

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Report: US Ebola centers treated few

*Stars and Stripes*

Only 28 Ebola patients have been treated at the 11 treatment units built last year in Liberia by the U.S. military after President Barack Obama ordered American intervention to help end the deadliest Ebola virus epidemic in history, *The New York Times* reported.

Nine of the centers have never seen a single patient, the newspaper reported.

Despite millions of dollars spent and nearly 3,000 U.S. troops deployed in the effort, it all came too late, the paper reported. “But even before the first treatment center built by the American military opened there, the number of Ebola cases in Liberia had fallen drastically, casting doubt on the American strategy of build-

ing facilities that took months to complete,” it said.

U.S. Army Africa commander Maj. Gen. Darryl Williams was dispatched to Liberia in September after Obama announced the plan to aid a U.S. historical ally in stemming the epidemic then raging in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

U.S. Army Africa declined to comment on the report.

Deploying the military cost \$360 million, according to the *Times* report, not including the construction, staffing and operating expenses at the treatment centers it built.

Of the 11 centers the U.S. military built, all but one opened after Dec. 22. By then, Ebola cases already had fallen to the point that Liberian and foreign officials were discussing the closing of treatment units

built by other organizations that were no longer needed, the paper reported.

“I knew that most of the ETUs that were being built may not receive a single patient,” Dr. Francis Kateh, who helped lead the response of the Liberian government, which decided with the Americans where to build the 11 centers, told the *Times*.

“But at the same time, you couldn’t put a stop to that process,” he added. “The train was coming full force.”

But Jeremy Konyndyk, who headed the Ebola response for the United States Agency for International Development, which was in charge of the American campaign, told the paper that there had been no “template” for addressing such an epidemic.

“Our initial expectation, based on some of the models and some of the experiences and precedents from past Ebola outbreaks, was that the way you would beat this would be to get enough ETU beds,” he told the paper. “On balance, I think we took the right approach.”

“The challenge in this kind of a response is you don’t know where the fire is going to break out, but you’re going to need a fire station there when it does.”

Liberia, now on track to be declared Ebola-free, has had 9,862 total Ebola infections and the most recorded deaths — 4,408. Worldwide, more than 25,500 cases and more than 10,500 deaths have been recorded, with new infections continuing in Guinea and Sierra Leone.

## Ex-Blackwater guards to get long prison sentences

*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — A U.S. federal judge says he won’t deviate from the lengthy mandatory minimum sentences faced by four former Blackwater security guards for their role in a 2007 shooting that killed 14 Iraqi civilians and wounded more than a dozen others.

U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth on Monday rejected a defense motion to impose lesser sentences on the four, as well as a motion by prosecutors to increase the penalties.

That means that former guard Nicholas Slatten appears likely to be sentenced to life in prison for his first-degree murder conviction, and that three others — Paul Slough, Evan Liberty and Dustin Heard — appear headed for 30-year terms for multiple counts of

manslaughter, attempted manslaughter and using firearms while committing a felony.

Lamberth deferred formally imposing the sentences while hearing arguments from both sides on the sentencing.

All four were convicted in October for their involvement in the killings that caused an international uproar in Nisoor Square, a crowded traffic circle in Baghdad. The legal fight has spanned years.

Prosecutors have described the shooting as an unprovoked ambush of civilians, though defense lawyers countered that the men were targeted with gunfire and Iraqi police, and shot back in self-defense.

The defense argued for mercy Monday by saying that decades-long sentences would be unconstitutionally harsh punishments for men who op-

erated in a stressful, war-torn environment, and who have proud military careers and close family ties.

The firearms convictions alone carry mandatory minimum sentences of 30 years in prison. The government sought sentences far beyond that, partly because it said the men have never shown remorse or accepted responsibility.

The sentencing is unlikely to bring an end to the legal wrangling, which began even before the guards were first charged in 2008. A judge later dismissed the case before trial, but a federal appeals court revived it and the guards were indicted again in October 2013.

Even before the trial began, defense lawyers had identified multiple issues as likely forming the basis of an appeal, including whether there was

proper legal jurisdiction to charge them in the first place. The statute under which they were charged, the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act, covers the overseas crimes of Defense Department civilian employees, military contractors and others who are supporting the American war mission. But defense lawyers note that the Blackwater defendants worked as State Department contractors and were in Iraq to provide diplomatic, not military, services.

The legal fighting continued in the days leading up to sentencing, too, with defense lawyers seeking Friday to postpone the hearing after receiving new information — a victim impact statement from a trial witness — that they said was favorable to the defense. Lamberth denied the request.

# Lawmakers urge superdrone development

*The Washington Post*

The revolution in unmanned aerial flight has advanced quickly and in dramatic leaps, perhaps none more momentous than the historic landing of an autonomous Navy drone on an aircraft carrier.

That happened for the first time two years ago, when Northrop Grumman's X-47B, which looks more like a UFO than a military aircraft, took off and landed on the USS George H.W. Bush.

It made history again last year, when it flew alongside F/A-18 fighter jets, the first time a drone flew in concert with piloted planes off a carrier. This month, the X-47B is expected to attempt what would be another aerial triumph: refueling in midair by a tanker plane.

But despite those breakthroughs, some powerful members of Congress and lead-

ing military think tanks say the Pentagon is being too cautious in its development of a technology that they think could push the boundaries of unmanned flight — and the future of warfare.

In what has become a made-for-Washington drama, a group of Congress' most influential members are pushing the Pentagon to develop what to some sounds like sci-fi fantasy: drones that could not just take off from carriers but also fly for days at a time, covering hundreds, if not thousands, of miles and, perhaps most importantly, haul a hefty arsenal of bombs deep into enemy territory.

That might sound like a tall — and expensive — order, especially at a time when congressionally mandated budget caps are forcing the Pentagon to balance wish lists against necessities.

But proponents of a more ambitious approach, including Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., fear that the Navy's plan to primarily use the drones as eyes in the sky designed to fly around the carriers to detect incoming threats is misguided. Potential adversaries have developed advanced anti-ship missiles, pushing aircraft carriers well off shore, beyond the striking distance of piloted fighter jets, such as the F/A-18 and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

To counter that, the carriers need stealthy, unmanned aircraft that can fly long distances in combat environments, proponents say. Without that ability, the United States' long-held air dominance is lost, and its fleet of aircraft carriers, long a symbol of the United States' ability to project power from wherever and whenever, is at risk of obsolescence.

## Police video shows fatal shooting of Okla. suspect

TULSA, Okla. — A man can be heard apologizing and admitting to shooting a man in a video released over the weekend that documents the killing of a black suspect by a white reserve sheriff's deputy in Tulsa, Okla.

Police have said that Tulsa County reserve deputy Robert Bates, 73, thought he was holding a stun gun, not his handgun, when he fired at Eric Harris, 44, in the April 2 incident.

The video, shot by deputies with sunglass cameras and released on the request of the victim's family, shows a deputy chase and tackle Harris, whom they said tried to sell an illegal gun to an undercover officer. A deputy is heard telling Harris, "I need you to roll on your stomach." A woman can be heard saying, "Stop fighting."

As the deputy subdues Harris on the ground, a gunshot rings out and a man says: "Oh, I shot him. I'm sorry."

From The Associated Press

## Sen. Rubio tells donors he is running for president

*The Associated Press*

MIAMI — Marco Rubio, the young Florida senator who has been a favorite of the conservative tea party movement, on Monday took on Hillary Rodham Clinton in his first words as a presidential candidate.

Rubio, 43, told top donors he is running for the Republican nomination because the

2016 race for the White House should be about the future, not the past. Rubio also said he feels "uniquely qualified" to pitch his Republican Party as one that will defend the American dream.

Rubio is the third major GOP contender to declare himself a candidate, after Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and Sen. Rand Paul.

# Whistleblowers: Retaliation still rampant at VA

BY HEATH DRUZIN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Public shaming, demotions, verbal abuse. On Monday, Veterans Affairs employees prepared to address lawmakers again about a culture of retaliation in the beleaguered agency that has been detailed during a yearlong scandal.

Employees say that despite the scrutiny and ongoing department overhaul, whistleblowers are still facing retaliation.

In testimony submitted to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs for a public hearing Monday evening, VA employees paint a picture of a workplace culture where speaking out comes at great cost.

Dr. Christian Head, who testified in July about wait time manipulation at the VA's Greater Los Angeles Health Care System, said he has been demoted, embarrassed in front of patients and nearly turned away from an operating room while his patient lied down waiting for surgery.

Head said in August he found that the locks had been changed on his office, and he was informed that he had been moved to a "tiny, dirty, poorly furnished, closet-sized office" on a different floor. He said his supervisors have engaged in a continuous effort to undermine him since July.

Head also detailed instances in which he said employees experienced racial and religious discrimination.

Almost one year ago, the same committee detailed allegations of falsification of data and patients dying while languishing on secret wait lists. That helped uncover a systemwide failure in the care of veterans.

Meghan Flanz, director of the VA Office of Accountability Review, said protecting whistleblowers is a "key component" of VA's mission.

"VA is fully committed to correcting deficiencies in its processes and programs, and to ensuring fair treatment for whistleblowers who bring those deficiencies to light," she said in written testimony.

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# Perfect Royals sweep Angels

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Alcides Escobar and Alex Rios hit two-run doubles, Salvador Perez homered, and the defending AL champion Kansas City Royals extended their season-opening win streak to six games with a 9-2 victory over the Los Angeles Angels on Sunday.

The winning streak is the Royals' second-longest to open a season. They won their first nine in 2003 under first-year manager Tony Pena, but finished only four games over .500 and third in the AL Central.

Albert Pujols hit his 522nd home run, moving past Ted Williams, Willie McCovey and Frank Thomas for sole possession of 18th on the career list. The solo drive off Yordano Ventura (2-0) landed in the left-field corner.

**Yankees 14, Red Sox 4:** Alex Rodriguez had a three-run double in a seven-run first-inning outburst, and New York broke out the bats and avoided its worst start in more than 25 years.

Chase Headley and Stephen Drew had consecutive homers as a New York lineup that entered hitting .193 throttled Clay Buchholz (1-1) to avoid a three-game sweep and win for just the second time in six games.

Masahiro Tanaka survived one wild stretch for his first win.

**Astros 6, Rangers 4 (14):** Hank Conger hit a two-run homer in the 14th inning following George Springer's game-saving catch in the 10th.

Conger homered after Evan Gattis reached base for the first time this season — on a walk in his 21st plate appearance of the year.

Samuel Deduno loaded the bases with two outs in the bottom of the 14th but got his first big league save when Rougned Odor lined out to right field.

Springer kept Houston alive in the 10th with a leaping catch at the wall in right on a ball hit by Leonys Martin.

**Tigers 8, Indians 5:** Miguel Cabrera homered twice and drove in four runs as Detroit improved to 6-0 for the first time in 30 years with a win over host Cleveland.

Cabrera hit a two-run homer in the first off T.J. House (0-1), and J.D. Martinez added a solo shot in the ninth.

**Pirates 10, Brewers 2:** Andrew McCutchen homered and drove in four runs in his return to Pittsburgh's lineup, and Neil Walker hit a three-run shot in the Pirates' win over host Milwaukee.

**Rays 8, Marlins 5:** Nathan Karns allowed two hits in seven innings for his second career victory and visiting Tampa Bay beat reeling Miami.

Karns (1-1), making his seventh career start, allowed two runs — one earned — and lowered his career ERA from 6.67 to 5.65.

**Cardinals 7, Reds 5:** Matt Carpenter hit a two-run homer off Kevin Gregg (0-1) in the 11th inning to lift visiting St. Louis.

Carlos Villanueva (1-0) pitched two innings, working out of a bases-loaded jam in the 10th by striking out Todd Frazier.

**Blue Jays 10, Orioles 7:** Jose Bautista hit the last of Toronto's three home runs, and the Blue Jays beat Baltimore to complete a solid season-opening road trip.

Bautista's two-run drive in the eighth off Darren O'Day gave Toronto some room after the Orioles cut a five-run deficit to 8-7.

**Nationals 4, Phillies 3:** Wilson Ramos drove in what would be the winning run in the 10th inning with his second RBI of the day, and Washington defeated host Philadelphia.

Bryce Harper homered and Clint Robinson had three hits for the Nationals, who salvaged a win in the three-game series.

**Mets 4, Braves 3:** Bartolo Colon helped himself with his first RBI in a decade, Daniel Murphy hit a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the eighth inning and visiting New York beat Atlanta, giving the Braves their first loss this season.

**White Sox 6, Twins 2:** Chris Sale (1-0) struck out eight over six innings in his return from a broken bone in his right foot, allowing one run and five hits in Chicago's win over visiting Minnesota.

Adam LaRoche homered for the second straight day and had a run-scoring single.

**Mariners 8, Athletics 7:** Nelson Cruz homered for the second straight day, hitting a solo drive off Tyler Clippard (0-1) in the 10th inning to lift visiting Seattle past Oakland.

Mariners ace Felix Hernandez left after five innings as a precaution because of tightness in his right quadriceps. Seattle took a 7-3 lead into the ninth before Oakland rallied to tie it against closer Fernando Rodney (1-0).

**Cubs 6, Rockies 5:** Former Rockies player Dexter Fowler hit a two-run homer on a hanging slider from LaTroy Hawkins (1-1) on an 0-2 pitch with two outs in the ninth inning and Chicago beat host Colorado.

Neil Ramirez (1-0) earned the win by getting two outs in the eighth. Hector Rondon got his second save of the season.

**Padres 6, Giants 4:** Backup catcher Wil Nieves hit his first career grand slam, a drive off former San Diego star Jake Peavy, as the host Padres won three of four in their series against the defending World Series champions. It was the first career slam and just the 10th homer overall for the 37-year-old Nieves.

Peavy (0-1), whose first start was delayed because of a back injury, allowed four runs and four hits in four innings.

**Dodgers 7, Diamondbacks 4:** Alex Guerrero had his first big league homer and four RBIs, Zack Greinke pitched seven strong innings and visiting Los Angeles avoided a three-game sweep.

Yasiel Puig hit his first homer of 2015 off Josh Collmenter (0-2) and Guerrero finished 3-for-5 with a two-run homer off Oliver Perez in the eighth inning. Joc Pederson had his first big league homer and three of Los Angeles' 16 hits after the Dodgers managed two in a shutout loss the night before.

# Bucks get berth in playoffs

The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — The rebuilding plan is way ahead of schedule for the Milwaukee Bucks.

A year after a franchise-worst 67-loss season, the Bucks are headed to the playoffs.

Ersan Ilyasova scored 21 points and coach Jason Kidd's team relied on defense in a 96-73 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Sunday that wrapped up the playoff spot and the sixth seed in the Eastern Conference.

Kidd led his team to the clinching victory over the team he coached last season. According to STATS, Kidd is the first coach in NBA history to lead two franchises to the playoffs in his first two years as a head coach.

**Pacers 116, Thunder 104:** Russell Westbrook scored a career-high 54 points Sunday, but host Indiana fended off his late charge for a critical victory over Oklahoma City.

C.J. Miles matched his season high with 30 points to lead Indiana (37-43) to its fifth straight win and into a tie with Brooklyn for the final playoff spot in the East. The Nets own the tiebreaker.

**Spurs 107, Suns 91:** Tim Duncan had 22 points and 10 rebounds to lead host San Antonio to its 11th straight victory.

San Antonio moved into second place in the Western Conference and took a half-game lead over idle Memphis in the Southwest Division. The defending champion Spurs have won 21 of 24.

**Rockets 121, Pelicans 114:** James Harden scored 30 points as host Houston used a big run at the start of the fourth quarter to take the lead against New Orleans.

The Rockets ended a two-game skid behind the NBA-leading 35th 30-point game for Harden, who leads the league in scoring.

**Celtics 117, Cavaliers 78:** Isaiah Thomas scored 17 points as Boston moved closer to a playoff berth with a victory over a visiting Cleveland team without LeBron James and three other starters.

**Wizards 108, Hawks 99:** John Wall had no trouble finding his rhythm after resting for two games, finishing with 24 points and nine assists to lead host Washington to its highest win total in more than 30 years.

**Mavericks 120, Lakers 106:** Tyson Chandler had 20 points as visiting Dallas tuned up for the postseason with a victory over Los Angeles.

**Nuggets 122, Kings 111:** Kenneth Faried scored a season-high 30 points to help spoil Sacramento coach George Karl's return to Denver.

**Pistons 116, Hornets 77:** Andre Drummond had 15 points and 19 rebounds as Detroit turned its home finale into a rout over Charlotte.

# Sabres dump Nolan after losing season

The Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Two last-place finishes and an imperfect working relationship led Sabres general manager Tim Murray to fire coach Ted Nolan on Sunday.

The decision was made after a lengthy evaluation, which ended with Murray's exit interviews with Sabres players, a day after Buffalo (23-51-8) closed its season with a 2-0 loss to Pittsburgh.

"I don't think it was a bad fit. I don't think it was a great fit," Murray said. "Maybe it's just chemistry. Maybe it's just two different personalities."

Murray also felt the move to fire Nolan, a little more than a year after the coach signed a three-year contract, was needed to improve a team in the midst of a rebuilding process.

"I know this isn't a popular thing," Murray said. "To me, it's about getting

better. I feel this was an opportunity for us to improve and keep improving."

Nolan is out for a second time in Buffalo, after he spent two seasons coaching the team in the mid-1990s. Nolan's first tenure ended after winning NHL coach of the year honors in 1997. He left feeling disrespected by then-GM Darcy Regier, who offered Nolan a one-year contract extension.

Nolan returned to Buffalo on an interim basis in November 2013 when Ron Rolston was fired as part of a front-office shake-up. Regier was fired at the same time, and former Sabres captain Pat LaFontaine was brought in as president of hockey operations.

LaFontaine then hired Murray in January before stepping down abruptly. Nolan lost his biggest backer in LaFontaine.

The Sabres are searching for their third coach since Lindy Ruff was fired a month into the lockout-shortened season in

2013.

Otherwise, the offseason rebuilding plan starts with the draft in June, when the Sabres are guaranteed selecting one of two highly prized centers: Erie Otters' Connor McDavid or Boston University's Jack Eichel, this year's Hobey Baker winner.

The NHL's draft lottery to determine who picks first will be held Saturday, and Buffalo will pick no worse than second as a result of finishing 30th.

The chances of landing one of two players described as "once-in-a-generation talents" was the key reason numerous Sabres fans openly rooted for their team to lose this season.

"We understand what happened this year, trying to get our future put in place," veteran defenseman Josh Gorges said. "But now, it's time to take a step forward."



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# Spieth wins Masters title

The Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Jordan Spieth never really suffered. Certainly not like Phil Mickelson, who came close so many times before finally winning his first major title.

Yet, not long after Spieth slipped on the green jacket at age 21, the second-youngest champion in the history of the Masters, he pondered what pushed him to one of the game's greatest performances.

There was that runner-up finish in the 2014 Masters, when he had a two-shot lead with 11 holes to play but faded to a runner-up finish behind Bubba Watson. A fine showing, indeed, for someone so young playing Augusta National for the first time.

But it gnawed at Spieth.

"I was already hungry from last year," he said. "I had an opportunity and watched it slip away."

When he drove down Magnolia Lane this year, Spieth was even more ticked off. In his two previous tournaments, he finished second and lost in a playoff. Never mind that he had won right before those two close calls, stamping him as the hottest player on the PGA Tour.

That's the thing about this generation of golfers.

They're not very patient.

It sure bodes well for golf in this inevitable changing of the guard, from players such as Mickelson and Tiger Woods — who aren't done yet, by the way — to the youngsters like Spieth and 25-year-old Rory McIlroy, now 1-2 in the world ranking with five major titles between them.

Spieth, who was bothered by "having a chance to win the last couple of weeks and not quite pulling it off," made every-one pay at the Masters.

Leading from start to finish, he began

with an 8-under 64 for the lowest opening round at the Masters in 19 years, set scoring records for 36 and 54 holes, made a staggering 28 birdies (another tournament mark), and became the first player in Augusta history to reach 19 under when he rolled in a birdie putt at the 15th hole Sunday.

He sucked all the drama out of the final round, making sure no one got closer than three shots to the lead.

Spieth closed with a 2-under 70 to finish four shots clear of Mickelson and Justin Rose.

About the only thing Spieth missed was having the 72-hole record all to himself. He bogeyed the last hole to finish with at 18-under 270, tying Woods' performance while winning his first green jacket in 1997.

"It all happened so quickly," Spieth surmised. But he quickly added, "I feel ready to carry that baton."

His victory sets up a tantalizing new rivalry with McIlroy in a sport that has always thrived on matchups, whether it was Hogan vs. Snead and Nelson; Nicklaus vs. Palmer and Watson; or Woods vs. Mickelson.

Spieth isn't ready to call it an even matchup, considering Boy Wonder already has four major titles and arrived at Augusta looking to complete a career Grand Slam.

But this past week at Augusta sure turned it up a notch.

"He's got four majors. That's something I can still only dream about," Spieth said. "I look forward to getting in the heat of the moment with him a couple of times in the near future and see if we can battle it out and test our games."

McIlroy didn't have a chance in this one.

No one did.

The world's top-ranked player was 10 shots behind going to the final round

and realistic about his chances. A sluggish start doomed any hope of putting some heat on Spieth, though McIlroy did close with six birdies on his final 12 holes for a 6-under 66 that left him six shots behind.

"I played well," he said. "I can take a lot of positives from it."

It wasn't all about youth.

At 44, Mickelson has clearly come up with a formula that should give him a few more chances to add to his five major titles. He's largely blown off the regular PGA Tour, focusing all his energy on the majors. It worked at Muirfield in 2013, where he rallied to win the British Open. It led to runner-up finishes at the last two majors, even when his other results provided little evidence he was ready to contend.

Now, with McIlroy's Grand Slam quest on hold for another year, the focus turns to Mickelson in June at the U.S. Open, where he will try to add the only title missing from his resume.

"I'll be trying to get my game sharp heading into that week," Mickelson said. "I'll have a different tactic (than Augusta). I'll try to play more of a controlled-style game, getting the ball in play, getting the short game sharp."

Woods, whose game was such a mess just two months ago, re-emerged at Augusta and showed some of his old flair. The 39-year-old never seriously contended on the final day — and raised a few eyebrows when he claimed a "bone popped out" when he struck a tree root on a swing — but a 5-under 283 showed that he's at least headed in the right direction.

Yep, the future of the game looks bright.

For both the short and long term.

# Rory gets better of Tiger on final day

The Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — On almost any other Sunday, Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy playing together in the final round of the Masters would have been the marquee pairing.

On this one, though, they might as well have been competing in the B-flight.

As far as bragging rights in the head-to-head matchup, McIlroy trounced Woods both ways. He won the day 66-73, and the week by a similarly wide margin, 12-under to 5-under.

Not that it mattered much, as 21-year-old winner Jordan Spieth steamrolled the rest of the field, too, rolling to a record-tying 18-under win.

"Just left myself too much to do after 27 holes of this golf tournament," McIlroy said. "The 40 on the front nine on Friday, that really left me with an uphill battle. It was just great to get in for the weekend."

Oddly enough, McIlroy's fourth-place finish was his best ever at Augusta, though he had to play the last 45 holes in 15-under to manage that. The Northern Irishman led the Masters as a 21-year-old heading into the back nine on Sunday in 2011, but made triple bogey on No. 10 and skidded into a tie for 15th.

Woods collected his first green jacket as a 21-year-old in 1997, posting the same 18-under record Spieth threatened to surpass before a bogey at the 18th. But little was expected from Woods in only his third appearance this year. He missed the cut at Phoenix in his first appearance of 2015 and then, beset by chipping woes and tightness in his back, he withdrew in the first round at Torrey Pines.

Woods figured he'd have to shoot 31 on the front nine to have a chance to contend, but he didn't find the fairway with a tee shot until No. 13. Unfortunately, that was emblematic of his week, since Woods finished tied for next-to-last in fairways hit.

An errant drive on No. 9 left him playing off the pine straw beneath a stand of trees, but it was almost more costly than that. After launching his approach shot, he dropped his club and clutched his right hand in pain. Woods said that he struck a tree root hidden by the straw.

"A bone kind of popped out and the joint kind of went out of place, but I put it back in," Woods said.

"I'm sore," he added a few moments later. "I'm not going to be lifting any weights for a little while."

For all that, and despite finishing tied for 17th, Woods found plenty to be upbeat about. His short game was solid and rounds of 69 and 68 on Friday and Saturday marked the first time in 10 years that he posed back-to-back rounds in the 60s at the Masters. They were also his best consecutive scores in a major since 2012.

"No one knows how hard we had to work to get to this point, but I'm very pleased," Woods said. "This is my first tournament back, being a major championship, and to give myself a chance, it felt good."

McIlroy, the world's top-ranked player and three-time major winner, arrived in Augusta with a chance to complete the career Grand Slam. He said his 71 in the opening round gave him plenty of hope he could seal the deal here — and might have except "the start on Friday was really what killed me."

# Mickelson completes second-place Slam

The Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Phil Mickelson knew he needed a truly special round to catch Jordan Spieth.

Instead, Lefty settled for a familiar spot. Runner-up.

Mickelson closed with a 3-under 69 that left him tied with Justin Rose, four shots behind the wire-to-wire winner.

"It was just a good, solid round of golf," Mickelson said. "I needed something exceptional."

The 21-year-old Spieth won with an 18-under 270, tying the Masters record for lowest overall score.

Mickelson and Rose finished at 274, a score that would have been good enough to win the last three years. In fact, it was lower than Mickelson's score in two of his three Masters victories.

"The fact is, I would have taken 14 under at the start of the week," he said. "I played really well to shoot 14 under and I simply got outplayed by a young player who just played some incredible golf."

On a résumé highlighted by five major titles, it was Mickelson's 10th second-place finish in golf's biggest events.

It also completed a Grand Slam of sorts, one he would prefer not to have.

Mickelson has now finished second in every major championship.

This won't hurt nearly as bad as some of the others, especially all those close calls in the only major Mickelson has never

won, the U.S. Open.

At 44, Mickelson hasn't played all that well in recent years on the PGA Tour. But he knows how to get up for the biggest events, having won the British Open in 2013 with a stirring final-round comeback, and finishing second in the last two majors going back to the 2014 PGA Championship at Valhalla, where he was one stroke behind Rory McIlroy.

"I don't have a great explanation other than I really focus on those events," Mickelson said. "It's not my motivation to go out and try to grind out wins week after week. I want to zero in on our four or five biggest events, and I've been fortunate in that I've been able to get some of my best golf out of those events."

Spieth dominated this Masters from start to finish. Mickelson started the final round five shots back and never got within four shots of the lead, even after holing out an eagle from the bunker at the par-5 15th hole.

He was doomed by three bogeys spread throughout the round, keeping the popular player from really getting the Augusta patrons on his side. They cheered him all the way, of course, but never unleashed one of those really big roars that would have signaled Lefty, playing just ahead of Spieth in the next-to-last group, was making a serious move.

"Every time I got a birdie here or there, I stalled with a bogey," Mickelson said. "It was a really fun tournament. I thought

I played some good golf. I just got outplayed. Jordan was phenomenal."

Rose also played extremely well, and he was the only one who got as close as three strokes to Spieth in the final round.

Carrying on the momentum he had Saturday, when he closed with five birdies on his last six holes to get into the final group of a major for the first time, Rose birdied the first two holes Sunday in what looked for a while like essentially a match-play scenario with Spieth.

But Rose stalled, playing the next 10 holes at 2 over. He gave himself a glimmer of hope with three straight birdies starting at No. 13, and a last gasp came at the par-3 16th, when he stuck his tee shot to 15 feet for another birdie try, while Spieth faced a dicey 8-footer to save par.

Rose missed his putt. Spieth made his.

Game over.

"It was probably one of the best putts he hit all day," Rose marveled. "I was looking for that two-shot swing to keep it interesting."

Rose, the 2013 U.S. Open champion, posted his highest finish ever at Augusta National, where he's made the cut in all 10 of his appearances and finished in the top 15 four other times.

Asked what it's going to take to finally break through, he smiled.

"Keep shooting 14 under," Rose said.