

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Thursday, April 23, 2015

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## US: January drone strike killed 2 hostages

*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — An American and an Italian held hostage by al-Qaida, as well as two Americans working with the terrorist group, were inadvertently killed by CIA drone strikes early this year, the government revealed Thursday.

President Barack Obama said he took full responsibility for the counterterrorism missions and offered his “grief and condolences” to the families of the hostages, Warren Weinstein, of Rockville, Md., and Giovanni Lo Porto.

Obama defended the legality of the January drone strike that killed the hostages and said there had been no evidence that the two men were present at

what the U.S. had determined was an al-Qaida compound in Pakistan.

“Based on the intelligence that we had obtained at the time, including hundreds of hours of surveillance, we believed that this was an al-Qaida compound, that no civilians were present and that capturing these terrorists was not possible,” Obama said at the White House. “And we do believe that the operation did take out dangerous members of al-Qaida.”

Among those believed killed in the strike was Ahmed Farouq, whom the White House said was an al-Qaida leader from America. U.S. officials have also concluded that Adam Gadahn, an American who had served as a spokesman for the terrorism

network, was killed in a separate operation in January.

Gadahn used the name “Azzam the American” in his statements supporting al-Qaida.

The White House said neither Farouq nor Gadahn was intentionally targeted in the strikes and the U.S. did not have information indicating their presence at the site of the operations.

U.S. government officials said the CIA carried out the drone strikes on Jan. 14 and Jan. 19 in Pakistan. The White House said the strikes happened in the border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The officials were not authorized to discuss details of the attacks and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The president made no men-

tion of Farouq and Gadahn. Instead, he focused his remarks on Weinstein, who had been held by al-Qaida since 2011, and Lo Porto, who had been held since 2012.

Obama expressed regret for the deaths of the two men and offered condolences to their families.

Weinstein, 73, was abducted in August 2011. His capture came four days before his seven-year stint with the U.S. Agency for International Development was to end.

Lo Porto was an Italian aid worker who worked for the German aid group Welthungerhilfe. He went missing in Pakistan in January 2012.

## DOD can't account for \$1B in Afghan reconstruction aid

*McClatchy Washington Bureau*

WASHINGTON — A total of \$1.3 billion that the Pentagon shipped to its force commanders in Afghanistan between 2004 and 2014 for the most critical reconstruction projects can't be accounted for by the Defense Department, an internal report released Thursday shows.

Most of the \$100 billion the United States has spent to rebuild Afghanistan during 13½ years of war has gone through the U.S. Agency for International Development and other civilian departments. But a small portion of that money went through the Pentagon and directly to American military officers there in a bid to bypass bureaucracy and rush the aid to urgently needed roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, water-treatment plants and other essential infrastructure.

A yearlong investigation by John F. Sopko, the U.S. special

inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction, or SIGAR, found that the Pentagon could not — or would not — provide basic information about what happened to six in 10 dollars of \$2.26 billion it spent over the course of a decade on the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which is known by its acronym CERP in military circles.

“In reviewing this data, SIGAR found that the Department of Defense could only provide financial information relating to the disbursement of funds for CERP projects totaling \$890 million (40 percent) of the approximately \$2.2 billion in obligated funds at that time,” Sopko's report said.

When Sopko's staff divided the Pentagon expenditures into 20 categories set under the emergency program, from transportation and education to health care, agriculture, water and sanitation, by far the larg-

est category was in a 21st category that the inspector general termed “Unknown.”

That category applied to 5,163 projects, compared with 4,494 projects in all of the 20 defined areas put together.

The Pentagon did not respond directly to Sopko's main findings in comment he sought while conducting the probe, and which he released along with his report on the investigation.

In one somewhat cryptic comment, the U.S. Central Command, which oversees military operations in Afghanistan and 19 other countries in the Middle East and Central Asia, suggested that some of the CERP money was redirected from reconstruction aid to more direct war needs.

“Although the (SIGAR) report is technically accurate, it did not discuss the Counter Insurgency strategies in relationship to CERP,” Central Command stated in a Feb. 25,

2015, email to Sopko's office. “In addition (to) the 20 uses of CERP funds, it was also used as a tool for Counter Insurgency.”

However, with the bulk of the Afghanistan War's \$800 billion price tag for the United States having gone to battlefield needs, it is not clear why money set aside for urgent reconstruction needs would need to pay for counterinsurgency, which has been a core part of the U.S. military campaign there since the October 2001 invasion following the Sept. 11 terrorism attacks.

Brief descriptions of the 20 categories defined by Pentagon regulation under the emergency-response program, also included in Sopko's report, do not mention counterinsurgency.

The SIGAR report suggests how intertwined U.S. military and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan became, and how difficult it is to separate the two.

## Brown's parents file suit against Ferguson

ST. LOUIS — The parents of Michael Brown have filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against the city of Ferguson over the fatal shooting of their son by a white police officer.

Brown's death last summer put a spotlight on the often contentious relationship between young black men and police in the United States.

Attorneys for Brown's parents, Lesley McSpadden and Michael Brown Sr., filed the suit Thursday.

Brown was 18 and unarmed when he was shot by officer Darren Wilson during a confrontation. The shooting led to sometimes violent demonstrations and spawned a national protest movement. In the end, local and federal authorities ruled that the shooting was justified.

Messages seeking comment from Ferguson officials and an attorney for Wilson were not immediately returned. The lawsuit had been expected.

A St. Louis County grand jury and the U.S. Justice Department declined to prosecute Wilson, who resigned in November. But the Justice Department last month released a scathing report citing racial bias and profiling in the Ferguson Police Department and a profit-driven municipal court system that frequently targets black residents.

## Senate confirms Lynch as attorney general

WASHINGTON — Loretta Lynch won confirmation to serve as the U.S. attorney general, the first black woman to hold the country's top law enforcement job.

The vote ending months of delay was 56-43 in the Senate on Thursday. Her confirmation was delayed for months for a variety of reasons, most recently a lengthy dispute over abortion on an unrelated bill to address sex trafficking.

A deal on the abortion issue was reached earlier this week and the trafficking bill passed unanimously Wednesday.

From The Associated Press

# New Pentagon strategy has option to use cyberwarfare

The Associated Press

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. — A new Pentagon cybersecurity strategy lays out for the first time publicly that the U.S. military plans to use cyberwarfare as an option in conflicts with enemies.

The 33-page strategy says the Defense Department "should be able to use cyber operations to disrupt an adversary's command and control networks, military-related critical infrastructure and weapons capabilities."

The cybersecurity strategy is the second done by the Pentagon and was slated for release Thursday, but it was obtained early by The Associated Press. The previous strategy, which was publicly released in 2011, made little reference to the Pentagon's offensive cyberspace capabilities, although U.S. officials have spoken quietly about the issue.

The new document takes a more open approach in part because officials said the Pentagon wants more transparency in its cyberspace mission — and because it could provide some

deterrence to adversaries.

"I think it will be useful to us for the world to know that, first of all, we're going to protect ourselves, we're going to defend ourselves," Defense Secretary Ash Carter told reporters traveling with him to California. He added that the new strategy is "more clear and more specific about everything, including [U.S.] offense."

The strategy also, for the first time, includes a small section on U.S. concerns about continued cyberespionage by China against U.S. companies and agencies. It says the U.S. will continue to try to work with Beijing to bring greater understanding and transparency of each nation's cyberspace missions to "reduce the risks of misperception and miscalculation."

Carter is in Silicon Valley to reach out to high-tech companies and experts and to seek their help in countering the growing cybersecurity threat and ensuring that America's military has the cutting-edge technologies it needs.

He is likely to face a tough

techie audience that has long been suspicious of U.S. surveillance programs and is determined to protect their clients and customers from government prying.

Speaking to reporters on the plane Wednesday, Carter acknowledged the challenge, including suspicions involving the case of intelligence leaker Edward Snowden.

"One of the things we need to do is have that dialogue," said Carter, who has long been entrenched in cybersecurity issues, including when he served as deputy defense secretary. "We have a tremendous common interest in having a safe but also open and prosperous society, so that's common ground, and it's that common ground I'm trying to get us to stand on."

According to defense officials, Carter is setting up a full-time unit of military, civilian and reservist workers in the San Francisco Bay area in the next month or so to scout out promising emerging technologies and to build better relations with the companies there.

## DOD: Iranian warships join cargo flotilla near Yemen

By JON HARPER  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Iranian warships have joined a flotilla of cargo vessels that the U.S. military is tracking in the Gulf of Aden, according to the Pentagon.

Spokesman Col. Steve Warren on Thursday would not say whether the convoy was headed to Yemen or had turned away, as some news organizations are reporting.

FARS, the official Iranian news agency, reported that an Iranian destroyer and a helicopter-carrying warship

had arrived in the Gulf of Aden to protect the country's cargo ships.

The nine cargo ships are suspected of carrying arms destined for Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen, which are fighting forces loyal to the U.S.-supported government.

Warren said the Pentagon doesn't know whether the Iranian cargo ships are carrying weapons. There has been no communication between the U.S. and Iranian vessels, he said.

The U.S. Navy has beefed up its presence in the region in recent days, partly in response

to concerns about the flotilla. There are nine American warships in the region, including the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt.

The Roosevelt, which carries combat planes and reconnaissance aircraft, is about 200 nautical miles from the Iranian ships, according to the Navy.

"We're keeping a close eye on them," Warren said. "They remain in the region. They have not announced their intentions and we continue to monitor their activities," he told reporters.

harper.jon@stripes.com  
Twitter: @JHarperStripes



# Mayweather relies on father

*The Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — Floyd Mayweather Sr. remembers the moment he discovered his son had a feel for the family business.

Floyd Jr. was just 9 or 10 months old, not even walking yet. But his father had been showing him how to hold his hands in a boxing position, a skill young Floyd learned quickly.

"One day I came into the room and he's laying back on the pillow doing just what I was showing him," Mayweather Sr. said. "I said, 'This is it. He's going to be a fighter.'"

It wasn't long after that when the two had another kind of father-son moment. This one, too, lives in Mayweather family lore, but for a different reason.

Floyd Sr. was facing the wrong end of a shotgun, aimed at him by his brother-in-law during a dispute in Grand Rapids, Mich. Mayweather was holding his year-old son and, like the boxer he was, was thinking on his feet.

"I wasn't going to put that baby down," he told the Los Angeles Times in 2012. "I didn't want to die. It wasn't about putting my son in the line of fire. I knew he wouldn't shoot the baby. So he took the gun off my face, lowered it to my leg and bam!"

The shotgun blast destroyed most of Mayweather's left calf, and pretty much ended his career as a welterweight contender. He fought on, but his mark in boxing wound up being made in other ways.

Floyd Sr. isn't exactly the guiding force

behind the fighter who will make a record purse of some \$180 million or more to fight Manny Pacquiao. He has spent long stretches of time estranged from his son, and was in prison on a drug conviction when Floyd Jr. fought in the 1996 Olympics before turning pro.

But he's the trainer who helped teach his son defense and has stressed it for every fight he's been involved in. And he'll be in the corner next week at the MGM Grand arena, confident as ever in the abilities of a fighter who was throwing punches before he learned to walk.

Just another opponent. Just another fight.

"Ain't nothing different for this fight," Floyd Sr. said. "We're just fighting an opponent. We're not fighting Cassius Clay. We're fighting an ordinary guy."

If this is the new normal for the Mayweathers, it wasn't always that way. The two publicly feuded for more than a decade and were so much at odds in 2007 that Floyd Sr. nearly took a job training Oscar De La Hoya against his son in the fight that made Floyd Jr. a household name.

But he's replaced his brother, Roger, for Mayweather's last four fights, a reconciliation the younger Mayweather sought partly because he felt he got hit with too many shots against Miguel Cotto and wanted his father's help in slipping punches.

They've also patched up things outside the ring, at least for now.

"I probably wouldn't be a fighter if it wasn't for my father," Mayweather said.

"As long as he knows I love him and I went out there and when I fought I didn't just fight for myself, I done it for the both of us. I think he should be happy with that."

In addition to his training duties, Mayweather's role in this fight promotion has also been as the foil to Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer. Roach said when the fight was announced that Floyd Sr. wasn't much of a cornerman and that he was happy to learn that he would be working his son's corner.

That got Floyd Sr. riled up enough to come up with a poem of sorts about his training counterpart.

"Manny moved from first class to the coach with the roach," he said. "Now he'll be sprayed with Raid and underpaid. He'll be gone just like the roaches go when the lights go on."

It's a long way from the federal penitentiary in Michigan, where the older Mayweather spent more than three years for selling cocaine before being released in 1998. He's 61 now, recovering from the lung disease Sarcoidosis, and living the life in an upscale gated community in Las Vegas.

He's more concerned about his son losing his money than losing the fight. He believes in Floyd Jr.'s defensive wizardry, and believes he hasn't slowed a bit at the age of 38.

Like a proud father, he also believes his son is the best.

Oh, and don't forget his trainer, too.

"He's the best, ever, yes," Mayweather said. "And this is Floyd Mayweather Sr., the main man behind him."

# Bonds cleared on appeal

*The Associated Press*

SAN FRANCISCO — For the first time in more than a decade, Barry Bonds is in the clear.

His conviction overturned on appeal, baseball's home run king is no longer a felon. Yet his reputation might have been forever tarnished and the Hall of Fame's doors could remain shut. Despite a decision that he didn't break any laws, many fans — and even some baseball peers — concluded the ex-San Francisco star cheated by using performance-enhancing drugs.

Fellow Bay Area product Jimmy Rollins, now with the rival Dodgers, doubts Bonds will ever completely repair his image. Fair or not.

"Mud in water. No matter how clean it is, it will still be remembered as muddy water," the Los Angeles shortstop said Wednesday at Bonds' former AT&T Park home. "Presumed guilty, you're always going to be guilty regardless of a ruling. That's just the way it is, that's the way society is. That's the world we live in. He would definitely rather be remembered as one of the greatest ballplayers that ever played, because that's what he was."

Bonds' obstruction of justice conviction was thrown out Wednesday by a federal court of appeals, but that doesn't necessarily mean much when it comes to his legacy and the allegations of steroid use that will always surround his every accolade and accomplishment.

For 15 seasons, former Triple-A left-hander John Yandle threw Bonds' batting practice sessions, from the time he joined the Giants in 1993 through his record-setting final season of 2007. Bonds broke Hank Aaron's all-time home run record on Aug. 7, 2007, with No. 756 and went on to finish with 762.

"It's good to have this chapter behind and to have him cleared of all charges, so hopefully people can remember him for the baseball player that he was and not all these other things that surrounded his persona," Yandle said. "All I can say is he gave us a lot of stand-up-from-our-sofa, yelling-at-the-top-of-our-lung moments during his years here. That's what I certainly remember and appreciate all the time I was able to spend with him throwing."

Yandle communicated with the 50-year-old Bonds by text message Wednesday following the ruling, "and I think he's relieved, too, he's got to be relieved that it's all over with and hopefully this is where it ends and taxpayers' money can be used for better purposes now."

In his third year on the Hall of Fame ballot, Bonds received 202 votes for 36.8 percent from the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

Rollins, for one, counts him as a Hall of Famer.

"Through and through," Rollins said. "But the Hall of Fame is obviously more than just numbers. You can't debate his numbers. There's nothing to debate."

# Army-Navy game has schedule problem

*The Associated Press*

Heading into next week's College Football Playoff meetings in North Texas, what to do about the Army-Navy game seems to be the most vexing issue facing those in charge of the postseason system.

With Navy joining the American Athletic Conference this season, the Midshipmen are now eligible to earn a bid to a New Year's Six bowl as the best-ranked champion from among the AAC, Mountain West, Sun Belt, Conference USA and Mid-American Conference.

The playoff selection committee sets the bowl lineup on Dec. 6, but Navy's regular season doesn't end until it plays Army on Dec. 12. If nothing changes, the Army-Navy game wouldn't count toward the final rankings — which is a problem, especially with a \$4 million bowl bid on the line.

"It's a challenging issue and it's a system-wide issue and it has me concerned," MAC Commissioner Jon Steinbrecher said.

American Athletic Conference Commissioner Mike Aresco has been working to find a solution that allows Army-Navy to keep its late date while also giving the academies a chance to be in the mix for a marquee bowl bid.

"It is on the agenda and the commissioners know they have some scenarios from me, from our group, that we think work," said Aresco, who declined to share details of his proposals.

The 10 FBS conference commissioners and Notre Dame Athletic Director Jack Swarbrick, who make up the College Football Playoff management committee, will gather in the Dallas area starting Monday.

Army-Navy has been played for years on a Saturday at the end of the season with few or no other major college games. For a while it was played on the same day as several conference title games. When that first weekend of December became cluttered with big games — the American championship game joins the schedule this season — Army-Navy was moved to the second weekend of December, giving it a day all to itself.

"I think it's incumbent on all of us to figure out a way where Army-Navy can stay where it is," Aresco said Wednesday. "It's such an iconic national institution. A national treasure of a game."

The Army-Navy problem is a tricky one because there are so many hypotheticals to consider. The most obvious potential pitfall: What if Navy is the highest ranked Group of Five champion on Dec. 6 and loses to Army six days later?

The Black Knights have had only one winning season since 1997 and have lost 13 straight to the Midshipmen.

And then there are the not so obvious scenarios. What if the rankings are very close and Navy were to beat a poor Army team by a slim margin? Should that open the door for another team to move ahead of Navy and take that marquee bowl bid?

Or, what if Navy is ranked slightly behind the highest-ranked Group of Five team on Dec. 6 and the Middies beat a good Army team? Should that game allow Navy to push past another team in the rankings?

Navy athletic director Chet Gladchuk said he believes having a selection committee picking the teams, instead of the polls and computer formulas used by the old BCS, could make it easier to deal with the what-ifs.

The 13-member panel could weigh in when Navy is or is not a contender for the Group of Five bid and leave that New Year's Six bowl spot open until the Middies season is complete. But that would also require a contingency plan with another smaller bowl, and force organizers from two games to wait a week for a matchup.

Football Bowl Association Executive Director Wright Waters said most bowl tickets are sold soon after the teams are announced. Delaying is far from ideal.



## Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

[www.navyauto.com](http://www.navyauto.com) or [nasinfo@navyauto.com](mailto:nasinfo@navyauto.com)

# Duncan, Spurs get even

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Three days from his 39th birthday, Tim Duncan keeps getting better with age. He smartly stayed on the court while playing the last eight minutes with five fouls, and recovered from a woeful fourth quarter to steady the Spurs in overtime.

Duncan scored 28 points and fellow NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard added 23 to help San Antonio beat the Los Angeles Clippers 111-107 on Wednesday night, tying their Western Conference playoff series at 1-1.

“He was spectacular,” Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said of Duncan. “He continues to amaze me with the things that he is able to do. He knows he had to stay on the court and he figured out a way to do it. He continued to be aggressive, which is pretty amazing.”

Duncan apologized to his teammates after going 1-for-5 in the fourth, when Manu Ginobili fouled out and Tony Parker was already gone with a right Achilles’ injury.

“I was awful,” Duncan said. “I missed two or three layups, I made two or three defensive mistakes, got out of position and gave up dunks to DeAndre (Jordan).”

Duncan made up for it in overtime, scoring four straight points, and Patty Mills had eight of his 18 off the bench to give the Spurs a road split.

“Seeing the team play like this today was very important,” Ginobili said. “Hopefully we bring the same sense of urgency, the same fire and juice, for Game 3.”

The series, the only one of eight in the first round that is tied after two games, moves to San Antonio for Game 3 on Friday night.

“This is going to be a helluva series,” Clippers coach Doc Rivers said.

The defending champion Spurs blew 10-point leads in the third and fourth quarters, and got into overtime on a pair of free throws by Mills with 8 seconds left in regulation.

“They are battle-tested,” Clippers guard Jamal Crawford said. “They lose Parker, Mills steps in. Manu is out, (Danny) Green steps in. That is what they do. You have to tip your hat to them.”

Duncan’s jumper snapped a 101-all tie, Mills followed with a fast-break layup off Leonard’s long pass, and Leonard scored on a layup for a 107-101 lead with 56 seconds left.

Blake Griffin had his first career playoff triple-double of 29 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists, but had a costly turnover with 11 seconds left in regulation.

“That game is on me,” he said. “I just got to take care of the ball.”

DeAndre Jordan had 20 points and 15 rebounds for the Clippers, but he was just 4-for-12 from the line in the fourth. Los Angeles missed 17 free throws and had 11 turnovers in the game.

**Hawks 96, Nets 91:** Paul Millsap scored 19 points and top-seeded Atlanta again survived a tougher-than-expected test from visiting Brooklyn, holding on for a 2-0 lead in their Eastern Conference playoff series.

Squandering an early 12-point lead, the

Hawks fell behind before halftime and spent the rest of the game struggling to put away the No. 8 seed.

It went down to the wire. Deron Williams missed an open 15-foot jumper that would’ve tied it with about 10 seconds to go. Kyle Korver rebounded, was fouled and made two free throws to clinch Atlanta’s win.

The best-of-seven shifts to Brooklyn for the next two contests. Game 3 is Saturday.

Millsap, who missed five games near the end of the season with a sprained right shoulder, ditched a pad that he felt restricted his shooting motion. He responded by hitting 7 of 11 shots.

**Grizzlies 97, Trail Blazers 82:** Mike Conley and Courtney Lee each scored 18 points, and host Memphis beat Portland to grab the franchise’s first 2-0 lead in a playoff series.

The Grizzlies took full advantage of starting the playoffs with home-court advantage for only the second time in their short postseason history. They had only won their playoff opener once before, and that was on the road in San Antonio in 2011.

Marc Gasol had 15 points, and Zach Randolph and Beno Udrih added 10 apiece.

LaMarcus Aldridge led Portland with 24 points and 14 rebounds, and he also had four blocks with two steals. Damian Lillard added 18 points.

# Blues dominate to tie Wild

The Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The St. Louis Blues stopped chasing the Minnesota Wild and revived their checking style.

After a listless performance the previous game, the Blues suddenly have their edge back. The Wild will have to quickly rediscover theirs.

Vladimir Tarasenko scored twice, and the Blues sent Wild goalie Devan Dubnyk to an early exit during a dominating 6-1 victory in Game 4 to even the Western Conference quarterfinal series Wednesday night.

“When we check, we score. It looks like we’ve joined the tournament now, and we’re dialed in,” Blues coach Ken Hitchcock said. “So we’ve got home ice back, we’re dialed into our game and hopefully we’re going to be hard to play against.”

Kevin Shattenkirk had three assists and Jake Allen made 17 saves to help the Blues end a nine-game postseason road losing streak that lasted more than three years. Patrik Berglund had a goal and an assist, and David Backes and Paul Stastny scored for the first time in the series. So did fourth-line right wing Ryan Reaves, whose one-timer from the point got past Dubnyk’s glove to give the Blues the early lead.

By the middle of the first period, they were ahead 3-0 after being shut out in Game 3.

Game 5 is in St. Louis on Friday night.

**Rangers 2, Penguins 1 (OT):** Kevin Hayes scored at 3:14 of overtime to give visiting New York a 3-1 series lead heading back to New York for Game 5 on Friday night.

In overtime, Martin St. Louis started a goalmouth scramble when he threw the puck in front on a wraparound attempt. The puck pinballed to Carl Hagelin and went across the crease for Hayes to flip it past fallen goalie Marc-Andre Fleury. The point was Hayes’ first in the postseason.

Fleury and New York’s Henrik Lundqvist each made 22 saves.

Pittsburgh is a loss away from elimination after dropping consecutive home playoff games to the NHL’s best regular-season road team. The Rangers have won 12 of their last 13 on the road, allowing 15 goals.

**Ducks 5, Jets 2:** Ryan Kesler scored twice in the third period and Anaheim beat host Winnipeg to sweep the Western Conference first-round series.

Andrew Coglian, Emerson Etem and Sam Vatanen — into an empty net — also scored, and Frederik Andersen made 25 saves. The Ducks are the first team to advance to the second round.

Bryan Little and Mark Stuart scored for Winnipeg.

**Senators 1, Canadiens 0:** Mike Hoffman scored midway through the third period as host Ottawa beat Montreal to avoid playoffs elimination.

Craig Anderson made 28 saves to help the Senators cut Montreal’s lead to 3-1 in the Eastern Conference first-round series. Carey Price stopped 31 shots for the Canadiens.

Senators coach Dave Cameron moved Hoffman from the fourth line to the second unit with Mika Zibanejad and Bobby Ryan during the first period. It paid off in the third when Cody Ceci kept Tom Gilbert’s clearing attempt in at the point and fed Hoffman in the left circle for a quick shot that beat Price.

# Duda lifts Mets to 10th straight win

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Consistent pitching, nifty defense and well-placed hits at just the right time. Lucas Duda and the New York Mets are playing so well they’re practically giddy.

Duda hit a go-ahead single in the eighth inning that sent the Mets to their 10th consecutive victory Wednesday night, 3-2 over the Atlanta Braves.

“It’s unbelievable, coming to the ballpark every day. Just a great feeling when you walk in the doors. It’s just fun. There’s no other word to describe it,” a smiling Duda said. “It’s pretty special. It’s hard to do.”

Wilmer Flores hit a tying homer and an RBI single for the Mets (12-3), on their longest winning streak since taking 10 straight in July 2008. Another victory in the series finale Thursday afternoon would match the team record of 11 in a row — last accomplished in 1990 — and complete a perfect 10-game run on their first homestand of the season.

Despite injuries to several key players, New York is off to its best start since the 1986 World Series champions opened 13-3.

“These guys have just taken off. I salute every single one of them,” manager Terry Collins said. “Pitching has been remarkable.”

Helped out by some slick defense, Mets starter Dillon Gee allowed only two runs in seven steady innings after the first pitch was delayed 31 minutes by rain.

Second baseman Ruben Tejada robbed Nick Markakis of a hit by leaping high for a snow-cone grab, and Gold Glove winner Juan Lagares ran down Jace Peterson’s drive in deep center, reaching behind his

head for a sensational catch.

**Yankees 13, Tigers 4:** Jacoby Ellsbury turned as if to start his swing and then crumpled to the ground after David Price’s pitch caught him square in the chest.

With temperatures in the 30s in downtown Detroit, this was no way to begin the game.

“It felt like a frozen snowball or something, going at 93,” Ellsbury said.

Ellsbury shook off the pain and went to first base, and Price’s problems were only beginning.

New York scored six runs off Price in the first inning amid swirling snow flurries, and went on to a rout of host Detroit.

**Giants 3, Dodgers 2:** Joe Panik hit a game-ending sacrifice fly after the Dodgers tried a five-man infield in the ninth inning, and host San Francisco edged Los Angeles.

Reigning World Series MVP Madison Bumgarner and current NL Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw kept things close, dueling until it became a battle of the bullpens.

**Diamondbacks 8, Rangers 5:** Archie Bradley shook off a shaky start to pitch six effective innings, lifting Arizona over visiting Texas.

**Reds 2, Brewers 1:** Billy Hamilton dashed home on a two-out wild pitch in the ninth inning and Cincinnati sent host Milwaukee to its eighth straight loss. Hamilton scored both runs for Cincinnati, which won its third straight game against Milwaukee. The Brewers have the worst record in the majors at 2-13.

**Cardinals 7, Nationals 5:** Kolten Wong homered and drove in the tiebreaking run with a double in the eighth inning to lift visiting St. Louis over Washington.

