

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, September 2, 2019

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Navy uses YouTube influencers to recruit

*The (Norfolk, Va.) Virginian-Pilot*

William Osman appears thrilled that he's about to perform an egg-drop experiment.

The challenge is the same one that generations of students have done before: Engineer a way to stop an egg that's dropped from a high elevation from obliterating on impact.

But Osman is no student. And the location of this egg drop is anything but typical.

Osman is an engineer and professional YouTube influencer who was invited aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt to compete in an egg-drop competition against a pair of sailors while cameras — lots of cameras — captured every moment on the aircraft carrier.

The entertaining videos that resulted were never intended to appear on television but were targeted at Osman's 1.3 million YouTube subscribers. He's one of a trio of YouTube influencers the Navy chose for a series of "sailor vs." videos that showcase various jobs in the Navy to millions of subscribers focused

on niche topics. Each video ends with a link to a Navy recruiting website that features other videos in the series.

The use of paid influencers is a first by the Navy. It underscores the service's strategic shift away from traditional media as it works to find a new generation of recruits for jobs like cryptologic technicians, nuclear machinist mates and explosive ordnance disposal technicians.

The jobs are plentiful in Virginia's Hampton Roads area and are among the most difficult to fill because the standards for them are among the highest in the Navy, prodding the service to try new tactics to reach a new generation of recruits.

"They are consuming a large amount of video content digitally online, mostly through their smartphones," said Capt. Matt Boren, director of marketing and advertising for Navy Recruiting Command. "So we had to adapt and provide our content to the audience really where they live

"So it was a natural collaboration for us to try to find those creators that we think would work well with sailors, so we can show that we're relatable and to help perhaps reach a new audience to show what a day in the life of a sailor is. And just to try to, maybe demystify, some of the things we do."

In one video, YouTuber Kevin Lieber, known as VSauce2, deconstructs the algorithms used in the board game "Battleship." Lieber, who has 4.1 million followers, played the game with a submariner aboard the attack submarine USS Pasadena. As they played, Lieber explained mathematical probabilities.

Those who visit Lieber's channel can find a link to a Navy-produced video in which he details what "nukes," like the submariner he played "Battleship" with, do aboard nuclear-powered vessels as well as see a behind-the-scenes video.

Boren declined to say how much each influencer was paid for making the sponsored videos.

But a few weeks into the

campaign, he said the results look positive.

Osman's egg drop video was viewed on his channel more than 1.5 million times in its first two weeks, generating 98,000 "likes" and more than 7,700 comments. Meanwhile, a Navy-produced video of Osman's visit had been viewed about 142,000 times on the Navy's channel.

There are already similar results for the other videos. Jake Koehler, a diver who chronicles his treasure hunting adventures on his channel, produced a video in which he works with explosive ordnance disposal divers to locate simulated bombs on the decommissioned aircraft carrier USS Midway.

The 16-minute video has been viewed more than 2.1 million times in just a few weeks. The only two official Navy recruiting videos to ever get more views are one about boot camp, which has been online for eight years and viewed 4 million times, and one about SEAL training, which has been viewed 3.3 million times in 12 years.

## Ex-NBA player, 1st female airman graduate Ranger School

BY CHAD GARLAND

*Stars and Stripes*

A 7-foot-tall former NBA player graduated from Ranger School last week alongside the first woman in the Air Force to complete the grueling Army small unit tactics and leadership course.

First Lt. Chelsey Hibschi, an Air Force security forces officer, graduated from the two-month course Friday in a ceremony at Fort Benning, Ga., overlooking Victory Pond. Second Lt. Marshall Plumlee, a member of Duke University's 2015 NCAA Championship bas-

ketball team and former New York Knicks player, was "baptized" later in that pond after having a Ranger tab pinned on.

"From the NBA to leading the way!" wrote Gen. David Hodne, head of the Army's Infantry School at Benning, in a tweet accompanying a photo of himself with Plumlee at the school's rappel tower. "Proud of today's Ranger School graduates including 2LT Marshall Plumlee."

After ROTC at Duke, Plumlee commissioned in the New York National Guard in 2017 while playing for the Knicks.

He signed with the Milwaukee Bucks and played for them in the 2018 season. His two older brothers play in the NBA.

Plumlee's mother, who played college basketball at Purdue, pinned his tab on him. On Instagram, he thanked her as his biggest supporter in his transition "going from the NBA to the active duty Army and now Ranger School."

While smaller in stature, Hibschi will likely be looked up to as well for different reasons. She's the first woman out of about 300 airmen to complete the rigorous training since it opened to the Air Force in 1955.

More than two dozen women have graduated from the school since it opened to them in 2015 as part of a push to get women into combat jobs.

On average, less than half of men who attempt the course complete it — many fail in the initial three days.

Most aren't able to complete all three of the school's phases without recycling through either the initial Benning phase, another one in the mountains of northern Georgia or the final stage in the swamps of Florida, the Army has said.

# Afghan leaders see draft of Taliban deal

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A U.S. envoy showed the draft of a U.S.-Taliban agreement to Afghan leaders on Monday after declaring they were “at the threshold” of a deal to end America’s longest war, officials said. Under the deal the first 5,000 U.S. troops would leave Afghanistan in less than five months, the envoy said.

However, reflecting the sensitivity of the U.S.-Taliban negotiations and the Afghan government’s sidelined role in the talks so far, it was not clear whether the draft was actually given to President Ashraf

Ghani and his team.

Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad met twice with Ghani after arriving Sunday evening from Qatar, where the ninth round of U.S.-Taliban talks ended without a final agreement. He is expected to meet with other political leaders this week.

“We have reached an agreement with the Taliban in principle but, of course, until the U.S. president agrees with it, it isn’t final,” Khalilzad told the local TOLO news channel. He said that under the deal, the first 5,000 U.S. troops would withdraw within 135 days from five bases. Between 14,000 and

13,000 troops are currently in the country.

President Donald Trump last week told Fox News the U.S. plans to reduce its troop presence to 8,600 and then “make a determination from there.”

Afghan presidential spokesman Sediq Seddiqi told reporters the government would study the deal to make sure it addresses the goals of a lasting ceasefire and direct talks with the Taliban in the near future. “It will take couple of days, probably, that we will get back to them and give them our observations,” he said.

A deal on ending nearly 18

years of fighting is closer to reality, even as the Taliban attacked the capitals of Kunduz and Baghlan provinces in the north over the weekend.

Violence continued in Kunduz on Monday as a suicide bomber targeted a police checkpoint and killed at least four officers and wounded 17 people, including 10 civilians, said provincial health director Esanullah Fazeli.

The Afghan government has been shut out of the U.S.-Taliban negotiations, as the militant group dismisses it as a U.S. puppet.

# Iran warns Europe amid nuclear pact stalemate

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran will “take a strong step” away from its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers if Europe cannot offer the country new terms by a deadline at the end of this week, a government spokesman said Monday as top Iranian diplomats traveled to France and Russia for last-minute talks.

The comments from Ali Rabiei reinforced the deadline Iran had set for Friday for Europe to offer it a way to sell its crude oil on the global market. Crushing U.S. sanctions imposed after President Donald Trump withdrew America from the deal more than a year ago have halted those sales.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was in Moscow, while his deputy was to travel to Paris with a team of economists Monday in a renewed diplomatic push.

The developments come after French President Emmanuel Macron surprised the Group of Seven summit in France by inviting Zarif last week.

Rabiei described Iran’s strategy to journalists at Monday’s press conference in Tehran as “commitment for

## Iran acknowledges rocket explosion; says test failed

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran acknowledged for the first time Monday that a rocket at its Imam Khomeini Space Center exploded after satellite photos showed the blast last week, with an official saying a technical malfunction during a test caused the explosion.

The comments by government spokesman Ali Rabiei were the first explanation offered by Iran for Thursday’s explosion, which came ahead of a planned satellite launch by the Islamic Republic that the U.S. has criticized.

Rabiei also criticized

President Donald Trump for tweeting what appeared to be a surveillance photo of the aftermath of the explosion shot by a U.S. spy satellite.

The explosion marked the third failure involving a rocket at the Iranian center.

However, Rabiei dismissed that, saying that “this has been a technical matter and a technical error. Our experts unanimously say so.

“The explosion happened at the launchpad, and no satellite had yet been transferred to the launchpad,” Rabiei said. “It happened at a test site, not at the launch site.”

commitment.”

“Iran’s oil should be bought and its money should be accessible to return to Iran,” Rabiei said. “This is the agenda of our talks.”

It’s unclear what the terms of negotiation are. In theory, anyone caught buying Iranian crude oil would be subject to U.S. sanctions and potentially locked out of the American fi-

ancial market.

Already, Iran has gone over limits set by the deal. The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed last week that Iran’s stockpile of low-enriched uranium still exceeds the amount allowed by the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA as the deal is known.

The U.N. agency also said Iran continues to enrich uranium up to 4.5%, above the 3.67% allowed.

It remains unclear what further step Iran will take, though it could involve restarting advanced centrifuges prohibited by the deal or further bumping up its enrichment of uranium. Iran insists the steps it has taken so far are easily reversible.

Meeting in Moscow with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, Zarif reiterated that it was up to Europe to ensure the deal’s survival.

Iran will “be complying with its obligations in full when the Europeans comply with theirs in full,” Zarif told journalists.

The nuclear deal is meant to keep Tehran from building atomic weapons in exchange for economic relief.



# Bahamas battered by Category 4 Dorian

Associated Press

FREEPORT, Bahamas — Hurricane Dorian unleashed massive flooding across the Bahamas on Monday, pummeling the islands with so much wind and water that authorities urged people to find flotation devices and grab hammers to break out of their attics if necessary.

The fearsome Category 4 storm slowed almost to a standstill as it shredded roofs, hurled cars and forced even rescue crews to take shelter until the onslaught passed.

Officials said they received a “tremendous” number of calls from people in flooded homes. Forecasters warned that Dorian could generate a storm surge as high as 23 feet.

Police Chief Samuel Butler urged people to remain calm and share their GPS coordinates, but he said rescue crews

had to wait until weather conditions improved.

“We simply cannot get to you,” he told Bahamas radio station ZNS, which shared reports from callers who said some people were stuck on roofs and in attics.

On nearby Abaco Island, Parliament member Renward Wells said he received reports of casualties but officials had not been able to confirm them.

Meanwhile in the United States, the National Hurricane Center extended watches and warnings across the Florida and Georgia coasts. Forecasters expected Dorian to stay just off shore, but meteorologist Daniel Brown cautioned that “only a small deviation” could draw the storm’s dangerous core toward land.

By midday Monday, the storm’s top sustained winds fell slightly to 155 mph. It was crawling along Grand Bahama

Island at just 1 mph.

The water reached roofs and the tops of palm trees. One woman filmed water lapping at the stairs of her home’s second floor.

On Sunday, Dorian churned over Abaco Island with battering winds and surf and heavy flooding.

Parliament member Darren Henfield described the damage as “catastrophic” and said officials did not have information on what happened in nearby cays. “We are in search and recovery mode. ... Continue to pray for us,” he said.

A spokesman for Bahamas Power and Light told ZNS there was a blackout in New Providence, the archipelago’s most populous island.

Forecasters said Dorian was likely to begin pulling away from the Bahamas early Tuesday and curving to the northeast parallel to the southeastern

coast of the U.S. The system is expected to spin 40 to 50 miles off Florida, with hurricane-force wind speeds extending about 35 miles to the west.

An advisory from the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami warned that Florida’s east-central coast could see a brief tornado sometime Monday afternoon or evening.

South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster issued an order Sunday for the mandatory evacuation of his state’s entire coast.

A few hours later, Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp ordered mandatory evacuations for that state’s Atlantic Coast, also starting at midday Monday.

Authorities in Florida ordered mandatory evacuations in some vulnerable coastal areas. North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper warned his state that it could see heavy rain, winds and floods later in the week.

## Plan for more US troops in Poland moving ahead

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN  
Stars and Stripes

WARSAW, Poland — The United States and Poland are moving ahead with a plan to add another 1,000 U.S. troops to the country, Vice President Mike Pence and Polish President Andrzej Duda said at a joint press conference Monday, perhaps by the end of this year.

“Lots of proposals have been put on the table,” Duda said. “We hope this year we will be able to sign a final agreement concerning the extension of the U.S. presence” in Poland.

Pence said sites “for our joint bases have also been finalized,” but referred a reporter’s question about the timeline of the boost into Poland to the Pentagon.

Pence and Duda did not say to which locations U.S. military personnel would go. U.S. troops currently live and train at about

half a dozen Polish bases on a rotating or temporary basis.

“I know that is in the process as we speak,” Pence said of timeline targets, “and it reflects a part of the United States’ ongoing commitment to this alliance and our relationship to Poland, rotating troops through this country.”

Pence and his wife arrived in Warsaw early Sunday morning to attend the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II along with dozens of foreign leaders from across Europe. He came in place of President Donald Trump, who canceled his trip last week to better monitor Hurricane Dorian, which is battering the Bahamas after making landfall as a Category 5 storm and is forecast to stay just off the U.S. coast as it turns up the eastern seaboard.

Trump is expected to reschedule his trip to Poland this fall, Pence said.

## Police not sure of reason for West Texas rampage

Associated Press

ODESSA, Texas — Police say they are not sure why a man with a misdemeanor on his record and no warrant for his arrest erupted in a spate of violence after a routine traffic stop in West Texas, killing seven, including a man slain outside his parents’ home and a teenager fatally shot as she left a car dealership with her family.

Authorities said Seth Aaron Ator, 36, also injured 22 people Saturday afternoon before officers killed him outside a busy movie theater in Odessa.

Online court records show Ator was arrested in 2001 for a misdemeanor offense that would not have prevented him from legally purchasing firearms in Texas, although authorities have not said where Ator got the “AR-style” weapon he used.

Authorities said those killed

were between 15 and 57 years old but did not immediately provide a list of names. Family and employers, however, said that among the dead were Edwin Peregrino, 25, who ran out of his parents’ home to see what the commotion was; mail carrier Mary Granados, 29, slain in her U.S. Postal Service truck; and 15-year-old high school student Leilah Hernandez, who was walking out of an auto dealership.

Hundreds of people gathered at a local university in the Permian Basin region known for its oil industry Sunday evening for a prayer vigil to console each other and grieve the loss of life.

Odessa Police Chief Michael Gerke said there were still no answers pointing to a motive for the chaotic attacks. The New York Times and Washington Post reported that Ator lost his job on the day of the attack, citing unnamed officials.

# Dive boat catches fire off coast of Calif.

Associated Press

OXNARD, Calif. — The bodies of four people killed by a raging fire that swept through a dive boat off the Southern California coast were recovered Monday as authorities said more than two dozen others remained missing and feared dead.

Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Kroll said the four bodies had injuries consistent with drowning.

Searchers continued to look for more than two dozen other people who were aboard the vessel *Conception*, which burned while anchored off Santa Cruz Island.

“Right now they’re conducting shoreline searches for any available survivors,” Coast Guard Capt. Monica Rochester told reporters at a brief news conference at Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard.

The Coast Guard said the vessel was believed to have carried 38 people, including five crew members who jumped off

the boat soon after the fire ignited before dawn.

“The crew was actually already awake and on the bridge and they jumped off,” Rochester said.

Two suffered minor injuries, said Coast Guard Petty Officer Mark Barney.

Authorities said the crew members were rescued by a good Samaritan vessel called *The Grape Escape*.

A woman who came to the harbor said, “My son was on that boat.” She was led away by a Ventura County firefighter.

Rochester said the 75-foot commercial scuba diving vessel was anchored in Platt’s Harbor, about 20 yards off the northern coast of Santa Cruz Island, when the fire ignited around 3 a.m.

She said the vessel sank in 64 feet of water, adding that its bow is still visible above the waterline.

The *Conception* was on the final day of a Labor Day weekend cruise to the Channel Islands when the fire erupted.

“At 3:15 this morning the Coast Guard overheard a mayday call. The call was garbled, it was not that clear, but we were able to get some information out of it to send vessels on scene,” Barney said.

Rochester said that call indicated the boat was already fully ablaze.

The *Conception* was chartered by Worldwide Diving Adventures, which says on its website that it has been taking divers on such expeditions since the 1970s. It was owned and operated by Truth Aquatics, a respected Santa Barbara-based company founded in 1974.

Asked if the boat operator has a history of any violations, Rochester said, “The vessel has been in full compliance.”

The *Conception* had departed at 4 a.m. Saturday with plans to return at 5 p.m. Monday.

Divers sleep in a single room of bunk beds, according to a diagram of the *Conception* posted on Truth Aquatics’ website.

## State pro-gun groups see opportunity in NRA turmoil

Associated Press

Bob Mokos is a passionate gun owner who on the surface would seem like a card-carrying National Rifle Association member.

The retired airline pilot has been shooting guns since he was a child. The Vietnam veteran got more serious about firearms as a civilian after one of his sisters was fatally shot during a mugging in Chicago. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, he became qualified to carry a gun in the cockpit.

But Mokos has grown so disillusioned with the NRA over the years that he has joined forces with a rival organization — the gun control group founded by former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords.

“The more gun owners I contacted, the more I found out that everybody is thinking the same thing: The NRA does not speak for us,” said Mokos, who was a founder of the Minnesota Gun Owners for Safety.

As the 2020 presidential campaign draws closer, gun control groups are seizing on the turmoil engulfing the NRA

— as well as recent high-profile shootings in Gilroy, Calif.; El Paso, Texas; Dayton, Ohio; and in Odessa and Midland, Texas, over the weekend — to court firearms owners in hopes of persuading them that there can be bipartisan solutions to gun violence that don’t infringe on their Second Amendment rights.

Giffords’ group formed coalitions this year with gun owners in Colorado, Minnesota and Texas in outreach that managing director Robin Lloyd said was done expressly to show that not all gun owners believe in the NRA.

Long viewed as the most powerful gun lobby in the world, the NRA has been facing internal and external pressures over its operations and spending habits. Law enforcement authorities have launched probes that threaten its nonprofit status, and there has been a revolt by members who are questioning the NRA’s finances and leadership.

The NRA’s problems have created fears among gun enthu-

siasts that rival organizations have found an opening to undermine the organization’s mission to protect gun rights.

But gun control groups trying to court politically moderate firearms enthusiasts still have a long way to go to wield the same power as the NRA.

In the wake of massacres that killed 31 people in Texas and Ohio, LaPierre has demonstrated his sway over President Donald Trump and the Republican-led Senate, where Democratic-sponsored gun legislation faces a grim fate. Trump voiced support for universal background checks after the shootings but backtracked after a phone call with LaPierre.

The NRA spent some \$30 million to help elect Trump in 2016 and remains a powerful force lobbying politicians and government officials.

In the first half of this year, the NRA spent \$1.6 million lobbying Congress, the State and Justice departments and other federal agencies on legislation that ranged from recreational shooting on federal lands to concealed firearms permits,

according to disclosure records filed with the House and Senate.

Many gun rights activists contend that even a weakened NRA may not matter when it comes to 2020 because the Democratic candidates for president have run so far to the left on guns during the primary. The vast majority of Democratic presidential candidates have called for a wide range of gun restrictions to be enacted.

Greg Pruett, president of Idaho Second Amendment Alliance, said that although gun owners have grown weary of the NRA’s troubles, it won’t require much effort to mobilize gun owners because of some of the gun control ideas the Democrats have proposed during the campaign.

“The Democratic Party has gotten so radical on guns that it might actually help fuel a lot of gun owners getting out to vote and not necessarily have to rely on the NRA to get out to vote,” Pruett said.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Zoo adding 2 more gorillas to family

**OH** POWELL — A zoo in Ohio says two more western lowland gorillas will soon join its blended gorilla family.

The Columbus Dispatch reported 4½-year-old Sulaiman and his mother, Shalia, 17, will be arriving at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium this fall from the Milwaukee County Zoo.

Columbus Zoo officials said Sulaiman, nicknamed Sully, is a half-sibling of nearly 2-year-old Zahra.

Zahra was transferred to the Columbus facility last year after her parents died from gastrointestinal infections likely caused by a water supply infected with E. coli bacteria.

Sully and Zahra have the same father.

## Fraternity suspended 10-15 years for hazing

**OH** OXFORD — Miami University is suspending a fraternity for 10 to 15 years after a student reported being hazed by members who beat him with a spiked paddle, kicked him and forced him to drink a lot of alcohol.

Miami already had suspended Delta Tau Delta last March while investigating violations of the university's conduct code. The fraternity unsuccessfully appealed the findings.

It is suspended until 2034, but can petition for an earlier return in 2029.

## Police: Man put razors in bait for wildlife

**MA** FALMOUTH — A Massachusetts man who police allege stuck razor blades in peanut butter he

smeared on a tree in a public park to attract wildlife is facing animal cruelty charges.

Authorities said Brian McGrath, 65, of Falmouth, was arrested Saturday following a joint investigation by town and state environmental police.

Police started investigating after receiving a tip about the blades at Goodwill Park.

Officers also captured evidence of squirrels in contact with a razor while feeding.

McGrath is charged with animal cruelty, reckless behavior, and wanton injuries to trees.

## 2 men injured by bull that escaped pasture

**ME** MADISON — A Maine sheriff's department said a 57-year-old man and his 83-year-old father-in-law were injured by a bull that escaped an enclosure in Madison and gored them.

WMTW-TV reported that Ronald McEwen and his father-in-law, Robert Neal, both suffered serious gore wounds in the Friday attack. The men were trying to capture the bull after it got loose at McEwen's farm on Horsetail Hill Road in Madison when it charged them.

Police said McEwen shot and killed the bull before it could cause further injury.

Neal was being treated for serious wounds to his arm and leg.

McEwen was gored in the face and leg.

## Flyer: 'Sasquatch' not cause of bridge closing

**VT** BRADFORD — An anonymous flyer denying that Bigfoot is behind the prolonged closure of a bridge in a Vermont town has got locals talking about the mythical for-

est creatures.

The flyer first spotted at the Bradford post office said the prolonged closure of the Creamery Bridge over the Waits River was not due to the "displacement of or intrusion on a 'Sasquatch' or Bigfoot, either a single creature or several."

Dartmouth College professor Alexander Chee posted a photo of the flyer to Twitter last month.

Since then, copies have been popping up across town.

Local resident Claudia Johnson told MyNBC5 she thinks there's a local Bigfoot because she's heard unexplained rustling behind her home.

## Mom, deputy indicted in filmed child sex act

**LA** ST. GABRIEL — A grand jury has indicted a Louisiana woman who's accused of performing a sex act on her 1-year-old son, as well as the sheriff's deputy accused of filming it.

The Advocate reported the mother had told investigators that Iberville Parish Sheriff's Deputy Shaderick Jones coerced her into performing the act on her son in exchange for not arresting her for an open traffic ticket warrant.

A grand jury indicted the two Aug. 26 on charges of rape, aggravated crimes against nature and distributing child pornography.

Jones was also charged with malfeasance-in-office after prosecutors argued he leveraged his authority as an officer.

## Whitewater rafter thrown into river dies

**PA** OHIOPYLE — Authorities said a man on a whitewater rafting trip was

thrown into a western Pennsylvania river and died after his foot apparently became trapped under a rock.

Ohiopyle State Park operations manager Ken Bisbee told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette the man was part of an eight-member group that had rented two rafts from White Water Adventurers on Saturday.

Bisbee said the county 911 emergency center contacted the park about 1 p.m. Saturday about a raft that had overturned at River's End Rapid on the Youghiogheny River.

He said the man had apparently put a foot down on the river bottom, something rafters are typically warned against doing if they are thrown into the water.

His body was recovered about 2:30 p.m. Saturday. His name hasn't been released.

## Man is shot after confrontation at party

**UT** TAYLORSVILLE — Authorities in Taylorsville said a man was hospitalized in serious condition after being shot during a confrontation with neighbors.

The Salt Lake Tribune reported that the man was kicked out of a child's birthday party Saturday night for being intoxicated and allegedly carrying a gun.

Unified Police have not released the suspect's name.

They said the party's host asked the man to leave and he did not.

The man reportedly pointed his gun at some neighbors. Police said an armed neighbor then shot the man.

From wire reports

STARS AND STRIPES

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# Verlander tosses 3rd career no-hitter

Associated Press

TORONTO — Justin Verlander took the mound for the ninth inning, fully aware of the no-hitters he finished — and his near misses, too.

Zeroed in, he wouldn't be denied this time.

Verlander pitched his third career no-hitter, punctuating a dominant season by striking out 14 to lead the Houston Astros past the Toronto Blue Jays 2-0 on Sunday.

Verlander became just the sixth pitcher to throw at least three no-hitters in the majors, an elite club that includes the likes of Nolan Ryan, Sandy Koufax and Cy Young.

"It means a lot," Verlander said. "I'd be lying if I said I didn't know that. I've come so close. Since I've had two, I think I've blown two in the ninth and another couple in the eighth."

"I was definitely aware of the history aspect of it. Definitely a big hurdle to get over and a very special moment for me," he said.

Verlander (17-5) is the first pitcher to throw two no-hitters as a visitor in the same park — he also threw one at Rogers Centre in 2011 with Detroit. His other no-no was in 2007 for the Tigers against Milwaukee.

"I guess I have to like this mound a lot

now," Verlander joked.

Verlander allowed only one runner, with Cavan Biggio drawing a one-out walk in the first inning. The Blue Jays, with a lineup full of young, aggressive batters, never came close to a hit in the Astros' second no-hitter of the season — four Houston pitchers combined to blank Seattle a month ago.

The 36-year-old Verlander joined Ryan (seven), Koufax (four) and Young, Bob Feller and 1880s-era Larry Corcoran (three each) in rarefied air on the no-hitter list.

"Some of the guys I've idolized," Verlander said.

## Roundup

# Phillies top Mets, avert 3-game sweep

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Scott Kingery snapped an eighth-inning tie with a three-run double and Philadelphia beat New York 5-2 to avoid a three-game sweep.

Brad Miller hit a solo homer and a double for the Phillies, who pulled within 2½ games of the Chicago Cubs for the second NL wild card.

Pete Alonso hit his 43rd homer and Wilson Ramos extended his hitting streak to 25 consecutive games with a fourth-inning double for the Mets, who are four games behind the Cubs.

Daniel Zamora (0-1), who was just recalled from the minors, took the loss.

Hector Neris (3-5) got the final five outs for Philadelphia.

**Padres 8, Giants 4:** Ty France homered twice, Greg Garcia hit a leadoff drive and San Diego beat host San Francisco as Giants fans gave one more cheer for Pablo Sandoval.

Sandoval grounded out as a pinch-hitter in what could be his final game with the Giants. The 33-year-old former World Series MVP was activated off the injured list earlier in the day for a final at-bat under retiring manager Bruce Bochy.

Sandoval will undergo season-ending surgery on his right

elbow Wednesday.

**Braves 5, White Sox 3:** Freddie Freeman homered twice off All-Star Lucas Giolito and drove in five runs, providing all the offense for host Atlanta against Chicago.

The Braves have won four straight are 12-2 since Aug. 16, moving 30 games over .500 for the first time since 2013. They have won a season-best nine straight home games to stay 5½ games ahead in the NL East.

**Red Sox 4, Angels 3:** Xander Bogaerts had three hits, including a homer, and three RBIs as the Boston beat host Los Angeles.

J.D. Martinez also went deep for the Red Sox, who went 6-2 on the trip and have won 11 of 15 to get within five games of the second AL wild card.

**Cardinals 4/3, Reds 3/5:** Nick Senzel and Phillip Ervin hit solo home runs, Luis Castillo pitched six effective innings and visiting Cincinnati beat St. Louis in the nightcap to split a doubleheader and end a four-game losing streak.

With the 4-3 win in the first game and the Chicago Cubs' 4-0 loss to Milwaukee, the Cardinals gained a half game in the NL Central to increase their division lead to three games. St. Louis has only lost two of its past 11 games and is 12-3 in its past 15.

**Twins 8, Tigers 3:** Jake Cave and Nelson Cruz each drove in two runs and visiting Minnesota beat Detroit.

The Twins increased their lead in the AL Central to 5½ games over Cleveland.

**Rays 8, Indians 2:** Charlie Morton earned his 14th win and Travis d'Arnaud had two RBIs off the bench as host Tampa Bay swept a critical series between postseason contenders.

Nate Lowe hit a two-run homer for the Rays, who moved a half-game ahead of Cleveland for the top AL wild card.

**Cardinals 4/3, Reds 3/5:** Nick Senzel and Phillip Ervin hit solo home runs, Luis Castillo pitched six effective innings and visiting Cincinnati beat St. Louis in the nightcap to split a doubleheader and end a four-game losing streak.

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**Brewers 4, Cubs 0:** Christian Yelich hit a three-run homer off Craig Kimbrel in the ninth inning, and Milwaukee shut out host Chicago for the second straight game.

The Brewers took two of

three in the weekend series to pull within three games of Chicago for the second NL wild card.

**Nationals 9, Marlins 3:** Ryan Zimmerman celebrated his return from the injured list with one of host Washington's four home runs and the Nationals completed a series sweep of Miami.

**Yankees 5, Athletics 4:** Brett Gardner and pinch-hitter Mike Ford hit back-to-back homers off A's closer Liam Hendriks, and host New York rallied from four runs down and walked off for the second straight game.

**Mariners 11, Rangers 3:** Kyle Seager, Tom Murphy and Daniel Vogelbach hit home runs and visiting Seattle beat Texas.

**Pirates 6, Rockies 2:** Steven Brault hit his first major league homer and pitched effectively into the seventh inning to lead Pittsburgh over host Colorado for a four-game sweep.

**Dodgers 4, Diamondbacks 3 (11):** Cody Bellinger hit a tying homer in the ninth inning, pinch-hitter Joc Pederson went deep in the 11th and visiting Los Angeles prevented a four-game sweep with a win over Arizona.

**Royals 6, Orioles 4:** Adalberto Mondesi matched a career high with four hits and stole three bases to lead host Kansas City past Baltimore.



# Williams holds on after ankle injury

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Serena Williams was in pain — “acceptable” pain, her coach called it — after rolling her right ankle during the second set of a U.S. Open victory.

That was the bad news.

The good news for Williams as she pursues a seventh championship at Flushing Meadows and 24th Grand Slam singles title overall is that, while she reached the quarterfinals by beating No. 22 seed Petra Martić 6-3, 6-4 despite the ankle issue, No. 2 Ash Barty and No. 3 Karolina Pliskova both exited her side of the bracket Sunday.

Williams, who turns 38 this month, appeared to be cruising along to a straightforward victory when she took an awkward step while up at the net for a volley. She tumbled to the ground and sat there, cross-legged, right in the middle of Arthur Ashe Stadium for a few moments.

Williams has dealt with various health issues all season, including one that ended her stay at the Australian Open.

Still, Martić thought Williams’ play might actually have improved the rest of the way.

“She started going for even more, I think. She felt like maybe she couldn’t move that well anymore,” Martić said. “Her shots were really precise. Serve was unbelievable.”

Williams ended things by raising both arms after smacking an ace at 118 mph, her fastest of the afternoon, punctuating an overpowering performance that included 38 winners to Martić’s 11.

“I knew she (hits it) hard,” Martić said, “but until you feel it on your own racket, you just don’t know what to expect.”

Williams faces No. 18 Wang Qiang next. Wang, who never had played in the fourth round at a major until Sunday, advanced by surprising French Open champion Barty 6-2, 6-4.

Pliskova, the 2016 U.S. Open

runner-up, went home with a 6-7 (1), 6-3, 7-5 loss over nearly 2½ hours against 16th-seeded Johanna Konta, of Britain.

Konta will now meet No. 5 Elina Svitolina of Ukraine, who got past 2017 runner-up Madison Keys of the U.S. 7-5, 6-4 Sunday night.

Defending champion and No. 1 seed Novak Djokovic’s stay at the U.S. Open ended abruptly when he stopped playing during his fourth-round match against Stan Wawrinka because of pain in his left shoulder.

Djokovic was trailing 6-4, 7-5, 2-1 and being thoroughly outplayed when he retired from the match, shaking his head as he walked over to the chair umpire to say he was conceding.

“It’s never the way you want to finish the match,” said Wawrinka, who will face No. 5 seed Daniil Medvedev in the quarterfinals. “I feel sorry for Novak.”

Djokovic, 32, had won 36 of his past 37 Grand Slam matches, and four of the last five major titles, in one of the most dominant stretches ever.

Wawrinka will face Daniil Medvedev. Reprising his trolling role at Louis Armstrong Stadium, the No. 5-seeded Russian again begged the crowd to boo him after he beat qualifier Dominik Koepfer 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (2).

“You give me so much energy to win. Thank you!” he said, similar to his interaction with jeering spectators after his third-round win. “You are the best!”

Earlier Sunday, Roger Federer dominated No. 15 seed David Goffin 6-2, 6-2, 6-0 in just 79 minutes. That’s one fewer minute than it took him to put together a 6-2, 6-2, 6-1 win against Dan Evans in the previous round.

Federer next takes on Grigor Dimitrov, a two-time major semifinalist who is unseeded at Flushing Meadows. Federer is 7-0 against Dimitrov.

# Hurts’ 6 TDs lead No. 4 Sooners past Houston in opener

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Even one of the best nights ever for an Oklahoma player wasn’t good enough for Jalen Hurts.

The new Sooners quarterback passed for three touchdowns and ran for three more, and No. 4 Oklahoma rolled past Houston 49-31 on Sunday night.

It was Hurts’ first game for the Sooners since he transferred from Alabama. He put on a show as his predecessor, 2018 Heisman Trophy winner Kyler Murray, watched. He posted 508 total yards, the fifth-most in school history.

Hurts was not impressed. And at a school that has produced back-to-back Heisman-winning quarterbacks in Baker Mayfield and Murray, nitpicking has become the norm at that position.

“We did some really good things out there tonight, but there are a lot of things we can improve on,” he said. “We’ve got to take that next step.”

Hurts started at Alabama for two years before losing the job to Tua Tagovailoa. He stayed as a backup at Alabama last season, then transferred to Oklahoma and won the starting job in preseason camp.

He looked at home in the opener — he completed 20 of 23 passes for 332, ran for 176 yards on 16 carries and helped the Sooners gain 686 total yards.

Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley liked how Hurts handled the situation.

“He played good,” Riley said. “There were things he could do better, but I thought he handled the moment good. You could tell out there that he’d been in it, certainly. I’m sure he had some nerves, but he did a good job managing them.”

Houston coach Dana Holgorsen, who coached at West Virginia before making his

Houston debut on Sunday night, said he sees no drop-off in Oklahoma’s play.

“Four years ago, they were good,” Holgorsen said. “A year later, they were the best offense in college football. A year later, with a new quarterback, they’re the best offense in college football. A year later, with a new quarterback, they looked the same to me.”

Charleston Rambo caught three passes for 105 yards and a touchdown and Trey Sermon ran for 91 yards for Oklahoma.

Oklahoma’s defense was sharp too, constantly pressuring Houston quarterback D’Eriq King and limiting him to 87 yards passing in the first half. King, one of the nation’s top quarterbacks last season, finished with just 167 yards passing. Though King rushed for 103 yards, Riley felt the Sooners kept him and the Cougars under control.

“I thought our defense flew around, was extremely active, extremely disruptive for the majority of the game,” Riley said.

## The takeaway

**Houston:** The offensive and defensive lines struggled, and that decided the game. The Cougars couldn’t keep the Sooners away from King early in the game. He had his moments, but he couldn’t produce when Oklahoma established itself in the first half. Oklahoma’s offense was only stopped when it self-destructed.

**Oklahoma:** The offense looked sharp with Hurts, and Riley showed he can still get results from a very different quarterback than he has used in the past. The defense was more aggressive and tackled better than in recent years in its first game under new coordinator Alex Grinch. The Sooners forced three-and-outs on Houston’s first two possessions to set the tone.



# Questionable quarterbacks

Carr, Winston, Mariota would-be franchise passers in prove-it years

Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — While outsiders keep speculating when the Oakland Raiders will cut ties with Derek Carr and search for a new franchise quarterback, Carr tunes out all the outside noise.

He ignored all the pre-draft talk whether the Raiders would select his replacement and has paid so little attention to the talk about his long-term security that he has already bought a house in Las Vegas — where his new neighbor when the Raiders arrive in Sin City next year will be coach Jon Gruden.

“We are next-door neighbors,” Carr said. “We will be, yes, but that’s for the future. That’ll be fun. Hopefully a lot of knocks on the door. Maybe we can carpool. That would be good for us.”

Carr might be the only person so confident in his job status with the Raiders. After a promising start to his career that featured a 12-win season and MVP talk in 2016 when Oakland ended its 13-year playoff drought, Carr’s performance has lagged the past two years, thanks in part to switching play callers and diminished talent around him.

If he can’t succeed this season after the Raiders added the NFL’s most prolific receiver in Antonio Brown, a dangerous deep threat in Tyrell Williams, first-round running back Josh Jacobs and elite pass-blocking tackle Trent Brown, Carr might need to look for a real-estate agent. And for a new job as the Raiders can get out of his five-year, \$125 million contract three years early with almost no penalty.

“Let’s just get through this year first and then we’ll play that game again,” he said. “I’ll probably have some more fun with it, but I’m not going anywhere. This is my team and it will be for the next however long I want to play.”

Carr is one of several QBs in a prove-it season, along with 2015 top two picks Jameis Winston and Marcus Mariota, who are playing out their fifth-year options in Tampa Bay and Tennessee without long-term deals; Cincinnati’s Andy Dalton; and Jimmy Garoppolo in San Francisco.

Most of those teams can get out of commitments to players they once had hoped would be franchise quarterbacks without major salary cap implications. Winston and Mariota are set to be unrestricted free agents if they don’t get new deals or franchise tags. Dalton will enter the final year of a \$96 million, six-year contract in 2020 with no dead money on his deal. The 49ers can get out of Garoppolo’s with a cap charge of just \$4.5 million.

Garoppolo was viewed as the savior in

San Francisco after winning his first five starts to end the 2017 season following a midseason trade from New England. That led to a \$137.5 million, five-year contract in the offseason, but things soured from there. Garoppolo struggled in the first three games last season and then went down with a season-ending knee injury.

He’s back healthy this summer, still trying to prove he’s worthy of that deal and durable enough to make it through an entire season after starting just 10 games and getting hurt twice in five seasons in the NFL.

“It’s crazy what a year can do,” Garoppolo said. “I have so much motivation in myself and I push myself so much that that’s all I need. All the noise on the outside, you kind of just tune it out. ... It’s always going to be there.”

The questions about Winston, Mariota and Dalton have taken longer to form. Winston and Mariota came into the league as the top two picks but haven’t lived up to that billing. Winston has thrown for a franchise-record 88 touchdowns in four seasons, but also has 58 interceptions in 56 career games. He hasn’t shown the consistency needed to thrive in the NFL. Last season, he was suspended for the first three games for violating the NFL’s personal conduct policy, then benched briefly for ineffectiveness after throwing eight interceptions in his first three starts.

“I’ve just got to do my job,” he said. “The better I do my job, the better chance we give this team a chance to win.”

Mariota also has had a difficult time, missing at least one game a season and going through three head coaches and five play callers in his brief career. He is coming off a season when he threw for a career-worst 11 touchdowns with eight interceptions.

“Other people’s opinions don’t matter to me,” Mariota said. “I just got to be the best I can be for this team.”

Many thought the Bengals would move on from Dalton after a third straight year without making the playoffs. Cincinnati made the postseason in each of Dalton’s first five seasons but lost in the wild-card round each time — including in 2015 when Dalton was hurt — and now have taken a step back.

Dalton gets the chance to work with an offensive mind in head coach Zac Taylor.

“Andy is a very fine quarterback,” owner Mike Brown said. “He got hurt last year. I don’t know why, but the public perception seems to be that he wasn’t a fine enough quarterback. If we put the right people around him, he’s proven he can make this thing go well.”

# Jones holds off Kyle Busch to win at Darlington

Associated Press

DARLINGTON, S.C. — Erik Jones used every bit of stamina he had at Darlington Raceway. Few know better than Jones the effort it took to hold off Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Kyle Busch and win the rain-delayed Southern 500.

“I’m mentally drained,” he said with a smile. “I’m physically drained.”

Jones took the lead from Kyle Larson 85 laps from the end and stayed in front of Busch the rest of the way to add a win at Darlington Raceway to his first NASCAR Cup Series win at Daytona in July 2018.

“It’s pretty crazy, right,” he said. “I’m not a hugely emotional guy, but to get a win here means a lot to me.”

Some had wondered if the 23-year-old Jones was the soft spot in the JGR powerhouse as Busch, Denny Hamlin and Martin Truex Jr. had all won four times apiece this season while Jones’ No. 20 was winless.

“Is there anything more to say?” Jones asked as the crowd cheered.

Not anymore. Jones’ victory means all four of Joe Gibbs’ drivers has taken the checkered flag and are locked into the NASCAR playoffs that start in two weeks.

“It takes a lot to beat them,” Jones of his teammates. “Especially when you’re racing the same equipment.”

To have the win come at Darlington made it even more special for Jones.

“This is one of those races for me that has always held a special place. You think of NASCAR, you think of Darlington,” he said.

Larson was second, his third top three finish at Darlington in the past four years. He led 497 laps during that stretch, including 44 in this one.

Busch, who started in the back after swapping out an engine after qualifying, got up to Jones’ bumper near the end. But he brushed the wall on the next-to-last lap and ended third, clinching the regular-season points lead.

Jimmie Johnson made some headway on his quest for a 16th straight playoff appearance, but was hindered when he was caught up in a final stage crash that bumped him back to 16th at the Southern 500. Johnson trimmed his playoff deficit from 26 points to 18. Still, he’ll likely need a win in Indianapolis next week to qualify for the postseason.

“We’re running out of days and if we miss it, it’s going to be by a few (points) I believe,” Johnson said. “I can look back over the first half of the season and see a lot of races where we gave away a few points.”