineup ahead of Johnny Manziel after passing the NFL's protocol on concussions.

McCown sustained a concussion on the first drive in the season opener against the New York Jets and sat out last week against Tennessee because of lingering symptoms from his head injury. McCown was cleared Wednesday by an independent neurologist, the final stage before he can practice. McCown had been expected to return last week but had a setback.

Manziel is returning to his backup role just days after getting his first career

win. The second-year QB, who has overcome personal issues, threw two long touchdown passes in a 28-14 win over Tennessee on Sunday. He completed 8 of 15 passes for 172 yards but had two more fumbles, giving him four in two games.

### Moeller not charged

BEREA, Ohio — The city prosecutor says suspended Browns offensive line coach Andy Moeller will not be charged following a review of an alleged assault at his home.

Moeller was involved in a Sept. 17 incident after which a woman called police and told them that Moeller "tried to strangle me and beat me up." The woman said Moeller, who was suspended by the NFL in 2011 for violating the league's personal conduct policy, had been violent with her before. She identified herself as Moeller's fiancée and filed a complaint.

Prosecutor Jim Walters said Wednesday that he will not file criminal charges against Moeller, who has been indefinitely suspended by the Browns.

The team said in a statement that Moeller's suspension "remains indefinite."



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# Yankees legend Berra dies at 90

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The lovable legend of Yogi Berra, that ain't ever gonna be over.

The Hall of Fame catcher renowned as much for his dizzying malapropisms as his unmatched 10 World Series championships with the New York Yankees, died Tuesday. He was 90.

Berra, who filled baseball's record book as well as "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations," died of natural causes at his home in New Jersey, according to Dave Kaplan, the director of the Yogi Berra Museum.

Berra played in more World Series games than any other major leaguer, and was a three-time American League Most Valuable Player.

For many, though, he was even better known for all those amusing "Yogi-isms."

"It ain't over 'til it's over" is among eight of them included in Bartlett's.

"When I'm sittin' down to dinner with the family, stuff just pops out. And they'll say, 'Dad, you just said another one.' And I don't even know what the heck I said," Berra insisted.

Short, squat and with a homely mug, Berra was a Yankees great who helped the team reach 14 World Series during his 18 seasons in the Bronx.

"While we mourn the loss of our father, grandfather and great-grandfather, we know he is at peace with Mom," Berra's family said in a statement released by the museum. "We celebrate his remarkable life, and are thankful he meant so much to so many. He will truly be missed."

Berra served on a gunboat supporting the D-Day invasion in 1944 and played for the Yankees from 1946-63. His teammates included fellow Hall of Famers Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle and Whitey Ford.

"No! Say it ain't so. He was a good man, my former manager and friend! RIP Yogi," former Yankees star Dave Winfield tweeted.

Lawrence Peter Berra, the son of Italian immigrants, got his nickname while growing up in St. Louis. Among his amateur baseball teammates was Jack McGuire, another future big leaguer.

"Some of us went to a movie with a yogi in it and afterwards Jack began calling me Yogi. It stuck," Berra told the Saturday Evening Post.

He was a fan favorite, especially with children, and the cartoon character Yogi Bear was named after him.

Until recent years, he remained a fixture at Yankee Stadium and in the clubhouse, where the likes of Derek Jeter, Joe Torre and others in pinstripes looked up to the diminutive old-timer.

In 1956, Berra caught the only perfect game in World Series history and after the last out leaped into pitcher Don Larsen's arms. The famous moment is still often replayed on baseball broadcasts.

After his playing days, Berra coached or managed the Yankees, New York Mets and Houston Astros. He led both the Yankees and Mets to pennants.

In 1985, his firing as manager by the Yankees 16 games into the season sparked a feud with George Steinbrenner. Berra vowed never to return to Yankee Stadium as long as Steinbrenner owned the team.

But in 1999, Berra finally relented, throwing out the ceremonial first pitch of the Yankees' season-opener.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of a Yankees legend and American hero, Yogi Berra," the Yankees posted on Twitter.

Berra, who played in 15 straight All-Star Games, never earned more than \$65,000 a season. He died on the same date, Sept. 22, as his big league debut 69 years earlier.

Growing up, he was anything but a natural.

Chunky and slow, Berra was rejected by his hometown St. Louis Cardinals after a tryout in 1943. But a Yankees scout recognized his potential and signed him.

He reached the majors late in the 1946 season and homered in his first at-bat. The next year, he continued to hit

well, but his throwing was so erratic he was shifted to the outfield, then benched.

His breakthrough season came in 1948, when he hit .315 with 14 homers and 98 RBIs while improving his fielding. In 1949, he compiled a .989 fielding percentage and did not make an error in the All-Star Game or World Series.

Berra was the AL MVP in 1951, 1954 and 1955. He holds World Series records for most hits (71) and games (75). He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1972.

Among his boyhood friends was Joe Garagiola, who went on to a career as a major league player and broadcaster. In rejecting Berra at the 1943 tryout, the Cardinals signed Garagiola, another catcher, instead.

Berra was born in St. Louis on May 12, 1925, the son of Pietro, a laborer in a brickyard, and Pauline Berra. He grew up in "The Hill," or Italian district, with three older brothers and a younger sister.

In 1943, his first professional season with the Yankees' farm team in Norfolk, Va., was interrupted by World War II.

Berra married his wife, Carmen, in 1949. The couple met in their native St. Louis. Carmen died in 2014. Yogi is survived by their three sons. In 1996, Berra was awarded an honorary doctorate from the state university in Montclair, N.J., where he and his family lived. The university also named its baseball stadium for Berra. The adjoining Yogi Berra Museum opened in 1998.

The museum houses Berra memorabilia, including what he said was his most prized possession, the mitt he used to catch Larsen's perfect game.

He tickled TV viewers in recent years by bringing his malapropisms to a commercial with the AFLAC duck. ("They give you cash, which is just as good as money.")

His wife once asked Berra where he wanted to be buried, in St. Louis, New York or Montclair.

"I don't know," he said. "Why don't you surprise me?"

# Cubs' Arrieta first pitcher to reach 20 wins

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Jake Arrieta said he didn't feel sharp and that he was a little bit off Tuesday night.

The NL Cy Young Award candidate still tossed a three-hitter.

Arrieta became the first pitcher in the major leagues to reach 20 victories, Kris Bryant set the Cubs rookie record for home runs and Chicago inched closer to a playoff berth with a 4-0 win over the Milwaukee Brewers.

Looking loose after manager Joe Maddon entertained the team with a petting zoo in the outfield at Wrigley Field before the game, Arrieta (20-6) struck out 11 for Chicago, whose magic number for making its first postseason in seven years dropped to three.

The right-hander retired 14 in a row in one stretch in becoming the first Cubs pitcher to win 20 games since Jon Lieber in 2001.

"I've alluded to it before but it just means that I'm putting my team in positions to win ballgames," Arrieta said. "At the end of the day that's our goal, is to try and pile on as many as we can especially with where we're at in the season."

Bryant, whose April 17 debut was one of the most anticipated in years, hit a two-run homer in the third off Tyler Cravy (0-8) to give Chicago a 2-0 lead. It was Bryant's 26th longball, besting Billy Williams' mark in 1961. Bryant added a run-scoring double in the eighth.

By beating Milwaukee, Arrieta became the first Chicago pitcher since Hall of Famer Fergie Jenkins in 1971 to win at least 20 games and strike out at least 200 in a season. He also lowered his ERA to 1.88, giving him a chance to become the Cubs' first qualifying starter with a sub-2.00 ERA since Grover Cleveland

Alexander had a 1.91 mark in 1920. "He's got four good pitches." Brewers manager Craig Counsell said of Arrieta. "How many guys have four good pitches?"

Arrieta also lowered his ERA to 0.86 since the All-Star break, which would be a major league record, and he continued perhaps his best stretch of the season.

"It's hard to say otherwise," Arrieta said. "It's been good. It's been consistent."

Cravy went four innings and allowed two runs and three hits for the Brewers, who lost their 10th in 11.

"At this point in the season, he's pretty much going to capitalize on a miss every time," Cravy said. "[Bryant] got me tonight."

**Yankees 6, Blue Jays 4:** Greg Bird hit a three-run homer in the 10th inning and visiting New York beat Toronto to move closer in the AL East race.

Bird connected off reliever Mark Lowe (1-3) for the rookie's 10th home run in 34 games and third in the past three nights.

Brian McCann led off the 10th with a bunt single and was replaced by pinch-runner Rico Noel. Slade Heathcott reached on catcher's interference before Bird drove a 2-2 pitch into the right-field bullpen. Six of his 10 homers have given the Yankees a lead.

Andrew Miller (3-2) pitched two innings for the win and New York closed within 2½ games of first-place Toronto. The teams were scheduled to meet for the final time this season on Wednesday.

**Orioles 4, Nationals 1:** At Washington, Ubaldo Jimenez pitched six gritty innings to earn his 100th career win and added an RBI single as Baltimore won the rain-delayed opener of a series between teams fighting to remain in the playoff race.

**Braves 6, Mets 2:** Rookie right-hander Matt Wisler stopped his nine-start winless drought and visiting Atlanta stalled

New York's push toward the NL East title. David Wright homered as the Mets lost for the fifth time in seven games but still had their magic number for clinching the division cut to six because the Nationals lost to Baltimore.

**Cardinals 3, Reds 1:** John Lackey pitched seven strong innings, rookie Tommy Pham continued his productive hitting and host St. Louis beat Cincinnati to improve to a major league-best 95-56.

Lackey (13-9) allowed only a first-inning homer by Jay Bruce. The veteran right-hander struck out seven, walked none and lowered his home ERA to 1.97.

**Pirates 6, Rockies 3:** At Denver, Starling Marte drove in two runs and Pittsburgh closed in on its third straight playoff berth.

The Pirates reduced their magic number to one for securing at least an NL wild card. They also kept pace with NL Central leader St. Louis.

**Tigers 2, White Sox 1 (10):** Rajai Davis' two-out triple in the 10th lifted host Detroit one inning after the Tigers lost a combined no-hitter.

Detroit was two outs away from the first combined no-hitter in franchise history, but Tyler Saladino tripled off Neftali Feliz, making his debut as the Tigers' closer.

**Rangers 8, Athletics 6:** Delino DeShields hit a go-ahead sacrifice fly in the sixth four batters after Mitch Moreland connected for a tying two-run homer, and visiting Texas beat Oakland to increase its lead in the AL West.

**Giants 4, Padres 2:** Rookie Trevor Brown's RBI double was his first major league hit and Angel Pagan had a two-run homer for visiting San Francisco, which pulled to six games behind Los Angeles in the NL West.

**Rays 5, Red Sox 2:** Mikie Mahtook hit a two-run homer and Matt Moore recov-

ered from a difficult start to strike out seven as visiting Tampa Bay beat Boston.

**Twins 3, Indians 1:** Ervin Santana pitched strong into the eighth inning, Aaron Hicks and Brian Dozier each had two hits and an RBI from the top two spots in Minnesota's lineup, and the host Twins beat Cleveland to start a critical series for the American League wild card chasers.

**Mariners 11, Royals 2:** Robinson Cano homered twice and drove in four runs and Hisashi Iwakuma struck out a season-high 10 as visiting Seattle romped past slumping Kansas City, which has dropped 12 of 17. Their magic number for clinching the division remained three.

Seattle has the league's best record in September at 13-6 but is still three games under .500.

**Phillies 6, Marlins 2:** At Miami, Cody Asche hit two home runs to help Philadelphia's Aaron Harang get his first victory since July 30 against Atlanta, a span of eight starts. Harang (6-15) pitched seven innings, allowing two runs and seven hits.

**Angels 4, Astros 3:** At Houston, Mike Trout and Albert Pujols hit back-to-back homers in the first inning and Los Angeles held on to move 2½ games behind the Astros for the second American League wild-card spot.

There was one on in the first when Trout launched his 40th homer into left-center to make it 2-0. Pujols followed with his 36th of the season.

**Diamondbacks 8, Dodgers 0:** Robbie Ray pitched six innings of three-hit ball, A.J. Pollock and Paul Goldschmidt hit back-to-back homers in the seventh, and visiting Arizona handed Los Angeles its fourth straight loss, keeping the Dodgers' magic number for clinching their third straight NL West title at seven.