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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Navy seizes weapons in Arabian Sea

BY CHRIS CHURCH

Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — The U.S. has seized an illicit shipment of arms, including machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers, that officials said originated in Iran and were intended for Houthi rebels in Yemen.

It was the third seizure of weapons by international naval forces in the Arabian Sea in a month, the U.S. 5th Fleet said in a statement. In all three instances, the weapons were assessed by U.S. officials to have originated in Iran.

Iran backs the Shiite Houthi rebels in Yemen, who are fighting the internationally recognized government, which is backed by a coalition led by

Saudi Arabia, Iran's chief rival in the region. A cease-fire is set to take effect on Sunday, followed by peace talks in Kuwait.

Last year, the U.N. Security Council imposed an arms embargo against the Houthis. Saudi Arabia and its Gulf allies repeatedly have accused Iran of flouting the ban, something Tehran always has denied.

The coastal patrol ship USS Sirocco "intercepted and seized" a cache of weapons March 28 in a "small, stateless dhow," 5th Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Kevin Stephens said in a statement. The shipment included 1,500 AK-47s, 200 RPG launchers and 21 .50-caliber machine guns.

The guided-missile destroyer USS Gravelly assisted in

the seizure after the weapons were discovered by Sirocco's boarding team, Stephens said. The dhow and its crew were allowed to depart once the weapons were seized. The weapons were in U.S. custody, Stephens said.

Eight days earlier, the French navy destroyer FS Provence seized a shipment of arms that included nearly 2,000 AK-47s, 64 Dragunov sniper rifles and nine anti-tank missiles.

The Royal Australian Navy's HMAS Darwin intercepted a dhow on Feb. 27 carrying a similar cache of arms.

In early March, a Houthi official rejected a suggestion by an Iranian military official that Iran might send military advisers to support the Houthis, the Reuters news agency reported.

Houthi representatives were in Saudi Arabia at the time for talks.

The Houthi leader has said the rebels were prepared to continue fighting if the latest round of talks failed. More than 6,000 people have been killed in the conflict, which also involves al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. The Islamic State also has sought to exploit the chaos in Yemen to establish a foothold.

"We continue to operate and conduct maritime operations in the Arabian sea," Stephens said. "We are continuing to do what we have been doing and continue to expect to have success. It's clear these operations are making a difference."

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At least 29 die across Iraq in wave of suicide attacks

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Militants unleashed a wave of suicide attacks across Iraq on Monday, killing at least 29 people and wounding dozens, officials said.

The deadliest attack took place in the southern province of Dhi Qar (also known as Nasiriyah), where a suicide bomber blew himself up inside a restaurant that is frequented by Shiite paramilitary militia fighters, killing at least 14 people.

Another 27 people were wounded in the attack on the well-known restaurant, which is located on the main highway that links the capital, Baghdad, with the southern provinces, a police officer said.

Dhi Qar is located about 200 miles southeast of Baghdad.

About the same time, a suicide car bomber set off his explosives-laden vehicle in a commercial area in the oil-rich city of Basra, killing at least five people and wounding 10 others, another police officer said.

Pieces of flesh and debris littered the bloodstained pavement as thick, black smoke billowed from the area. The attack also damaged up to 30 cars.

Basra is located about 340 miles southeast of Baghdad.

Earlier in the day, a suicide bomber rammed his car into a security checkpoint in the capital's northeastern suburb of Sadr al-Qanat, killing six troops and wounding 13 others.

Another suicide car bomber hit the headquarters of paramilitary troops in the town of Mishahda, 20 miles north of Baghdad, killing four troops and wounding 10 others.

Medical officials confirmed the casualty figures. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release information.

The Islamic State group seized much of northern and western Iraq in the summer of 2014 and established a self-styled Islamic caliphate in the areas of Iraq and Syria under its control, imposing a violent version of Islamic law.

The Iraqi army, along with pro-government militias, launched an offensive last month aimed at retaking Mosul, the country's second-largest city, which is under Islamic State control. Their progress in villages outside the city has been slowed by roadside bombs and other booby traps.

Iraqi officials said troops on Monday recaptured a key village outside Mosul after days of

heavy fighting. Iraqi forces retook the village of al-Nasr, near the Tigris river, after destroying six suicide car bombers that had tried to attack them, said Lt. Col. Mohammed al-Wagaa, of the Iraqi army.

As Iraqi forces backed by a U.S.-led coalition have advanced against the Islamic State group on a number of fronts in recent months, extremists have retaliated with a number of large-scale bombings targeting civilians.

According to United Nations figures, at least 1,119 Iraqis were killed and 1,561 were wounded in March, a sharp increase from the previous month, when 670 people were killed and 1,290 wounded. The figures include 575 civilians killed and another 1,196 wounded.

Millions of offshore accounts leaked to media by law firm

Bloomberg

Leaked files from a Panama law firm that creates shell companies show that politicians, criminals and celebrities worldwide have used banks and shadow companies to hide their finances, according to a series of reports by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.

The consortium, in articles published Sunday, said it had obtained a cache of 11.5 million records outlining the creation of more than 200,000 offshore shell companies.

The trove includes offshore companies linked to 12 current and former world leaders, as well as hidden financial dealings by 128 more politicians and public officials, according to the ICIJ.

At least \$2 billion in transactions involved people and companies it alleged had ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin, according to the report.

It outlined, for example, the creation within 24 hours of a

chain of four shell companies in three countries involving two banks, a process that made the money behind it “all but untraceable.” The original company in the chain, according to the consortium’s report, was a St. Petersburg, Russia-based bank “whose majority owner and chairman has been called one of Putin’s ‘cashiers.’” Some of this money was used to gain “indirect influence” over shareholders in Russian companies.

A Kremlin spokesman last week accused the consortium of preparing an “information attack” on Putin. The government wouldn’t reply to “honey-worded queries” from the consortium or its reporting partners because they contain questions that “have been asked hundreds of times and answered hundreds of times,” the group reported Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as saying.

While offshore holdings can be legal, they can also be used to hide wealth.

Afghan forces change tactics

BY PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

KUNDUZ, Afghanistan — Afghan forces are changing tactics in northern Afghanistan, drawing lessons from their failure last year to keep Taliban insurgents from overrunning the city of Kunduz, Afghan and U.S. military officials said.

Security forces have increased operations in the region, responding to recent intelligence that insurgents were planning to attack Kunduz again, said Gen. Qadam Shah Shaheem, the Afghan army’s chief of staff, who visited Kunduz’s Camp Pamir this week.

“We are pretty much changing everything — changing maneuvers, the shape of the operation and the directions,” Shaheem said through an interpreter.

Taliban insurgents attacked Afghanistan’s fifth-largest city in late September, catching government forces by surprise. Within hours, the Taliban were in control as security forces retreated to the airport and an army base south of the city. Residents said police disappeared without putting up a fight.

It took two weeks of street-to-street fighting and the help of U.S. special operations forces and air power for the Afghan forces to retake the city. Kunduz was the first major urban center to fall under Taliban control since they were ousted from power in the 2001 U.S. invasion.

U.S. military officials and analysts pointed to a lack of coordination among Afghan security forces and low morale as contributing to their failure to anticipate or stop the Taliban advance.

US sailor in Japan charged with rape

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — A charge has been filed against a Navy sailor accused of raping an intoxicated Japanese woman who passed out in an Okinawa hotel last month.

Seaman Apprentice Justin Castellanos, 24, assigned to Camp Schwab, was charged with incapacitated rape Friday by the Naha District Public Prosecutor’s Office, an office spokesman said.

Police said Castellanos found the female tourist, visiting from the mainland city of Fukuoka, intoxicated and asleep in the hotel’s hallway on March 13, then took her into his room and

raped her. The incident was reported by the woman’s friend.

In the aftermath of the allegation, local political leaders called for an apology by American officials and strict restrictions on U.S. servicemembers off base. A small but vocal protest movement seeking to block the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma within Okinawa intensified protests.

Okinawa has been the site of several high-profile sexual assaults over the years, including a case in late 2012 involving two Navy reservists that spurred a curfew for all U.S. servicemembers in Japan. The curfew, slightly relaxed in 2014, remains in effect.

USO center at Frankfurt airport shutting its doors

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The USO will permanently close its lounge and reception area at Frankfurt Airport later this month after nearly 41 years in operation, citing dwindling visitor numbers and the changing security environment in Europe.

The center will shutter permanently on April 14, said Walter Murren, USO Europe regional vice president.

The announcement comes two weeks after the terrorist attacks at the Brussels airport renewed criticism of security at airports across Europe.

Murren said the decision was considered over time.

“This was not arbitrary,” Murren said in a telephone interview Monday. “It was a hard decision.”

The USO lounge has been a welcome retreat for Americans since May 1975, providing mili-

tary personnel and families a place to grab a snack or a cup of coffee before or after a long flight. They also could make free calls to the states, ask for help, relax and, in recent years, use the Internet and check email.

Visitor numbers to the center have dropped by more than half following the March 2011 shooting in which two U.S. airmen on their way to Afghanistan were killed in an attack on an American military bus at the airport. The shooting led U.S. Army Europe to send some 1,500 incoming personnel and their families per month through Ramstein Air Base instead of Frankfurt, beginning in 2012.

That change has affected the number and types of visitors using the USO at Frankfurt.

In the past three years, the number of people using the airport USO has gone “from a steady 3,000 to less than 1,000 a month,” Murren said.

Royals win series rematch in opener

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Edinson Volquez would rather sit on the bench than stand on the mound on Opening Day, especially when it happens to be the first game following a World Series triumph.

"I like to enjoy the show," Volquez explained with a grin. "Enjoy the time."

He had every reason to enjoy Sunday night's festivities anyway.

Given no choice but to start the game by Royals manager Ned Yost, the veteran right-hander responded with six scoreless innings. His bullpen held on through three more shaky frames and Kansas City beat the New York Mets 4-3 in the first opening-day rematch of a World Series.

"I did the best I could," said Volquez, who also started the decisive Game 5 at Citi Field last November.

The Mets rallied for three runs off Joakim Soria in the eighth, then put runners on the corners with one out against Wade Davis in the ninth. But the All-Star closer struck out David Wright and Yoenis Cespedes, preserving a nail-biting victory and sending 40,030 fans home in another celebratory mood.

"They're scrappy," Wright said. "We knew that they put the ball in play, they find holes, put together terrific at-bats. They get that lead early and you know the bullpen is coming in. That's their M.O. — good starting pitching, terrific bullpen and a pesky offense. That's exactly what they did tonight."

Volquez (1-0) allowed two hits and three walks in out-dueling Matt Harvey, who also opposed him in Game 5 of the World Series. Harvey (0-1) allowed four runs — three earned — on eight hits and two walks in 5²/₃ innings.

There wound up being little good about opening night for the NL East champs, still in search of their first championship in three decades. They spent nearly an hour

before the first pitch reliving last year's World Series defeat through a steady stream of highlights on the crown-shaped big screen, then had to watch the raising of the championship banner over the Royals Hall of Fame in left field at Kauffman Stadium.

"It was just strange, the pregame ceremony. I think I would have enjoyed it more if we played another team," Yost said. "For them to relive that, it's a little awkward."

Things didn't get a whole lot better for the Mets once the game began.

Cespedes, the Gold Glove outfielder whose shoddy fielding hurt the Mets in the Series, dropped an easy fly ball in the first inning that ultimately led to the Royals' opening run.

Kansas City then strung together a couple of singles before Kendrys Morales popped a sacrifice fly to center in the fourth, and Alex Gordon and Omar Infante added two-out RBI singles in the sixth.

Volquez and the Kansas City defense had things well in hand by that point.

The biggest misstep Volquez made may have been fashion-related — he wore his spring training hat with a gold crown over the interlocking "KC" to start the game. He swapped it out for the proper one by the second inning.

"Nobody said anything!" he said, grinning again. "Not even in the bullpen."

Pirates 4, Cardinals 1: Clint Hurdle spent spring training tinkering with the Pittsburgh lineup and preaching the importance of selflessness. Of moving runners over. Of being patient at the plate and aggressive on the bases.

The message found an unlikely landing spot in pitcher Francisco Liriano.

The veteran tied a Pirates' Opening Day record by striking out 10 and singled home the first run of the 2016 Major League Baseball season for good measure.

It was 39 degrees when Liriano threw the first pitch

of the year at sunny but frosty PNC Park. He allowed just three hits and walked five in six shutout innings. His RBI hit in the second came off Cardinals ace Adam Wainwright.

"Just trying to take good at-bats and put the ball in play," Liriano said.

A refrain his manager repeated over and over during the offseason after Pittsburgh traded second baseman Neil Walker and cut first baseman Pedro Alvarez, an exodus of power the Pirates knew they couldn't replace. So instead Hurdle got creative, placing catcher turned first baseman John Jaso atop the order and bumping Andrew McCutchen from third to second and emphasizing the need to take smart chances to generate offense.

"You need to be able to perform in the box and execute," Hurdle said. "You know there's some at-bats to sacrifice."

Yet Hurdle let Liriano — a career .121 hitter — swing away in the second with runners at the corners and one out, resulting in a crisp single to left that gave Pittsburgh a lead it would not relinquish in the meeting of the teams with the two best records in the majors since the start of 2013.

Blue Jays 5, Rays 3: Marcus Stroman outpitched Chris Archer in his first opening day start, helping Toronto begin defense of its first AL East title in 22 years by beating host Tampa Bay.

Stroman allowed three runs and six hits over eight-plus innings. Roberto Osuna got three outs for a save.

Archer struck out a Rays' Opening-Day record 12 in five innings.

Troy Tulowitzki hit the first home run of the MLB season, a two-run shot for Toronto. Edwin Encarnacion had two hits and drove in two runs after not batting in spring training games because of injuries.

Kyle Busch sweeps weekend at Martinsville

Associated Press

MARTINSVILLE, Va. — Kyle Busch pulled away on a restart with 11 laps to go and outran AJ Allmendinger to the finish for his first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series victory at Martinsville Speedway, and a sweep of the two-race weekend.

Busch, who won for the first time in 31 starts at Martinsville in a truck race on the 0.526-mile oval on Saturday, dominated in the premier division in bright sunshine but cool temperatures that never let the track get quite as sticky as it normally does.

The option to pick the inside or outside line as the leader on the final restart was great for Busch, but not for teammate Matt Kenseth.

"That was the key to the race, being able to restart on the bottom like that," Busch said after choosing the inside line, putting Kenseth outside.

"We all talked as a group earlier this morning about how we were going to do that and what we were going to do and we all said, with 10 to go, it's pretty much off limits. It was [11] to go, so it was pretty much right on the brink there, so, 'Sorry Matt.'"

When the green flag flew, Busch sailed off, Allmendinger beat Kenseth to the inside position and Kenseth got shuffled

back to 15th.

Allmendinger finished second, followed by Kyle Larson, Austin Dillon and Brad Keselowski.

"I was kind of hoping we'd stay green the last 120 laps," Allmendinger said. "I figured that wasn't going to happen, but I was praying we had a shot at that because I felt like if that happened, we had a great chance to win the race."

Several other drivers who pitted before the final restart started in the sixth row, or further back, of side-by-side racing, and while Larson and Keselowski recovered for top-five finishes, others got caught up in traffic and that allowed Dillon to take fourth out of nowhere.

It was the second straight major disappointment at Martinsville for Kenseth.

Last spring, he crashed race leader Joey Logano with 46 laps to go, earning himself a two-race suspension. This time, he seemed poised to challenge Busch for the lead with 35 laps to go until a blown tire by Jamie McMurray caused a caution, bunching up the field.

"I was a little worried there toward the end before that last caution came out that Matt was catching me," Busch said. "He was on me pretty good and I wasn't sure that I had enough brake in order to handle the rest of the day, but fortunately we got a yellow there."

Busch led the most laps at Martinsville since Bobby Hamilton was out front for 378 on April 20, 1998.

The race also was a lost day for Denny Hamlin, one of the favorites going in and the defending champion.

Hamlin was running fifth after 221 laps after overcoming a pit road penalty until his car lost control heading into Turn 1 and slammed into the wall, sending him to the garage. He never returned, and finished 42nd.

Formula One: Mercedes driver Nico Rosberg became the eighth man in Formula One history to win five consecutive races with a victory at the Bahrain Grand Prix on Sunday, and will now aim to do what all the other seven did: Go on to capture the championship title.

Rosberg made it back-to-back wins to start the new season, and five in a row dating to 2015, with a comfortable victory, capitalizing on a first-corner collision involving teammate Lewis Hamilton and an engine failure that prevented Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel from starting the race.

He led throughout to win by 10.2 seconds at the Sakhir circuit over Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen, with Hamilton recovering from the collision with the Williams of Valtteri Bottas and finishing third.

"It was a really good getaway on the dirty side of the grid and that really made

my race in the end," Rosberg said. "From then on the car was feeling great and just controlling the pace and playing it safe."

"Two wins in a row now, good points, that's where my focus is. Five wins, three wins in a row, doesn't make a difference."

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo was fourth and Romain Grosjean fifth in another encouraging performance by the new American-based Haas team. Toro Rosso teenager Max Verstappen was sixth and Red Bull's Daniil Kvyat seventh, ahead of the Williams drivers Felipe Massa and Bottas, with McLaren's Stoffel Vandoorne in 10th to take a point on his F1 debut.

There was drama on the warm-up lap as smoke began pouring from the back of Vettel's Ferrari and he immediately parked the car. It was the second reliability failure for Ferrari this season after trouble struck Raikkonen in Australia.

Pole-sitter Hamilton again got off to a poor start, like he did in Melbourne, as he adjusts to the new rule restricting drivers to a single clutch at the start.

The Briton was running behind Rosberg at the first corner when Bottas made an ambitious move on the inside, braked too late and collided with the right side of the Mercedes, dropping Hamilton down to seventh at the end of the first lap.



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Griffin returns in Clippers' win

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Blake Griffin showed brief flashes of his old Lob City self in his return from a three-month absence. His Clippers teammates, who kept winning without him, were just glad to have their leader back.

"Just like riding a bike except it was a little rusty," Griffin said, corralling his young son Ford, who was chewing gum like his dad.

Chris Paul had 27 points and 12 rebounds and Griffin scored six points to help Los Angeles beat the Washington Wizards 114-109 Sunday and clinch home-court advantage in the playoffs.

Griffin shot 2-for-7 and contributed five rebounds and two assists while playing 24 minutes after missing 45 games because of quadriceps and hand injuries. The team went 30-15 and clinched a play-off spot during his absence.

"It was a blast being back out there," Griffin said. "My rhythm was pretty bad, conditioning was a little bit better than I thought it would be, but not great. I feel good now, but the key is the next few days."

The Clippers gleefully pounced on Griffin during introductions, when DeAndre Jordan playfully pounded on him.

Griffin hadn't played since Christmas Day, when he partially tore a left quadriceps tendon. He was averaging 23.2 points, 8.7 rebounds and 5.0 assists at the time. He broke his right shooting hand in January after punching the team's assistant equipment manager and recently served a four-game suspension for that.

Marcin Gortat scored 21 points and Markieff Morris added 18 for the Wizards, who never led in losing for the fifth time in seven games. John Wall scored 15 points on 5-for-14 shooting and Bradley Beal had

eight points after missing 14 of 16 shots.

Warriors 136, Trail Blazers 111: Stephen Curry scored 39 points and host Golden State bounced back from its first regular-season home loss in more than 14 months to tie the mark for the second-most wins in a season.

Draymond Green added 22 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for his 13th triple-double, and Klay Thompson scored 21 for the Warriors, who matched the 1996-97 Chicago Bulls and 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers with 69 wins. Golden State needs to win four of its final five games to break the record of 72 victories set by Chicago in 1995-96.

Celtics 107, Lakers 100: Isaiah Thomas scored 26 points and the Boston Celtics clinched a playoff berth while besting Kobe Bryant for the final time with a victory over host Los Angeles.

Jae Crowder added 22 points for the Celtics, who blew an early 17-point lead and survived a tense fourth quarter in their first game since snapping the Golden State Warriors' NBA-record 54-game home winning streak.

Cavaliers 112, Hornets 103: LeBron James scored 31 points, J.R. Smith matched a season high with 27 and host Cleveland knocked down 16 three-pointers while playing without an injured Kyrie Irving.

James added 12 assists and eight rebounds and Kevin Love added 25 points for the Cavs.

Rockets 118, Thunder 110: James Harden had 41 points with nine assists to help host Houston improve its playoff chances with a win over Oklahoma City.

With 30 seconds left, Harden stole a pass from Kevin Durant and found Patrick Beverley for a transition dunk to give Houston an eight-point lead and the

Rockets held on for an important victory.

Mavericks 88, Timberwolves 78: Wesley Matthews hit six three-pointers and scored 19 points for visiting Dallas.

J.J. Barea scored 21 points and the Mavericks (39-38) made 14 of 40 three-pointers to overcome 38.6 percent shooting for their fourth straight victory.

Pelicans 106, Nets 87: Tim Frazier had career highs with 19 points and 13 assists, Luke Babbitt added 21 points and visiting New Orleans beat Brooklyn.

Jazz 101, Suns 86: Gordon Hayward led five Utah players in double figures with 22 points, and the visiting Jazz boosted their playoff chances with a win.

Rodney Hood added 18 points, Derrick Favors had 17, Trey Lyles 13 and Rudy Gobert 12 for the Jazz, who scored 26 points off 22 Suns turnovers and committed only 10 turnovers themselves.

Magic 119, Grizzlies 107: Nikola Vucevic scored 25 points off the bench, Victor Oladipo and Evan Fournier added 22 points each and host Orlando topped struggling Memphis.

The Grizzlies, trying to hold onto the fifth seed in the Western Conference, have lost six straight games for their longest skid since November 2009.

Bulls 102, Bucks 98: Jimmy Butler scored 25 points on 10-for-11 shooting, Pau Gasol had 16 points and eight rebounds and visiting Chicago held off a second-half surge by Milwaukee.

Pacers 92, Knicks 87: Paul George returned from an injured ankle to make the tiebreaking jumper with 23.6 seconds left, and visiting Indiana beat New York Knicks to tie for seventh place in the Eastern Conference.

Syracuse last hurdle for UConn women

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Breanna Stewart and UConn are one victory away from accomplishing their ultimate goal — a fourth straight national championship.

To achieve that unprecedented feat, Stewart and the Huskies will have to beat Syracuse, her hometown team.

"Growing up in Syracuse, I thought about it, going there. Who wouldn't? Who wouldn't think about going to the hometown school and that stuff?" she said. "But when push came to shove, UConn was the best place for me."

And she's been great for UConn. A victory Tuesday would give coach Geno Auriemma 11 national championships, moving him past UCLA men's coach John Wooden for the most in NCAA basketball history.

Both teams advanced to the championship game with routs.

The Huskies won by 29 points, setting a Final Four record that surpassed the 28-point win by Tennessee over Arkansas in 1998. It was UConn's 74th consecutive victory, the second-longest winning streak in NCAA history.

Syracuse jumped all over seventh-seeded Washington en route to an 80-59 rout.

Auriemma referred to standout seniors Stewart, Moriah Jefferson and Morgan Tuck as he looked toward the title game.

"I don't know what I can do to help them except keep reminding them all the time, 'This is your spot, you've owned this spot for the last three years,'" the Hall of Fame coach said.

"Now there's no guarantee you're going to get it Tuesday night, but we're not going in there Tuesday night hoping we win. Because these three [players] they've done more than that, it doesn't mean we're going to win, but I don't have to help them with that mentality."

While the Huskies are no stranger to the title game, Syracuse is a newcomer. The Orange have been on an unexpected run in the NCAA Tournament.

Syracuse just followed the normal plan Sunday night, three-point shooting and full-court pressure. Alexis Patterson scored 18 points, and Brittney Sykes added 17.

The fourth-seeded team had never gotten out of the opening weekend of the tournament before this season. Now they'll have the monumental task of spoiling UConn's coronation.

The former Big East teams met at least once a season before the Orange went to the ACC in 2013. They haven't played since.

Since UConn won the first of its 11 championships in 1995, Syracuse hasn't had much success. The Orange lost the final 23 meetings with Syracuse's last victory coming in 1996.

The Huskies will play Tuesday night without freshman Katie Lou Samuelson. She broke the third metatarsal bone in her left foot in the first half. She missed practice Saturday because she was feeling under the weather. She started on Sunday, scoring seven points in the first half in 17 minutes. She didn't come out of the locker room for the start of the second half, returning to the UConn bench early in the third quarter with a boot on her foot.

Kane's hat trick powers Chicago

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Patrick Kane not only did a number on the Boston Bruins, he reached some milestone numbers himself.

So did Blackhawks coach Joel Quenneville.

Kane had three goals and an assist as Chicago raced to a six-goal lead in the second period before hanging on for a 6-4 victory over Boston on Sunday.

Kane's scoring spree gave him 100 points for the first time in his nine-year career. The win was career No. 800 for Quenneville.

"A special day," Kane said. "My 100th point on a hat-trick goal as well. Pretty cool the way it happened. Just one of those nights where things are going in."

Kane was clicking with linemates Artemi Panarin and Artem Anisimov early and often in the club's fourth win in its last five games. Panarin had a goal and three assists, while Anisimov added a goal and two assists.

"They were great," Quenneville said. "Individually, collectively, fun to watch, nice plays on the goals."

Quenneville said his 800th win was nerve-wracking as the Bruins fell short with a late comeback.

Jonathan Toews also scored for the Blackhawks, who won't finish lower than third in the Central Division and will avoid a wild-card playoff seeding.

Kane's second career regular-season hat trick — both this season — lifted him to 43 goals, the most for a Chicago player since Tony Amonte hit that mark in 1999-

2000. He's the first Blackhawk to reach 100 points since Jeremy Roenick had 107 in 1993-94.

Quenneville is second to Blackhawks senior advisor Scotty Bowman in coaching wins. Bowman has 1,244. Patrice Bergeron had two goals and an assist for the Bruins. He and David Pastrnak scored 11 seconds apart late in the second period. Bruins starting goalie Tuukka Rask was replaced early in the second after allowing a barrage of goals.

Brad Marchand scored on a deflection midway through the third to cut it to 6-4, but the Bruins couldn't overcome Chicago's early outburst.

"It cost us the game if you look at it," Bergeron said. "We can't wait for them to score four or five goals to get going, especially at this time."

Boston, with just two wins in its last nine games, remained one point behind Detroit and Philadelphia for the final Eastern Conference playoff spot.

Penguins 6, Flyers 2: Sidney Crosby, Beau Bennett and Patric Hornqvist scored to help host Pittsburgh build an early lead, and the surging Penguins equaled their longest winning streak of the season at six games with a victory over Philadelphia.

Crosby scored his 33rd goal and Pittsburgh jumped out to a 3-0 advantage midway through the second period. Carl Hagelin added his 12th and Eric Fehr scored twice in the third period for the Penguins, who won for the 12th time in 13 games.

Pittsburgh, in the playoffs for the

10th consecutive season, reached 100 points for the 10th time in team history. Matt Murray stopped 28 shots for the Penguins.

Ducks 3, Stars 1: Nate Thompson and Ryan Kesler each scored a short-handed goal, John Gibson made 25 saves and Anaheim defeated visiting Dallas to return to the top of the Pacific Division.

Ryan Getzlaf added an empty-net goal as the Ducks moved one point ahead of the Los Angeles Kings. Both teams have four games remaining, including the fifth and final Freeway Faceoff of the season between the rivals Thursday night at Los Angeles.

Blues 5, Avalanche 1: David Backes started the scoring in a three-goal first period, Anders Nilsson made 19 saves in relief of an injured Jake Allen, and St. Louis beat host Colorado as the Avalanche moved to the brink of post-season elimination.

Jets 5, Wild 1: Mark Scheifele scored his team-leading 27th goal and host Winnipeg beat Minnesota, giving Jets fans something to cheer about in the club's last home game of the season.

Minnesota dropped its third straight and squandered a chance to clinch a playoff spot.

Chris Thorburn ended a 47-game goal drought for Winnipeg with his sixth of the season. Andrew Copp, Drew Stafford and Blake Wheeler, with an empty-netter, also scored for the Jets.