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Navy's Pagan plan draws opposition

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

Activists and legislators in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands are mobilizing against a Navy plan to convert the island of Pagan into a live-fire training range.

The commonwealth's legislature is considering a joint resolution calling on the governor to oppose the military expansion on the 10-mile-long island. Meanwhile, officials on the island of Tinian told Guam's Pacific Daily News that they plan to issue a statement Monday expressing concern over the proposed construction of a live-fire training range there, citing safety issues.

Earlier this month, the Pentagon released a long-awaited environmental impact statement for the proposal to obtain Pagan and to significantly upgrade training capabilities on Tinian.

The U.S. already leases two-thirds of Tinian but would have to negotiate for access to Pagan.

The impact statement says that the U.S. "would seek to acquire a real estate interest for the entire island of Pagan."

CNMI is an American territory, and most federal statutes concerning the environment are applicable there.

"The U.S. is rebalancing military forces in the Asia-Pacific

region," states the Pentagon's website for the proposal. "In support of this, the U.S. military is proposing to increase joint military training capabilities by developing live-fire ranges and training areas on the islands of Tinian and Pagan.

"Existing U.S. military live-fire, unit and combined level training ranges, training areas, and support facilities are insufficient to support U.S. Pacific Command Service Components' training requirements in the Western Pacific, specifically in the Mariana Islands."

'Continuous use'

Pagan is a barbell-shaped island, with a volcano at each end. The massive Mount Pagan to the north still smokes after a 1981 eruption that led to the evacuation of about 300 indigenous Chamorro people to Saipan, 200 miles to the south. The CNMI government has not officially allowed them to return, but some have.

Opposition to the Pagan plan has simmered since it was broached in early 2013, with rallies against it held by the Sierra Club, Save Pagan Island, Roots Action and Care2Make a Difference. The proposal spawned an online community called Our Islands are Sacred and a petition on change.org.

The issuance of the environ-

mental impact statement then jolted CNMI lawmakers into action.

The speaker of CNMI's House of Representatives was among the legislators who now have introduced a joint resolution urging Gov. Eloy Inos to oppose the use of Pagan in particular and the expansion of the military presence in general.

The resolution contends that CNMI already contributes to national defense by leasing two-thirds of Tinian, property on Tanapag and the island of Farallon de Medinilla for training, maneuvers and live-fire bombing. The Pagan plan "is basically a military war game plan that demands continuous use and occupation of the entire island of Pagan for warfare function areas not limited to amphibious warfare, anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, strike warfare, air warfare, surface warfare, electronic warfare and Naval special warfare, among others," the resolution states.

Environmental concerns

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contracted Michael G. Hadfield, a professor of biology at the University of Hawaii-Manoa, to lead an insect survey team to Pagan in 2010 to gather information that would be used for the impact statement. His was only one of many teams

that surveyed the island.

"Speaking as a biologist, it's got some really unique things about it," Hadfield said of Pagan. "It's not a wasteland, which I think some people envision because it's got an active volcano. There's a lot there that's worth preserving — a couple of endangered bird species and snail species — which I specialize in and is about to hit the U.S. endangered species list." The island is also home to a fruit bat on the endangered species list.

Jerome Aldan, the mayor for CNMI's Northern Islands, which includes Pagan, recently told a New Zealand radio program that the U.S. military's description of the island as "uninhabited" was false.

"Our history goes back as far as the 1300s, and the military keeps coming out and stating in every press conference or document that the island is uninhabited, but that's not really true," Aldan said.

Hadfield said there were people living on the island when he visited. He's still digesting the contents of the nearly 1,400-page environmental impact statement, but he said he thinks it gives the flora and fauna of Pagan short shrift.

"They pretty much discount that there are things that are valuable there," he said.

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Carl Vinson group heads home after lengthy deployment

MANAMA, Bahrain — The USS Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group has left the Middle East after a lengthy tour that included more than six months of supporting combat operations in Iraq and Syria.

The carrier conducted 2,383 combat missions and dropped 869 precision-guided munitions totaling more than half a mil-

lion pounds of ordnance, the U.S. Navy said in a statement.

The Vinson group, with roughly 6,200 sailors, moved Thursday into the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations en route to its San Diego homeport, nearing the end of a deployment that started Aug. 22. Along with the carrier, the group includes the guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill and the guided-missile destroyers USS Gridley, USS Sterett and USS Dewey.

The Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike

Group, consisting of five ships and more than 6,000 sailors and Marines, has now taken the helm in the region, where it will also take part in the fight against Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria and conduct theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, officials said. The Roosevelt group left the U.S. in March for an anticipated eight-month deployment.

From staff reports

US, Ukraine troops mark start of exercises

BY MATT MILLHAM
Stars and Stripes

YAVORIV, Ukraine — U.S. and Ukrainian troops rang in the start of a new training mission here Monday, an effort to beef up the capabilities of Ukrainian forces fighting Russia-backed militants in the country's east.

The Fearless Guardian exercises are expected to run at least through the end of summer and to turn out thousands of newly trained personnel to take on separatists trying to splinter off from the former Soviet republic.

The first batch of about 900 trainees already has fought on the front lines of the year-old conflict, said Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, who addressed the U.S. and Ukrainian troops in a mid-day downpour.

But the country's armed forces need to be rebuilt, he said.

Two companies from the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade will lead the first round of training, which will start with basic marksmanship and grow in complexity over the next 10 weeks to include operations at a company and platoon level.

The U.S. has so far declined to provide "lethal aid," such

as weapons, to Ukraine. The training plan aims instead to improve Ukrainian forces' use of their own weapons, such as Kalashnikov rifles, U.S. officials said. A small number of Ukrainian troops taking part in a ceremony marking the start of the training wore U.S.-supplied body armor and helmets similar to those worn by American forces early in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Capt. Nicholas Salimbene, 31, the commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, said he hesitates to say the program is similar to basic training "because these

guys are coming right from the east. They have real-life combat experience."

His company was also the first to deploy to Lithuania last year as part of the U.S.-led Atlantic Resolve mission to reassure Baltic and Polish allies after Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine near the start of the conflict.

Salimbene said the situation here is different because Lithuania has an established army, "whereas these guys, the national guard, is relatively new to Ukraine."

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EU chiefs to hold summit on migrants after deaths

The Associated Press

MILAN — Rescue crews searched Monday for survivors and bodies from what could be the Mediterranean's deadliest migrant tragedy ever as hundreds more migrants took to the sea undeterred and European Union leaders said they would hold an emergency summit Thursday to address the crisis.

If reports of at least 700 and as many as 900 dead are confirmed, the weekend shipwreck near the Libyan coast would bring to well over 1,000 the number of migrants who died or

went missing during the perilous Mediterranean crossing in the last week. More than 400 are feared dead in another sinking. More than 10,000 others were rescued.

Italian Premier Matteo Renzi said Monday afternoon that Italian and Maltese ships were responding to two more migrant emergencies near the Libyan coast. In a separate incident, at least three people including a child were killed and 93 were rescued when a wooden boat carrying dozens of migrants ran aground off the eastern Aegean island of Rhodes.

Mayor vows answers in fatal Md. police encounter

BALTIMORE — Relatives, activists and even Baltimore city officials have more questions than answers about what happened to Freddie Gray, 25, a man who died one week after he was rushed to the hospital with spinal injuries following an encounter with four Baltimore police officers.

Gray, who died Sunday morning at the University of Maryland R Adams Cowley Shock

Trauma Center, was stopped by Baltimore Police Department officers on bike patrol April 12. Police have said Gray was running away from the officers when he was arrested and was placed in a transport van. Police said that roughly 30 minutes later, Gray was rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and top police officials promised accountability and transparency Sunday at a news conference at City Hall.

The Associated Press

7 vets sue VA over wait times for medical records

BY HEATH DRUZIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Seven disabled veterans have filed a lawsuit against the Department of Veterans Affairs, claiming they have been waiting for their medical records for 10 months to more than two years, potentially delaying crucial benefits.

The suit was filed Monday by the National Veterans Legal Services Program on behalf of the veterans, who come from across the country. Filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, the suit asks that the VA produce the plaintiffs' records within 20 days.

Bart Stichman, co-executive director of the National Veterans Legal Services Program, said he believes that the problem is widespread and that many veterans get frustrated by the delays and give up, never getting their benefits.

"There's no good reason to me," he said. "How hard is it to photocopy a file?"

The plaintiffs need their files to apply for further compensation. Five believe they are eligible for Combat-Related Special Compensation, which is

a monthly payment for military retirees with combat-related disabilities.

Veterans need their medical records to file for disability benefits and to appeal benefits decisions.

"This delay is preventing me from applying for benefits that would help me to live a better life," plaintiff Juan Rodriguez said in a statement released through the Legal Services Program.

The VA did not respond to questions by deadline.

The agency has been embroiled in a yearlong scandal that cost former Secretary Eric Shinseki his job, and some lawmakers and veterans advocates are frustrated by the pace of change at the agency.

Even now, VA whistleblowers say they continue to face retaliation and that new controversies regularly pop up, including a recently released VA Inspector General's investigation into the Philadelphia VA Medical Center that showed employees were keeping mail from veterans for years without a response, potentially delaying their benefits.

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Kenseth ends 51-race winless streak

The Associated Press

BRISTOL, Tenn. — After four rain delays and 11 extra laps, Matt Kenseth finally drove to Victory Lane.

It took him nine hours to get there Sunday at a waterlogged Bristol Motor Speedway.

Kenseth snapped a 51-race losing streak by holding off Jeff Gordon and Jimmie Johnson on one final restart in NASCAR's determined effort to stage a complete race.

Kenseth, a seven-race winner in his 2013 debut season with Joe Gibbs Racing, was winless all last year.

"It feels good to be back here. Not winning for as long as we did ... it wears on you a little bit," Kenseth said. "We had such a good 2013, and last year there were some races we had some chances to win and just things wouldn't line up for us.

"We just couldn't get it to happen. [Bristol] was kind of the opposite. Everything worked out."

The start was delayed nearly 90 minutes because of rain and the race was stopped three more times, including one delay that lasted almost four hours.

The final stoppage came when the race had already surpassed the scheduled 500 laps, but a quick rain shower

had stalled NASCAR's attempt to race to the checkered flag following an accident with eight laps remaining. So, NASCAR parked the cars on pit road and sent out its dryers to quickly try to give it one more shot.

Kenseth, the leader, was fine with NASCAR's decision because he was so confident in his Toyota.

"I've got to be honest with you, at least 90 percent of the time or more, I'd be all about, 'Man, call that thing,' because anything can go wrong," he said. "I felt pretty good about where we were. I felt like unless I really, really messed it up, I was going to be clear getting into [Turn] 1. I felt like our car was good enough to hold on for two laps."

He did have a two-lap overtime sprint to the finish and Kenseth, the pole-sitter, got a terrific jump on the restart. He wasn't challenged in part because Gordon had a poor restart.

Johnson slid past Gordon to take second place, and Gordon finished third.

The race had a series of hiccups unrelated to the rain stoppages: Austin Dillon ran out of gas while running third because of the lengthy final caution, Denny Hamlin didn't get back in his car after the first rain break be-

cause of a kink in his neck, and the two Team Penske drivers wrecked each other just 20 laps after the start.

Carl Edwards and Kurt Busch were in contention until they wrecked following a restart eight laps from the scheduled finish, and Busch put together his strong run with an interim crew chief because Tony Gibson couldn't leave his motorhome due to pain from a kidney stone.

Kyle Larson, while leading, had a miscue with a pair of cars a lap down and the chaos it created sent Landon Cassill hard into the wall.

"Heck, that's Bristol, isn't it?" said Gordon. "I'm sure I've had wackier nights and days at Bristol than this."

Prior to the rain delay, Brad Keselowski wrecked teammate Joey Logano and both Team Penske cars suffered significant damage.

Persistent rain delayed the start more than an hour, and NASCAR rushed to get the event underway during a brief window.

Although it was damp and cold when the race began, there weren't any issues until the 20th lap, when Keselowski spun trying to get around a lapped car. He spun directly into Logano, and both cars were heavily damaged.

Cespedes helps Tigers rout White Sox

The Associated Press

DETROIT — Yoenis Cespedes has added a bit more power to Detroit's lineup, and the guy who hits after him has taken notice.

"Kind of a tough act to follow," Nick Castellanos said. "You touch him, he's all muscle. It's ridiculous how strong that guy is."

Cespedes hit a grand slam and a two-run homer and Shane Greene pitched seven impressive innings in another fine start to begin the season, helping the Tigers rout the Chicago White Sox 9-1 on Sunday.

It was the first major league grand slam for Cespedes, and both his home runs came off Jose Quintana. Cespedes is now 6-for-8 with four home runs against Quintana (1-1) for his career.

"Any ballplayer that hits two home runs is feeling good," Cespedes said through a translator. "I couldn't be luckier to be on such a great team with such a good group of ballplayers."

Greene (3-0) allowed his first earned run of the season Sunday when an RBI triple by Jose Abreu skipped past J.D. Martinez in right field in the sixth. Greene gave up five hits and four walks, but the White Sox hit into four double plays.

Greene, who was traded in the offseason from the Yankees, struck out three.

The Tigers (10-2) are off to the best start in baseball.

Royals 4, Athletics 2: Kansas City overcame five ejections and won at home with Kendrys Morales' tiebreaking, two-run double off Eric O'Flaherty (0-1) in a three-run eighth inning.

Royals manager Ned Yost and pitching coach Dave Eiland were ejected in the first inning after Lorenzo Cain was hit by a Scott Kazmir pitch. Kansas City reliever Kelvin Herrera was tossed in the eighth after throwing behind Brett Lawrie. Bench coach Don Wakamatsu, who was acting as manager after Yost's ejection, also was ejected

along with injured Royals shortstop Alcides Escobar.

Yankees 5, Rays 3: Chase Headley and Mark Teixeira drove in two runs each for visiting New York, which completed a three-game sweep.

Michael Pineda (2-0) allowed three runs and seven hits in 5²/₃ innings to defeat Matt Andriese (0-1). After Ryan Brett doubled leading off the ninth for his first big league hit, Andrew Miller struck out three consecutive batters for his fourth save.

Braves 5, Blue Jays 2: Jonny Gomes hit a three-run double in the first inning off rookie Daniel Norris (1-1) and added a sacrifice fly as Atlanta took two of three from host Toronto.

Shelby Miller (2-0) gave up two runs and five hits in six innings, raising his ERA from 0.90 to 1.69.

Orioles 8, Red Sox 3: Adam Jones went 4-for-5 with a three-run double and two-run homer to match his career high with five RBIs. Ryan Flaherty added a solo homer and Jimmy Paredes three singles for visiting Baltimore.

Astros 4, Angels 3: At Houston, Scott Feldman (1-2) got the win after allowing two runs and six hits in six innings, one start after Oakland got to him for eight runs in five innings.

Garrett Richards (0-1), making his first start since knee surgery last August, gave up four runs — three earned — five hits and four walks in five innings.

Twins 7, Indians 2: Torii Hunter hit his first home run for host Minnesota since 2007, a three-run drive in the sixth off former Twins pitcher Anthony Swarzak.

Trevor May (1-1) allowed one run and four hits in six innings. With Ervin Santana serving a drug suspension, May is bidding to remain in the rotation when Ricky Nolasco returns from elbow inflammation.

Mariners 11, Rangers 10: Austin Jackson singled in the tying run in the ninth inning and Nelson Cruz followed with a two-out single off Neftali Felix (0-1) for his fifth

RBI of the game as host Seattle overcame deficits of 7-2 and 10-5.

Cruz homered twice in the first three innings, raising his major league-leading total to eight, and Jackson hit the 11th leadoff homer of his career.

Padres 5, Cubs 2: Jon Lester (0-2) gave up three runs and six hits in 5¹/₃ innings for host Chicago.

Lester (0-2), who signed a \$155 million, six-year contract as a free agent, has a 6.89 ERA after three starts.

Will Middlebrooks, Lester's teammate in Boston from 2012-14, and Yangervis Solarte hit two-run homers to help Andrew Cashner (1-2).

Lester alertly tossed his glove — with the ball stuck in the webbing — to first baseman Anthony Rizzo for an out after fielding Clint Barmes' comebacker in the second.

Pirates 5, Brewers 2: Gerrit Cole (2-0) improved to 9-1 in his last 10 decisions at PNC Park. He gave up two runs and struck out six in six innings.

Pedro Alvarez homered for Pittsburgh. **Nationals 4, Phillies 1:** Stephen Strasburg (1-1) won for the first time in three starts this season, allowing one run in 7¹/₃ innings and cutting his ERA from 6.75 to 4.50.

Drew Storen worked the ninth for his fourth save.

Diamondbacks 5, Giants 1: At San Francisco, Paul Goldschmidt hit a two-run homer off Tim Hudson (0-2) to help send the World Series champions to their ninth loss in 10 games.

Dodgers 7, Rockies 0: Howie Kendrick, Scott Van Slyke and rookie Joc Pederson hit sixth-inning home runs off rookie Scott Oberg as host Los Angeles stretched its winning streak to seven.

Cardinals 2, Reds 1: Adam Wainwright (2-1) outpitched Mike Leake (0-1), and Kolten Wong had a tiebreaking sacrifice in the eighth inning to help St. Louis sweep visiting Cincinnati and win its fifth straight.

Ethiopian wins again in Boston

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Lelisa Desisa of Ethiopia won his second Boston Marathon on Monday, two years after he donated the medal from his first victory to the city in memory of the bombing victims.

Kenya's Carolina Rotich was the women's champion, outsprinting Mare Dibaba to win by 4 seconds.

Desisa didn't have much time to celebrate when he won in 2013.

Hours after he crossed the finish line, two bombs exploded on Boylston Street and turned his victory into an afterthought. As the city mourned the three killed and 260 wounded in the explosions, he returned to Boston to donate the medal.

Now Desisa has a Boston title he can enjoy.

"I'm happy for No. 1," he said. "I am happy to win and for a strong Boston 2013."

The 25-year-old Ethiopian won the 119th edition in an unofficial time of 2 hours, 9 minutes, 17 seconds to beat Yemane Adhane Tsegay by 31 seconds. Kenya's Wilson Chebet was third, another 34 seconds back.

Dathan Ritzenhein of Rockford, Mich., was the first American, in seventh. Defending champion Meb Keflezighi of San Diego was one spot behind him a year after he became the first American men's champion since 1983, galvanizing the city behind him as a symbol of patriotism and resilience.

Two years after the explosions, the race took a tentative step back toward normal.



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Clippers roll over Spurs

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Chris Paul scored 32 points, Blake Griffin added 26 points and 12 rebounds, and the Los Angeles Clippers surged in the second half for a 107-92 victory over the San Antonio Spurs on Sunday night in their first-round playoff series opener.

Jamal Crawford added 17 points for the Clippers, who met the defending NBA champions' challenge in a difficult post-season-opening matchup for two powers. Griffin threw down his usual array of roof-raising dunks, while Paul quarterbacked Los Angeles to an 18-point lead in the third quarter.

Kawhi Leonard scored 18 points for the Spurs, who had won the opening game in their previous 11 playoff series. Tim Duncan had 11 points and 11 rebounds, but the Spurs couldn't rally from their hefty second-half deficit.

Tony Parker rolled his ankle early on and managed just 10 points on 4-for-11 shooting for the Spurs, who slipped to the sixth seed in the Western Conference in their season finale. That loss at New Orleans forced them to open their chase of their sixth NBA title against the hungry Clippers, who have never reached a conference final.

Both teams headed into the postseason with enormous momentum: Los Angeles won 14 of its final 15 games to finish with 56 victories and the NBA's third-best record, while San Antonio won 14 of 16 and 11 straight before the season finale.

San Antonio began intentionally fouling DeAndre Jordan at midcourt with 1:34 left

in the first half, resuming the much-loathed strategy of forcing a 39-percent free-throw shooter to the line. In February, Spurs coach Gregg Popovich sent Jordan to the line 28 times in a loss at Staples Center.

Jordan went 4-for-8 in his four trips to close the first half.

Paul and Griffin went to work in the third quarter while the Clippers made a 24-10 run in the period, taking an 18-point lead in their usual high-flying style. Griffin was particularly vicious, depositing two dunks right in the face of Spurs backup big man Aron Baynes.

San Antonio briefly trimmed the lead to nine points midway through the fourth quarter, but Paul and Griffin comfortably kept the Clippers ahead, pushing the lead to 20 points on Paul's jumper with 2:39 to play.

Cavaliers 113, Celtics 100: Kyrie Irving scored 30 points in his playoff debut, LeBron James added 20 in his first postseason game with Cleveland in five years and the host Cavaliers opened a run toward an NBA title with a victory over Boston.

Irving made five three-pointers and Kevin Love, another postseason rookie, had 19 points and 12 rebounds.

Isaiah Thomas scored 22 points to lead the seventh-seeded Celtics.

The Cavs built a 20-point lead in the third quarter, let the Celtics get as close as six and then finished the quarter with a 9-0 run — capped by a three-pointer by James Jones — to take a 15-point lead. Boston climbed within 10, but Love made a crucial three-pointer with 3:32 left to slow Boston.

Hawks 99, Nets 92: Kyle Korver scored 21 points, including five three-pointers, and top-seeded Atlanta held off visiting Brooklyn in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference playoff series.

The Hawks led nearly the entire game and pushed the margin as high as 16 points, but the Nets kept coming back. Finally, Jeff Teague dropped in a floater coming off the left wing, giving Atlanta a 95-89 lead. Joe Johnson missed a three-pointer from the corner for Brooklyn, and Teague made a pair of free throws with just under a minute remaining to essentially seal it.

Teague and DeMarre Carroll scored 17 points apiece.

Grizzlies 100, Trail Blazers 86: Reserve Beno Udrih scored 20 points and host Memphis never trailed in routing Portland in Game 1 of the Western Conference first-round series.

Zach Randolph had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Marc Gasol added 15 points and 11 rebounds. Mike Conley finished with 16 points and didn't play the fourth quarter. Jeff Green had 11.

LaMarcus Aldridge led Portland with 32 points while taking more shots than anyone had ever taken against Memphis in the postseason, going 13-for-34. Damian Lillard added 14 points, shooting 5-for-21 overall and 0-for-6 beyond the arc. Nicolas Batum had 15 points. The Trail Blazers have lost five straight overall.

The Grizzlies swept Portland during the regular season and have won 10 of the last 11, including the first playoff game between the teams.

Sources: Eagles, Tebow reach deal

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — It's Tebow Time in the City of Brotherly Love.

Tim Tebow is expected to sign a one-year contract with the Eagles on Monday, according to three people familiar with the deal. The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Sunday because the contract hasn't been finalized.

Tebow hasn't played in the NFL since 2012 with the New York Jets. He was released by the New England Patriots before the 2013 season and spent last year working in television as an analyst for the SEC Network and ESPN.

Despite being out of the league, the 27-year-old Tebow remained one of the most popular players around. He has a legion of fans who follow him because of his strong Christian beliefs.

The former Heisman Trophy winner led Florida to two national titles and was a first-round pick by Denver in 2010. He started 16 games during two seasons with the Broncos, including a playoff victory over Pittsburgh in January 2012. Tebow was traded to the Jets after Denver signed Peyton Manning.

The 27-year-old Tebow joins quarterbacks Sam Bradford, Mark Sanchez, Matt Barkley and G.J. Kinne on Philadelphia's roster. The addition of Tebow would be the latest move in a stunning offseason for coach Chip Kelly. He traded Nick Foles, LeSean McCoy and allowed Jeremy Maclin to leave in free agency.

Tebow worked out for the Eagles last month and Kelly later said he's always "been a fan of Tim."

Tebow had some success in Denver, but his inaccurate passing and lack of pocket presence was an issue. His strength has been running the ball or improvising. Tebow has completed just 47.9 percent of his passes for 2,422 yards, 17 touchdowns and nine interceptions. He has 989 yards rushing, a 5.0 average yards per carry and 12 TDs.

Weise, Canadiens top Senators

The Associated Press

OTTAWA, Ontario — Dale Weise's first goal of the playoffs sent the game to overtime. His second sent the Montreal Canadiens to a victory — and a commanding series lead.

Weise scored the tying goal late in the third period and then won it 8:47 into overtime, leading the Canadiens past the Ottawa Senators 2-1 on Sunday night in their first-round playoff series.

"I don't know if you can call me [clutch] yet," said Weise, who also had an overtime winner in the playoffs last year against Tampa Bay. "I thought I had some good chances early in the series and just couldn't put them in — a couple of 2-on-1s and hit posts. I don't know what it is, just every game gets so intense, you're so focused."

Montreal now has a chance to complete a four-game sweep Wednesday, with Game 4 in Ottawa.

Weise skated in on the left side and beat Craig Anderson with a shot inside the near post. Many of the Senators fans in the stands urged officials to call for a hand pass by Brandon Prust on the play, but replays showed the puck went off the glass and not Prust. So, the goal stood — and so did the Canadiens' big victory.

"Any time you score a winner like that, it's pretty special," Weise said. "I got pretty excited about that first one, too. That was a big goal. I just felt like we were pressuring and pressuring and we needed a good bounce like that to put the puck in the net. And thank goodness it was me."

Weise sent the game to overtime with his goal with 5:47 remaining in the third. Torrey Mitchell assisted on both goals, and Carey Price made 33 saves.

"There's guys that have made careers on that, just finding a way to get it done," Montreal's P.K. Subban said of Weise. "And listen, he's found a way."

Clarke MacArthur opened the scoring for the Senators at 11:28 of the first period. Anderson, making his first start of the playoffs after Andrew Hammond started the first two games, made 47 saves in the loss.

Montreal dominated at times in the second and third periods, outshooting Ottawa 31-15 through the final 40 minutes of regulation.

"It's one of those games when even though we did a lot of good

things, but in the end we didn't win the game," Ottawa captain Erik Karlsson said, "and that's what matters."

Islanders 2, Capitals 1 (OT): New York captain John Tavares scored 15 seconds into overtime to give the Islanders a victory over visiting Washington.

Nikolay Kulemin's initial shot was stopped by Braden Holtby, who then tried to direct the rebound into the right corner. The puck went to Tavares, who shoveled it in before Holtby could cover the right post.

The goal gave New York a 2-1 series lead.

Kyle Okposo also scored for the Islanders, and Jaroslav Halak made 24 saves.

Washington tied it on Nicklas Backstrom's goal with 6:06 remaining in the third.

Holtby stopped 40 shots and showed no effects of an illness that forced him to miss Game 2.

Blackhawks 4, Predators 2: Jonathan Toews had a goal and an assist and host Chicago used a three-goal second period to beat Nashville for a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference first-round series.

Marian Hossa had two assists and Scott Darling made 35 saves to help Chicago win for the 20th time in its last 24 postseason home games. Brandon Saad, Brent Seabrook and Andrew Desjardins also scored for the Blackhawks.

Darling, a native of the Chicago suburb of Lemont, made his first postseason start after Corey Crawford was ineffective in the first two games of the series. The rookie also replaced Crawford in Game 1 and made 42 saves as the Blackhawks rallied for a 4-3 victory in double overtime.

Mike Ribeiro and Mattias Ekholm scored for Nashville, and Pekka Rinne had 26 saves.

Flames 4, Canucks 2: TJ Brodie had a goal and an assist as host Calgary beat Vancouver to take a 2-1 lead in their first-round playoff series.

Sam Bennett scored his first NHL goal, and Brandon Bollig and Sean Monahan also had goals for the Flames, who hosted a playoff game for the first time since April 2009.

Shawn Matthias and Jannik Hansen had goals for the Canucks.

Calgary's Jonas Hiller and Vancouver's Eddie Lack each stopped 23 shots.

Longtime Sharks coach McLellan out

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Todd McLellan is out after seven years as coach of the San Jose Sharks.

The team announced Monday that McLellan and the Sharks agreed to part ways after the team missed the playoffs for the first time since 2003. McLellan had one year remaining on his contract.

McLellan had a successful run with the Sharks despite the latest disappointing season and an inability for the team to get over the playoff hump and make the Stanley Cup for the first time in franchise history.

McLellan had a 311-163-66 regular-season record with the Sharks, the third best in the league since he took over before the 2008-09 season. He had the most wins and coached the most games of any Sharks coach in franchise history.

But San Jose finished 12th out of 14 teams in the Western Conference this season and missed the postseason, leading to the change.

From The Associated Press