

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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## Bergdahl faces rare charge of misbehavior

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY  
*Stars and Stripes*

If Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl were convicted of “misbehavior before the enemy” a century ago, he might also have been subject to a humiliating send-off. His sword might be broken or his insignia ripped from his uniform in front of his unit.

Along with desertion, Bergdahl was accused last month of violating the little-understood Article 99 of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice — misbehavior before the enemy — for abandoning his post in Afghanistan in 2009 and thereby endangering his unit.

Although desertion cases are not uncommon, few military lawyers have ever prosecuted, or defended, a charge of misbehavior before the enemy.

In a 19th-century treatise, Col. William Winthrop, one of the most important influences in the formation of U.S. mili-

tary law, wrote that officers convicted of misbehavior before the enemy were “paraded in front of the command bearing a placard inscribed with the word ‘coward,’” and then “drummed out of the service.”

“These are charges from the 18th century,” said Eugene Fiddell, Bergdahl’s defense lawyer. “It struck me as piling on.”

The last time Article 99 was raised in such a high-profile case was in the wake of the 1968 seizure of the spy ship USS Pueblo by the North Korean navy. The skipper, Cmdr. Lloyd Bucher, surrendered the Pueblo without firing a shot, becoming the first American officer to give up his ship since the War of 1812.

After the crew was released, a Board of Inquiry comprising five admirals recommended that Bucher be court-martialed under Article 99 for surrendering the ship, which was armed with only two .50 cali-

ber machine guns. But public opinion supported Bucher, and Navy Secretary John Chafee overruled the admirals, declaring that the skipper and his crew had suffered enough after having been beaten and starved during nearly a year in captivity.

According to his charge sheet, Bergdahl misbehaved in front of the enemy by leaving his observation post in Paktika province on June 30, 2009. His absence endangered his fellow soldiers and those who were ordered to search for him in hostile territory, according to the charges.

Conviction under Article 99 can result in even more severe punishment than the desertion charge Bergdahl faces. The maximum punishment for misbehavior before the enemy is life imprisonment, compared with up to five years in prison, a dishonorable discharge, reduction in rank to E-1 and

loss of pay and allowances for desertion.

Sentences imposed in some previous misbehavior cases have been much shorter.

In one case, two soldiers guarding a tank farm in Vietnam were convicted and sentenced to five years of hard labor after being found guilty of misbehavior because they supposedly played dead during a North Vietnamese attack, thus endangering the tank farm.

An appellate court, however, ruled that there was insufficient evidence to prove that their actions constituted any misconduct, let alone misbehavior in front of the enemy. The guard shack was indefensible, the soldiers’ weapons either jammed or were incapable of rapid fire and both had been wounded by a grenade.

“Playing dead’ is not much different from ‘taking cover’; neither is misconduct, per se,” the court said.

## Army plans to ease tattoo restrictions

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Army announced Wednesday it soon will ease restrictions on tattoos imposed last year to improve soldiers’ appearance.

The new policy will lift limits on the number and size but still prohibit tattoos on the neck, hands and face. Tattoos with racist, sexist or extremist imagery will also remain prohibited, according to Army spokesman Wayne Hall.

The regulations are among a series of planned changes to Army Regulation 670-1, which deals with dress and appearance. The service said

the changes will be effective when the new rule is published, which is expected to be “soon,” though no date was set.

“This is essentially rolling the [tattoo] regulation back to what it was before the last change,” Hall said.

A year ago, the Army announced that full-sleeve tattoos were banned, and no more than four small tattoos could be visible on the lower arms and legs. Those who already had them were grandfathered.

Hall said soldiers will no longer face limits on the size and number of tattoos on their arms and legs. But the Army will continue to prohibit them on the neck above the T-shirt

collar, on the head or face, and on the hands and wrists except for single ring tattoos.

New tattoo and grooming standards issued in March 2014 caused public controversy, mostly because they banned certain hairstyles popular among black, female soldiers.

The hairstyle rules were eased in September but the Army did not initially budge on the tattoo rules.

Hall said the coming changes are due to input the Army received during the past year from soldiers.

“We want soldiers to play a role in helping to shape policy,” he said.

Other changes to 670-1 will

deal with traveling in uniform and will allow commanders to authorize soldiers to fly in their Army combat uniforms, Hall said.

Reactions to the coming change were uniformly positive.

Jeff Vargo, a Gulf War veteran who was an infantry soldier from 1988 to 1998, took a longer view.

“I still believe that as long as it doesn’t show past your uniform it shouldn’t matter, you should be able to be who you are,” Vargo said from Grafenwöhr. “We are still the land of the free. We’re supposed to be fighting for people’s freedoms, not what they look like.”

## Gunmen storm college in Kenya; dozens are killed

The Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya — Al-Shabab gunmen stormed a university in northeastern Kenya at dawn Thursday, killing more than 70 people in the group's bloodiest attack in the East African country, officials said. Four of the gunmen were killed by security forces.

In the attack, which turned into a hostage siege that continued into the evening at Garissa University College, masked militants separated Christian students from Muslims and then gunned them down without mercy, survivors said. Others ran for their lives with bullets whistling through the air, and hundreds of students

remained unaccounted for more than 11 hours after the bloodshed began.

At least 79 people were wounded at the school 90 miles from the Somali border by the al-Qaida-linked group, said Interior Minister Joseph Nkaissery, who gave the death toll of more than 70. A dusk-to-dawn curfew was ordered in Garissa and three nearby counties.

Kenyan security forces cornered the gunmen in a dormitory, and President Uhuru Kenyatta said the attackers were holding hostages. Ali Mohamud Rage, a spokesman for al-Shabab, said fighters from the Somalia-based extremist group were responsible.

## Amid drought, Calif. toughens measures to conserve water

The Associated Press

TUSTIN, Calif. — Gary Whitlock watched water run down to the sidewalk as gardeners hosed down a bed of marigolds outside an Orange County office building and questioned whether California's latest attempt to curb water use would be any more successful than previous ones in the drought-stricken state.

Gov. Jerry Brown on Wednesday ordered sweeping and unprecedented measures to save water in California. A survey that day found the Sierra Nevada snowpack, which supplies a third of the state's water, almost completely vanished.

"We're in a new era; the idea of your nice, little, green grass getting water every day, that's going to be a thing of the past," Brown said, standing on a brown field that would normally be covered in snow that melts its way into taps.

The governor's order calls for cities and towns to cut water use by 25 percent, but many Californians like Whitlock aren't seeing a difference in

their day-to-day routines nor a hit to their wallets because of the drought.

"You see people that just run water all the time, people that are watering their lawns, parks that are not using recycled water," Whitlock said.

"This has been going on for years and everybody that I talk to says, 'Oh, well, you know, it's going to rain, El Nino's coming.'"

While many California military installations — including Fort Irwin, Marine Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Naval Air Station Lemore and Edwards Air Force Base — have had extensive water conservation efforts in place for several years, they're not yet sure how the statewide reduction will affect them.

The state department of natural resources said that the 25 percent reduction cannot be enforced on federal facilities.

Brown also asked for a voluntary 25 percent cut in water use in 1977 during his first term as governor. Nearly 40 years later, Brown warns that drought may be the new normal.

## Rebels take palace in key Yemen spot

The Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Yemen's Shiite rebels and their allies fought their way through the commercial center of Aden on Thursday and seized the presidential palace on a strategic hilltop in this southern coastal city, security officials said.

The capture was a major blow to the Saudi-led coalition, which has been carrying out airstrikes for a week now across Yemen, including in the capital, Sanaa, in a campaign meant to halt the advance of the Iran-backed rebels known as Houthis.

The Maasheeq palace in Aden — a cluster of Colonial-era villas perched atop a rocky hill that juts into the Arabian Sea — was President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi's last seat of power before he fled to Saudi Arabia last month in the face of the Houthi advance. He had earlier fled to Aden from rebel-held Sanaa.

Fighting was still underway late Thursday as Hadi's forces and loyalists were holding on to some scattered parts of Aden after losing the palace and the city center.

The capture of the palace came just hours after al-Qaida militants, who have profited from the turmoil and violence roiling Yemen to expand their

foothold in this Arabian Peninsula nation, captured the coastal city of Mukalla, another key port, to the east of Aden.

In the raid, al-Qaida militants freed about 300 inmates from a local prison in Mukalla, including scores of militants, according to the security officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to media.

Among those freed from the prison was senior al-Qaida operative Khaled Baterfi, who had been in detention since 2011.

The militants fanned out across major roads leading into Mukalla, the provincial capital of Hadramawt, and sporadic fighting continued in the city itself. The province is still mostly in the hands of government forces loyal to the embattled Hadi.

The Saudi-led air campaign has been targeting the Houthis and their allies, forces loyal to Hadi's predecessor, ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Over the past two days, the airstrikes have focused on Aden, bombing rebels and Saleh loyalists approaching the city from the east and north.

The presumption was that if Aden was kept out of rebel hands, Hadi could return at some point to the country by way of the port.

## Officials: Outline for Iran nuclear deal set

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — The United States, Iran and five other world powers say they've reached an understanding that will direct them toward achieving a comprehensive nuclear agreement within three months.

Reading out a joint statement, European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said a "decisive step" has

been achieved.

Secretary of State John Kerry tweeted there was a deal "to resolve major issues on nuclear program. Back to work soon on a final deal."

Israeli leaders on Thursday voiced concerns about the announced deal, demanding that it "significantly" roll back the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and vowing to fight the agreement before it is finalized in the coming months.

From The Associated Press

# Final Four loaded with coaching greats

*The Kansas City Star*

Who has the coaching advantage at this year's Final Four?

There's a coach who has been enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame, Duke's Mike Krzyzewski.

Two others, Kentucky's John Calipari and Wisconsin's Bo Ryan, are Hall of Fame finalists.

The outlier is Michigan State's Tom Izzo, who will be a Hall of Fame slam dunk, as he leads the Spartans to a Final Four for the seventh time.

"They're really the best of the best," Krzyzewski said Monday. "It's really an honor for me to be in a Final Four with those three programs and those three coaches because they've all understood the commitment to excellence that a program needs to make."

The national semifinal battles match Duke and Michigan State in Saturday's opener in Indianapolis followed by Kentucky facing Wisconsin.

No Final Four newbie coaches here.

The Badgers and Wildcats will meet in the semifinals for a second straight year. Duke and Michigan State are back in the Final Four for the first time since 2010.

Each of the coaches has won an NCAA championship. Krzyzewski has four titles in his previous 11 Final Four appearances. If Duke wins the tournament, Coach K will stand behind only UCLA's John Wooden with the most titles at five. Wooden has 10.

Izzo's Spartans won the 2000 championship, and Calipari's Wildcats defeated Kansas for the 2012 title.

Although this is Ryan's second Final Four appearance, he owns four NCAA Division III championships coaching Wisconsin-Platteville in the 1990s.

Two of those teams went undefeated, which gives Ryan a bit of insight into what Kentucky, 38-0, is attempting to accomplish.

"I know what it's like to be 10-0, 15-0, 25-0 and what that does to a team," Ryan said. "It actually makes our practices better. I just thought it made us better while we were undefeated because of how you learned to deal

with outside pressures."

Last year, Kentucky won a nail-biter 74-73 on Aaron Harrison's three-pointer with 6 seconds remaining. Ten seconds earlier, the Badgers had missed a chance to take a three-point lead when Traevon Jackson missed a free throw, Wisconsin's only miss in 20 attempts, leaving the lead at two points.

"This will be a really hard game for our team," said Calipari, whose Wildcats are coming off a two-point victory over Notre Dame in the Midwest Regional final. "We know that."

Krzyzewski and Izzo say the same thing about their game, but Izzo isn't buying any suggestion that the Blue Devils and Spartans have a rivalry during the current coaches' tenures. Duke leads the series 8-1.

"Somebody said, 'You guys have a good rivalry,'" Izzo said. "I said you can't have a rivalry when it's 8-1. It will be fun to see if we can change that around."

## UConn not looking ahead to title game

*The Associated Press*

TAMPA, Fla. — Four No. 1 seeds are in the Final Four of the women's NCAA Tournament for only the third time, yet there's still a distinctive feel it's really two-time defending champion Connecticut's title to lose. Notre Dame, South Carolina and Maryland merely are a distant best of the rest.

The coaches of the teams, beginning with UConn's Geno Auriemma, say that's simply not true.

The Huskies (36-1) may be playing on college basketball's biggest stage for the eighth straight year and seeking a record 10th national title, but Auriemma said the best teams in the country are still standing, and all of them are capable of returning home with the championship trophy.

"We're not going down there thinking that we're so good that it doesn't matter. ... We don't buy into this nonsense that we're the only team that can win this thing, any more than I'm sure the rest of the country thinks Kentucky can't lose in the men's Final Four," Auriemma said Wednesday on a conference call. "That's not the case at all. Things happen in the Final Four that you just don't expect."

With All-American and two-time Final Four most outstanding player Breanna Stewart leading a talent-laden roster, UConn has won consecutive titles three times. A 10th national crown would lift Auriemma into a tie with UCLA's John Wooden for the most NCAA basketball championships.

But before the Huskies' coronation, there's a matter of beating Maryland (34-2) in Sunday's semifinals and facing either Notre Dame (35-2) or South Carolina (34-2) on Tuesday night.

The Huskies beat Notre Dame by 18 in early December, trounced South Carolina by 25 when the Gamecocks were unbeaten and ranked No. 1 in February, and have won 35 straight, suffering only a two-point overtime loss at Stanford in November. Maryland hasn't faced UConn this season.

No team has had more success against UConn recently than former Big East rival Notre Dame and coach Muffett McGraw has the Irish in the Final Four for the fifth straight year.

The teams have faced each other 14 times over the past five seasons, with each winning seven.

McGraw understands why there's a perception that there's UConn — and then there's everybody else. She just believes women's college basketball has outgrown that scenario, even if the Huskies remain the most dominant program in the country.

"I think this is one of the best tournaments that we've had in terms of parity. I feel like there were so many great games," McGraw said. "There were upsets. There were great games that the No. 1 seeds advanced. ... I think that was great for TV."

"I think we're definitely heading in the same direction as the men. I think we had almost the same number of upsets on the first day as the men had," she added. "And even though the top seeds advanced, which is unusual ... it seems as though there's definitely more parity and more excitement about the tournament."

McGraw and the Irish will take on South Carolina. The Gamecocks are making their first Final Four appearance.

## Coach K, Duke adjust to 'one-and-done' world

*The Associated Press*

DURHAM, N.C. — There was a time when Duke's Mike Krzyzewski led Final Four teams built around players who stayed for years to grow into tournament-tested veterans.

No longer, not in today's one-and-done world in which top players rarely stick around long.

The Blue Devils enter this week's Final Four relying on more freshman starters than John Calipari at Kentucky's NBA factory. They have three freshman players facing stay-or-go NBA decisions after the season.

"What Coach K has done in my judgment, and I think Calipari has done the same thing, they've adapted to the landscape, and they are dealing with it in a positive way," said Jay Bilas, an ESPN analyst who played on Krzyzewski's first Final Four team in 1986.

"Now people want to use value judgments to it and say, 'This is not the way it's supposed to be' and 'This is antithetical to college.' Well, says who?"

Krzyzewski, the Hall of Famer in his 35th season at Duke and the winningest coach in men's Division I history with 1,016 wins, didn't have a player go pro early for nearly two decades until three left in 1999. Elton Brand was the first that year after his sophomore season, followed by fellow sophomore William Avery and then freshman Corey Maggette a few weeks later as Krzyzewski's first of five one-and-done players.

It took five years for Luol Deng to become the next freshman to leave, but Duke has now had three in four seasons: No. 1 overall pick Kyrie Irving in 2011, Austin Rivers in 2012 and Jabari Parker last year.

It's forced the 68-year-old Krzyzewski to adjust his approach compared to days when Christian Laettner, Bobby Hurley and Grant Hill were four-year guys or even when Jay Williams, Carlos Boozer and Mike Dunleavy stayed for three.

"It actually starts before they get here," Krzyzewski said. "We try with the kids, especially if they commit early, to develop even a deeper relationship with them than we did 10 years ago. You had time (then). You want to know them even better because you're only going to have

them for a shorter period of time."

Duke (33-4) is built around star freshman big man Jahlil Okafor, a possible No. 1 overall pick who chose Duke jointly with point guard Tyus Jones. Forward Justise Winslow is the other every-game freshman starter.

Their arrival comes a year after Parker arrived as an all-but-certain one-year player.

The reality is it isn't all that different — except maybe for the smaller numbers — than what Kentucky's Calipari often is criticized for doing with his "succeed and proceed" approach, a response to the NBA's requirement for players to be at least one year out of high school before entering the draft.

As Bilas sums it up, Krzyzewski "has been playing against these players, and if some of them want to come to Duke, why not take them?"

And considering college should help prepare someone for a job, there's nothing wrong with a player leaving school to start a lucrative career.

"I really get tired of this discussion of basically people — and they're not just fans, they're NCAA member administrators — their view is 'Our one-and-done is a great kid that had a wonderful opportunity he couldn't turn down, and your one-and-done is a threat to the integrity of this enterprise,'" Bilas said.

"You can't moralize about that. You take one, you're in the same boat. There's not one negative thing about a young person going to college for any amount of time. Not one negative thing."

To that point, Krzyzewski said the program's ability to develop players is "obvious" but his pitch includes that the university itself "has a chance to develop you, too."

Okafor said knowing Krzyzewski had "coached the best of the best" was key in his decision, though he and Winslow said getting to the NBA wasn't a big part of the recruiting conversations.

"He always knew that the NBA could be a part of my eventual path," Winslow said. "But all our discussions were about me becoming the best player I could at Duke, not really any conversation about the NBA."



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# Harden's 51 fuels Rockets win

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — James Harden strengthened his case for the MVP award with a career-high 51 points, and the Houston Rockets squandered a huge early lead but held on for a 115-111 win over the Sacramento Kings on Wednesday.

Houston was up by nine with about eight minutes left when Sacramento used a 9-2 spurt to get within 104-102 with 5½ remaining. An 8-0 run by Harden, which he capped with a three-point play, pushed the lead to 112-104. Four straight points by the Kings cut the lead to four with less than a minute left, but they didn't score after that.

DeMarcus Cousins led the Kings with his second career triple-double with 24 points, 21 rebounds and 10 assists. He also had six blocks.

**Spurs 103, Magic 91:** Aron Baynes had 18 points, Manu Ginobili added 13 and San Antonio clinched a playoff berth with a win over host Orlando.

**Wizards 106, 76ers 93:** Marcin Gortat scored 23 points and grabbed 14 rebounds, Bradley Beal added 20 points, and Washington defeated visiting Philadelphia.

**Celtics 100, Pacers 87:** Kelly Olynyk scored 19 points after nearly missing the game with an eye injury sustained hours before tip-off, and host Boston beat Indiana in a matchup of Eastern Conference playoff hopefuls.

**Nets 100, Knicks 98:** Brook Lopez's follow shot with 2 seconds left gave visiting Brooklyn a victory and a share of seventh place in the Eastern Conference.

**Hornets 102, Pistons 78:** Marvin Williams scored 18 points and Charlotte cruised past visiting Detroit.

**Mavericks 135, Thunder 131:** Monta Ellis scored 26 points, and Dallas withstood a triple-double from Russell Westbrook to beat host Oklahoma City.

**Bucks 95, Bulls 91:** Michael Carter-Williams had 21 points and 10 rebounds to lead Milwaukee to a rare home win over Chicago.

**Raptors 113, Timberwolves 99:** Lou Williams scored 18 points to lead Toronto past host Minnesota.

**Jazz 98, Nuggets 84:** Rudy Gobert scored a career-high 20 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and had two blocks as host Utah cruised past Denver. Gobert was coming off his 22nd double-double of the season Monday.

**Pelicans 113, Lakers 92:** Anthony Davis scored 20 points and New Orleans inched closer to a possible playoff berth with a rout of host Los Angeles.

**Clippers 126, Trail Blazers 122:** Chris Paul had a season-high 41 points and 17 assists and visiting Los Angeles rallied in the second half to deny Portland a chance at clinching the Northwest Division title.

# Anaheim wraps up Pacific title

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Although the Anaheim Ducks wrapped up another division title and secured another 50-win season, their dressing room was conspicuously free of champagne, plastic sheeting or any type of celebration.

Late in another dominant regular season, the Ducks are determined to stay focused on bigger achievements.

Andrew Cogliano and Francois Beauchemin each had a goal and an assist, and the Ducks clinched their third straight Pacific Division title with a 5-1 victory over the Edmonton Oilers on Wednesday night.

Corey Perry, Nate Thompson and Simon Despres also scored in the fourth straight win for the NHL-leading Ducks, who won for the eighth time in 10 games and became the first team to wrap up a division race.

**Flyers 4, Penguins 1:** Brayden Schenn scored twice, Vincent Lecavalier added his first goal in nearly three months, and visiting Philadelphia had little trouble with injury-depleted Pittsburgh.

Carlo Colaiacovo chipped in a rare goal for the Flyers, who ended a nine-game, road-losing streak. Steve Mason stopped 24 shots for Philadelphia.

**Sabres 4, Maple Leafs 1:** Matt Moulson and Matt Ellis scored 1:41 apart in the third period, and host Buffalo rallied to beat Toronto.

The Sabres overcame a 3-1 second-period deficit and won their second straight, inching closer to moving out of last place in the NHL.

**Sharks 5, Avalanche 1:** Scott Hannan and Chris Tierney scored to help host San Jose keep its slim playoff hopes alive.

Patrick Marleau also scored and Logan Couture and John Scott added empty-net goals for the Sharks, who have won 13 straight regular-season home games against Colorado.

# Marlins' Hechavarria seeking consistency

The Associated Press

JUPITER, Fla. — When asked to pick the best play shortstop Adeiny Hechavarria has ever made for the Miami Marlins, infield coach Perry Hill happily fielded the question, selecting a grounder scooped up on the grass behind second base two years ago in Arizona that ended with a 360-degree pirouette and an out.

Hill then volunteered his runner-up choice, a running catch of a popup against Colorado last year. Next he cited a throw Hechavarria made from his knees on the infield grass against Cincinnati.

"I can go on and on and on," Hill said.

When it comes to improbable plays by Hechavarria, the list is long, even though he has been a big-league starter for only two years. As the Marlins' lone infield holdover from 2014, he's considered a cornerstone of their plans to become perennial playoff contenders after a decade of

mostly losing.

Along with sometimes sensational defense, Hechavarria began to provide pop at the plate in 2014, batting .276 with 10 triples, which tied for second-most in the majors.

While his knack for eye-popping plays draws plenty of notice, he wants to reduce his errors. He had 14 in 2014, which ranked him in the middle of the pack among regular shortstops, and 15 in 2013.

"When you get lost in making the highlight plays, that's when the errors come," the Cuban defector said through a translator. "You're trying to throw too quick or make a throw from too deep, and you lose your mechanics."

Perry Hill said that because Hechavarria is so athletic, he'll always make more than his share of spectacular plays.

"What we want from him is the consistency on the balls hit at him," Hill said. "Those have to be outs every time. That's

what he has to master.

"The best teacher in the long run is game experience, and that's what he needs. This year I expect him to turn the corner."

Hechavarria ranked seventh among major-league shortstops last year in fielding percentage. He ranked fourth in range factor and total chances per nine innings.

He's eager to be No. 1.

"One of the goals of mine is to win the Gold Glove one year," Hechavarria said. "That's one of the greatest achievements I want to achieve. Whether it's this year or next year, I'm always going to want to win one."

Hechavarria might benefit from some stability at second base, where the Marlins started seven players last year. This season he'll work with All-Star Dee Gordon, acquired in a trade with the Dodgers.

# Baseball has some fancy new stats this season

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — The days of batting average, RBIs, wins and ERA telling the whole story ended a while ago. To get the true picture of how baseball players are performing or will perform in the future takes navigating through an alphabet soup of new-age stats and acronyms.

Some of these statistics look back at what players did. Others are tools to predict future performance, allowing both real general managers and fantasy players a chance to identify under- or overvalued players.

Here's a look at some of them, what they measure and why they're important:

**WAR: Wins Above Replacement.** A single number that tries to encapsulate everything a player does as a hitter, pitcher, fielder and base runner. This allows for comparisons between a slugging first baseman and a slick-fielding shortstop; or five-tool outfielder and elite starting pitcher. The result is how many wins a specific player provided in comparison to a readily available replacement — or a so-called four-A player. Different sites have slightly different calculations but an

average starter is worth about two wins, a star around four and an MVP candidate in excess of six.

**FIP: Fielding Independent Pitching.** Tries to measure the aspects of pitching most in control of the pitcher: walks, strikeouts, hit batters and home runs. The stat tries to ignore the impact of fielding and luck and is considered a better predictor of future performance than ERA. Players whose FIP is lower than their ERA are often due for rebound seasons, while those with a higher FIP than ERA might be in for regression. The average FIP is the same as the average ERA, to make for simpler comparisons. There is also a cousin of FIP, called xFIP, which measures fly balls instead of homers and assumes a pitcher gives up home runs on a league average.

**WPA: Win Probability Added.** A different measure of wins based on the context of when events happen. It takes a team's chance of winning a game before and after each plate appearance, with each team starting with a 50 percent chance. The hitter and pitcher each get credit or blame for any change. A homer leading off the game is worth more than one in the eighth inning of a 10-1 game but much less

than one in the bottom of the ninth of a 1-1 game. WPA does not measure defense and because it depends on when players get their chances, it is not as predictive of future performance as statistics like WAR or FIP.

**BABIP: Batting average on balls in play.** With growing evidence that pitchers and hitters have little control over what happens once a ball is put into play, BABIP tries to eliminate the effects of luck and fielding on performance. BABIP is a form of batting average that eliminates home runs and strikeouts, while adding sacrifice flies and bunts. Players with a BABIP much below .300 are likely due for an improvement, while those much higher than .300 can be expected to regress.

**BACON: Batting average on contact.** Similar to BABIP, BACON also counts home runs as part of the measurement, only excluding strikeouts from the calculation.

**Adjusted OPS+: Adjusted on-base plus slugging percentage.** Adding on-base and slugging percentage has become an easy tool to better measure the best hitters rather than traditional stats like batting average and RBIs. Adjusted OPS+ also alters the percentage based on how the

league as a whole is hitting and a player's home ballpark. This allows for easier comparisons between eras, as well as between hitters who play at hitter-friendly Coors Field compared to cavernous Petco Park.

**ERA+: Like Adjusted OPS+, ERA+ accounts for how a pitcher performs compared to the league as a whole and factors in home ballpark, once again making comparisons more accurate.**

**UZR: Ultimate Zone Rating.** Splits the field into 64 zones and compares how well a given fielder turns balls hit into each zone into outs, compared to the league average.

**ISO: Isolated Power.** Measures extra bases per at-bat, or essentially slugging percentage minus batting average. Shows which players have the most power by taking singles out of slugging percentage.

**Pitch f/x:** A pitch-tracking system created by Sportvision and used in every stadium that tracks the speed, location and trajectory of every pitch. Sportvision also uses Hit f/x to measure what happens to batted balls and Field f/x to measure how much ground players cover and how difficult plays are in the field.