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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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UN reports atrocities in Kunduz violence

Taliban, government forces both contributed to chaos, investigation finds

By JOSH SMITH
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Both Taliban and government forces committed atrocities in the more than two weeks of fighting during which the insurgents briefly gained control of the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, the United Nations said in a report on Saturday.

The U.N. put the civilian deaths between Sept. 28 and Oct. 13 at nearly 300.

The report came as Doctors Without Borders announced that the death toll from an errant American airstrike against its Kunduz hospital on Oct. 3 had risen to 42.

In all, at least 289 civilians died and 559 were injured in the fighting in and around Kunduz that followed the Taliban's brief occupation of Kunduz, the U.N. said.

"The vast majority of casualties documented so far resulted from ground fighting that could not be attributed solely to one party," the report said.

The U.N. totals do not include the 12 additional deaths announced by the medical charity, which is known by its French initials, MSF.

The new hospital toll includes 14 hospital staff, 24 patients and four caretakers, MSF said in a statement. The confirmed death toll had been 30.

The American airstrike on the MSF hospital was the single largest incident of civilian casualties during the fighting.

Atrocities were committed by both sides, according to the report, which detailed allegations of "arbitrary killings, assault" and "other forms of violence, including gender-based violence, threats and widespread criminality."

"The insecurity, absence of governance and the breakdown of rule of law during this period resulted in a loss of protection of the most basic human rights, including the rights to life and security of person," the U.N. report said. "This chaos enabled an environment in which arbitrary killings, and other forms of violence against civilians and civilian objects, criminality and destruction of civilian property took place."

Although Taliban leaders publicly ordered their fighters to respect human rights, the U.N. recorded instances in which militants beheaded security forces, summarily executed some civilians with ties to the government or international organizations, threatened journalists and women's rights workers, and abducted men and boys.

The U.N. said violence against women and girls did not appear to be systematic or widespread during the brief Taliban occupation. It reported, however, "that some

armed men may have taken advantage of the general breakdown in law and order during this period to carry out acts of gender-based violence."

Taliban forces were alleged to have employed "large numbers" of children, both to fight and to carry ammunition, the report found. Medical clinics treated at least 200 child soldiers during the fighting, it said.

Government security forces were also accused of executing some Taliban prisoners and mutilating bodies by dragging them behind trucks, the U.N. said. Afghan military aircraft conducted airstrikes that killed as many as two civilians and injured five others.

MSF has called the attack on its hospital a war crime and has called for an independent investigation. The organization says the U.S. military knew the hospital's coordinates and continued to strike the facility even after the group made calls to the American command to stop the attack.

MSF said ascertaining the true death toll was "extremely difficult" because part of the medical archives, patient files and admission sheets were destroyed as the building burned.

In addition, more human remains have been discovered in the hospital rubble, the charity said.

Gunmen entered Spanish Embassy after Kabul car bombing

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Attackers entered the Spanish Embassy in Kabul after a deadly car bombing in a diplomatic neighborhood of the Afghan capital, engaging in an hourlong shootout with security forces while staff hid in bunkers, the Spanish government said Saturday in an account of the attack a day earlier.

Sediq Sediqqi, spokesman for the Afghan Interior Ministry, said four Afghan police officers and two others, including a foreigner, were killed in the attack

that was claimed by the Taliban. Authorities in Madrid said two Spanish police officers were killed. The discrepancy could not immediately be clarified.

According to a statement issued Saturday by Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's office, a powerful car bomb exploded Friday evening near the embassy, "causing serious damage to the premises" and killing Deputy-Inspector Jorge Garcia Tudela and Isidro Gabino Sanmartin Hernandez, who were guarding the compound.

An hourlong shootout followed, the statement said.

During the gunbattle, three attackers entered the embassy compound while staff hid in two bunkers. They were released unharmed "after an intervention by Afghan and United States special forces units that lasted several hours," the statement said.

"All details of the attack are under investigation, although a statement by the attackers said that the embassy was not the intended target of their attack," the Spanish government said.

The incident caused confusion in Spain, as Rajoy initially insisted to television audiences

during an election rally that the embassy had not come under attack.

Shortly after, Rajoy told reporters the only Spaniard hurt was a slightly wounded police officer who had been taken to a hospital but was expected to recover. He later acknowledged a policeman died, and hours afterward the government announced the death of the second officer.

Seven civilians and two policemen were wounded, Sediqqi said, adding that 12 foreign citizens were rescued by Afghan forces.

US airstrikes kill 350 in Ramadi

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. airstrikes in recent days killed an estimated 350 Islamic State fighters holed up in the western Iraqi city of Ramadi, an American military spokesman said Thursday, suggesting the extremists lost as much as half of their defending force.

Col. Steve Warren, spokesman for the U.S. military command in Baghdad, told reporters at the Pentagon that there had been an estimated 600 to 1,000 Islamic State fighters inside Ramadi, which the extremist group captured in May. Despite this depletion of Islamic State forces, U.S. officials are reluctant to predict how long it will take to reclaim

the city, which is the capital of Anbar province and a key to the Iraqi government's hopes of restoring its borders.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter, speaking separately Thursday, said Iraqi progress in retaking Ramadi has been "disappointingly slow."

"I am certain it will fall, and we will assist in the making of it fall," Carter said of Ramadi. He added that the U.S. would be willing to commit U.S. Army Apache attack helicopters to the battle for Ramadi, if the Iraqi government requests it and if it would "make a strategically decisive difference."

U.S. officials frequently have expressed frustration with how long it has taken the Iraqi army

and other security forces to press an offensive in Ramadi, but in recent days, they have pointed to important battlefield progress. On Tuesday, Iraqi forces seized an Islamic State operations center and the strategic Tamim neighborhood on the outskirts of the city.

With approximately 10,000 troops, including federal police, committed to the fight for Ramadi, the Iraqis vastly outnumber the defenders. Iraqi Maj. Gen. Ismail al-Mahlawi, head of military operations in Anbar province, said Thursday there are approximately 300 Islamic State fighters trapped in the center of Ramadi, which lies on the Euphrates River.

Pact on climate change adopted

Associated Press

LE BOURGET, France — Nearly 200 nations adopted the first global pact to fight climate change on Saturday, calling on the world to collectively cut and then eliminate greenhouse gas pollution but imposing no sanctions on countries that don't.

The "Paris agreement" aims to keep global temperatures from rising another degree Celsius (1.8 Fahrenheit) between now and 2100, a key demand of poor countries ravaged by rising sea levels and other effects of climate change.

Loud applause erupted in the conference hall after French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius gavelled the agreement. Some delegates wept and others embraced.

The agreement, South African Environment Minister Edna Molewa said, "can map a turning point to a better and safer world."

"This is huge," tweeted President Barack Obama. "Almost every country in the world just signed on to the #ParisAgreement on climate change — thanks to American leadership."

In the pact, the countries commit to limiting the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the same levels that trees, soil and oceans can absorb naturally, beginning at some point between 2050 and 2100.

Achieving such a reduction in emissions would involve a complete transformation of how people get energy, and many activists worry that despite the pledges, countries are not ready to make such profound and costly changes.

The deal now needs to be ratified by individual governments.

USS Milwaukee breaks down at sea

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The littoral combat ship USS Milwaukee, the Navy's newest ship that was commissioned in Milwaukee in November, broke down at sea Friday and had to be towed more than 40 nautical miles to a base in Little Creek, Va., the Navy Times reported.

The ship, constructed at the Marinette Marine Corp. shipyard in Marinette, Wis., suffered an engineering problem while in route from Halifax, Canada, to Mayport, Fla.,

and ultimately its home port of San Diego.

The cause of the problem on the ship — which was towed to the Joint Expeditionary Base at Little Creek, Va. — is being evaluated by the ship's crew and technical consultants, according to the Times.

Initial indications are that fine metal debris that collected in the lube oil filter caused the system to shut down, but the cause is not known, the Times reported.

"Reporting of a complete loss

of propulsion on USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) is deeply alarming, particularly given this ship was commissioned just 20 days ago," Sen. John McCain, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee who has voiced serious reservations about the LCS program in the past, said in a statement to the Times.

"U.S. Navy ships are built with redundant systems to enable continued operation in the event of an engineering casualty, which makes this incident very concerning."

Hundreds gather to honor 9/11 Pentagon victims

By CARLOS BONGIOANNI

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — When Morrill Worcester turned on the radio Friday morning, he heard news that the U.S. terrorist threat levels were the highest they've been since 9/11.

"How ironic," Worcester said after arriving at the Pentagon to lay 184 wreaths in honor of those who died at the Arlington site 14 years ago, when terrorists flew a hijacked airliner into

the Defense Department's massive headquarters building.

Worcester spoke as hundreds of people gathered to pay tribute to the 9/11 victims at the Pentagon Memorial grounds, which lie adjacent to the attack crash site on the western side of the Pentagon. Dozens of volunteers would later pin 184 wreaths on the fence surrounding the memorial site.

It was Worcester's ninth year in a row coming to the Pentagon to lay wreaths, but the primary

reason for being in Arlington was to attend a massive event the next day at the nation's most sacred military burial grounds. Saturday's annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery would still go on despite high threat levels, said Worcester, founder of Wreaths Across America, a nonprofit organization. "We're all there for the same reasons. We just want to remember and honor the veterans."

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Former Cav 'Hot Rod' Williams dies at 53

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — John "Hot Rod" Williams, who spent 13 years in the NBA and was a popular and tough defensive sixth man on Cleveland Cavaliers playoff teams, has died. He was 53.

He died Friday in a Baton Rouge hospital from complications related to prostate cancer, Williams' agent, Mark Bartelstein, said.

The Cavaliers called Williams "the humble embodiment and unsung hero of one of the most memorable and successful eras of Cavaliers basketball."

The 6-foot-11 Williams was a key player for the 1988-89 Cavs, who went 57-25 during the regular season, only to be eliminated by Michael Jordan's last-second jump shot in Game 5 of the first-round series.

Williams averaged 11 points and 6.8 rebounds for his career. During the 1989-90 season, he averaged 16.8 points and 8.1 rebounds. The Cavs made the playoffs in seven of Williams' seasons in Cleveland, advancing as far as the Eastern Conference finals in 1992, when his team again lost to the Bulls.

Williams spent his first nine NBA seasons with Cleveland, then closed his career with stints in Phoenix and Dallas, last playing in 1999.

"Hot Rod" was the guy that willingly and proudly drew the toughest defensive assignment," the Cavaliers said in a statement. "He was the kind of talented, unselfish and versatile player and person that earned the respect of everyone around him, including his teammates and opponents, and those who knew and worked with him off the court as well."

Williams was born in Louisiana and was given his nickname by his family for the engine-like sounds he made as he moved about as a baby. He played his college ball at Tulane, where he remains fourth in career scoring with 1,841 points and second in 20-point games with 36. Tulane had four winning seasons and two NIT appearances with Williams, who averaged 16 points and seven rebounds for the Green Wave.

Tulane's point-shaving scandal took place while Williams was there, and the program was disbanded by the university from 1985 to 1988. Williams was among three players initially arrested, but he was never convicted. Prosecutors said players accepted money from gamblers in exchange for keeping the Tulane's point total artificially low in certain games.

Bartelstein called Williams a man of "great character."

"For people that really understand the story of what happened at Tulane, he was taken advantage of by people who were far more sophisticated, but there was a reason he was proven innocent and it's because he was," Bartelstein said. "Nobody cared about winning more than 'Hot Rod' Williams. ... His teammates know that. If you know the man, it's not even fathomable he'd be involved in things he was accused of. He was a very simple guy who loved the game."

Warriors' win streak reaches 28

Associated Press

BOSTON — The Golden State Warriors needed two overtimes to remain perfect on a very imperfect night from the NBA's reigning Most Valuable Player.

Stephen Curry scored 38 points despite his worst shooting performance of the season, adding 11 rebounds and eight assists on Friday night as the Warriors improved to 24-0 by outlasting the Boston Celtics 124-119 in double overtime.

"Exhausting, but it was fun," Curry said. "Obviously, it was nice to get the win. But we had to claw our way to it."

Counting the wins in their final four games last season, the defending NBA champions have taken 28 regular-season games in a row. That broke a tie with the 2012-13 Miami Heat for the second-longest winning streak in league history, and now trails only the 33 straight by the Los Angeles Lakers in 1971-72.

The Warriors play the Milwaukee Bucks on Saturday night to complete a seven-game road trip. No NBA team has ever gone 7-0 on a single road trip.

"We will definitely cherish this, because it doesn't happen often," center Andrew Bogut said. "The record, the history, the team — it doesn't happen often so we will cherish it. Who knows? Next year you could be on a different team and nobody's talking about you."

Curry made only 9 of 27 shots from the field, a .333 shooting percentage that was his worst since Game 2 of the NBA finals against Cleveland. But he was 6 for 13 from 3-point range and a perfect 14 of 14 from the free throw line.

"He can score in so many different ways," interim coach Luke Walton said. "They did a phenomenal job on him and he scored 38. But that's how superstars are in this league."

The Celtics had two chances to win it at the end of regulation, tied 103-all, but Shaun Livingston blocked Isaiah Thomas'

attempt. After Golden State's try at an alley-oop off the inbounds pass failed, Boston had the ball with 0.7 seconds left, but Kelly Olynyk's off-balance jumper was wide.

Curry sank a pair of foul shots — his only points of the second overtime — with 13.4 seconds left to give the Warriors a three-point lead. Jae Crowder then missed a 3-pointer to tie it, and Andre Iguodala got the rebound and drew the foul.

That sent the Boston fans to the exits, but the Golden State crowd remained to see Iguodala sink both free throws and keep the winning streak alive.

"They're the champs. They did what they're supposed to do," said Celtics swingman Evan Turner. "Curry, you know, he still made it work."

Olynyk scored 28 points for Boston, and Avery Bradley had 19 while guarding Curry much of the night. Thomas had 18 points and 10 assists, and Jared Sullinger had 13 rebounds for Boston, which had won two in a row and six of its previous eight games.

Celtics coach Brad Stevens was asked if there was such a thing as a "great loss."

"No," he said. "Not even a good one."

Draymond Green scored 24 points with 11 rebounds, eight assists and five blocked shots. Iguodala scored 13 with 10 boards and Festus Ezeli had 12 and 12 for Golden State, which was playing without injured Klay Thompson and Harrison Barnes.

The game brought a playoff mood and a sold-out crowd to the new Boston Garden, but this time the loyalties were more divided than usual. Although the Celtics' green still dominated, there was plenty of Golden State blue as well.

Fans crowded around the Golden State end of the court during warmups to watch the defending NBA champions and their star. During introductions, the Celtics rooters struggled to drown out the cheers for Curry.

"That's every night for us," Bogut said. "It's always a playoff atmosphere because they all want to beat us."

After the game, Golden State fans remained long after the final buzzer, cheering Curry when he went to the locker room after his postgame, on-court TV interview.

"Now I can admit I'm tired," Curry said. "We'll dig deep for tomorrow."

Overtime: Golden State has only needed overtime in one other game during the win streak, against Brooklyn on Nov. 14. The Warriors outscored the Nets 10-2 in the extra 5 minutes.

The '71-72 Lakers went to overtime once in their 33-game stretch, beating Phoenix 126-117 in Los Angeles on Dec. 10, 1971.

Old time's sake: Walton, who is filling in for Steve Kerr while he recovers from back surgery, said he has fond feelings for Boston. His father, Hall of Famer Bill Walton, was with the Celtics when they won the 1986 NBA title.

"It looked like they enjoyed playing together. It reminds me a lot of the way our guys are now," said Walton, who turned 6 years old during the '85-86 season and was a fixture at practice before kids were banned. "I remember them having to change the rules because of me and my brothers. But I also remember it being a lot of fun."

Walton said Larry Bird was his childhood hero.

Tip-ins: Thompson turned his ankle in Tuesday night's game against Indiana, and it was a game-time decision to rest the injury. ... New England Patriots players Danny Amendola, Julian Edelman and LeGarrette Blount were in the crowd. ... The Celtics went 2-for-7 from the free throw line in the first half and 9-for-16 for the game. ... Barnes missed his seventh straight game. ... Curry had eight turnovers — three of them when he stepped out of bounds in the fourth quarter and overtimes.

UFC's Edgar stops Mendes in first round

LAS VEGAS — Frankie Edgar stopped Chad Mendes with a vicious combination midway through the opening round, winning his fifth straight fight on the eve of Aldo's long-anticipated bout with McGregor at UFC 194.

Edgar (18-5-1) absorbed a handful of early kicks before abruptly staggering Mendes (17-4) with a right and flooring him with a left. Edgar celebrated after referee John McCarthy stopped the fight and angered Mendes, who thought he could have continued.

Edgar's stoppage put a dramatic finish on the second of three UFC fight cards in three nights on the Las Vegas Strip. The big week concludes Saturday night in the MGM Grand Garden Arena with UFC 194, headlined by Aldo's meeting with McGregor and Chris Weidman's middleweight defense against Luke Rockhold.

Tony Ferguson also choked out Edson Barboza midway through the second round of a spectacular lightweight bout at the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas. Earlier, Ryan Hall beat Artem Lobov by

unanimous decision to win the 22nd season of "The Ultimate Fighter," the UFC's long-running reality show.

Evan Dunham also won a clear decision over Joe Lauzon in a meeting of veteran lightweights. Dunham peppered Lauzon with 146 strikes in three rounds to earn his third victory in 2015 after a three-fight losing streak.

Penguins fire head coach, promote Mike Sullivan

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Penguins' slow start cost Mike Johnston his job.

The Penguins fired Johnston and assistant Gary Agnew on Saturday morning in the middle of the pack in the crowded Metropolitan Division.

Mike Sullivan, who was head coach of the Boston Bruins from 2003-06 and was serving as the coach of Pittsburgh's affiliate in the American Hockey League, replaces Johnston.

General manager Jim Rutherford said in a statement the Penguins and their star-filled roster that includes former

MVPs Sidney Crosby and Evgeni Malkin have underachieved.

Pittsburgh, which lost to Los Angeles in a shootout on Friday night, is 15-10-3 and in fifth place in the Metropolitan entering Saturday. The Penguins are 28th in scoring.

Johnston went 58-37-15 during his brief stint with Pittsburgh.

Ravens put Monroe on IR, bring up QB Renner

OWINGS MILLS, Md. — Left tackle Eugene Monroe was placed on injured reserve Friday by the Baltimore Ravens, a move that ends his disappointing season.

Monroe was already declared out of Sunday's game against Seattle with a shoulder injury. He started six games this season and finished only three.

Also on Saturday, the Ravens promoted quarterback Bryn Renner and wide receiver Chris Matthews to the active roster.

— Associated Press



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Pacers end three-game skid

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Paul George was struggling, and the Indiana Pacers needed a hero to combat a strong performance from Miami's 1-2 punch of Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh.

Monta Ellis emphatically asserted himself when the Pacers needed it most.

Ellis had his most complete game of the year, leading the Pacers with 24 points, six assists and six steals in a 96-83 win over the Heat that ended a three-game losing streak.

"Just one of those nights," Ellis said. "I was feeling good."

That's one way to put it.

Ellis asserted himself in the third quarter with nine points, four assists and a steal that helped push the Pacers to a 77-68 advantage entering the final period.

That was after Wade and Bosh shared the ball and smothered their opponents on defense during the first half. The long-time teammates combined to score 28 of Miami's 48 points and the Pacers needed to close the half on an 11-3 run just to get back in it.

Once Ellis sparked the Pacers, George got going. He tacked on nine points in the third quarter after making just two shots in the first half — although he did make eight free throws before halftime. Feeding off Ellis' energy and George's offensive burst, the Pacers had the ingredients for a victory when center Ian Mahinmi did his part in the paint.

Mahinmi scored 18 points and grabbed 12 rebounds for his second double-double of the year. After giving up more than 120 points in three consecutive games, Mahinmi said the Pacers went into this game focused on playing better defense than they recently had been.

"After losing three in a row," Mahinmi

said, "this was kind of a must-win."

George, the NBA's third-leading scorer, finished with 23 points.

Cavaliers 111, Magic 76: LeBron James had 25 points and eight assists as Cleveland rolled past host Orlando.

Timofey Mozgov added 17 points as the Cavaliers beat the Magic for the 12th straight time.

Pistons 107, 76ers 95: Andre Drummond had 18 points and 16 rebounds, and Marcus Morris scored 21 points as visiting Detroit downed Philadelphia.

The Sixers dropped to 1-23. Before the game, the team announced that coach Brett Brown had signed a multiyear contract extension.

Pelicans 107, Wizards 105: Tyreke Evans scored 27 points and host New Orleans rallied to end a seven-game losing streak against Washington.

The Wizards led 97-90 in the fourth quarter before the Pelicans came back to win. New Orleans hadn't beaten Washington since Feb. 1, 2011.

Raptors 90, Bucks 83: DeMar DeRozan had 27 points as host Toronto held off late-charging Milwaukee.

The Raptors led by as many as 19 points in the latter stages of the third quarter before the Bucks cut it to four when Giannis Antetokounmpo hit a jumper with 5:11 to go.

Hornets 123, Grizzlies 99: Kemba Walker had 33 points and six assists, and Nicolas Batum added 20 points as visiting Charlotte beat Memphis for its fourth straight win.

The Hornets hit 18 of 37 shots from three-point range, with Walker and Batum each shooting 5-for-8 from beyond the arc.

Thunder 94, Jazz 90: Kevin Durant scored 21 points, including the last 11 for Oklahoma City to beat host Utah.

The Thunder matched a season high with their fourth straight win.

Nuggets 111, Timberwolves 108 (OT): Danilo Gallinari hit a three-pointer to put his team ahead late in overtime as Denver rallied from an 18-point deficit in the second half to beat visiting Minnesota.

Gallinari finished with a game-high 23 points, including nine in overtime. The Nuggets ended a five-game home losing streak.

Spurs 109, Lakers 87: LaMarcus Aldridge had 24 points, Kawhi Leonard had 16 points and they each had 11 rebounds to lift host San Antonio over the Los Angeles Lakers.

Rookie D'Angelo Russell had a career-high 24 points in the fifth straight loss for Los Angeles. Kobe Bryant had 12 points on 5-for-12 shooting in 29 minutes.

As time expired, Bryant ran over to give Spurs coach Gregg Popovich a long hug, and the longtime competitors spoke for a couple of minutes. Bryant tapped his chest and pointed to the crowd, acknowledging the cheers and chants of "Kobe" as he walked off the court.

Trail Blazers 106, Suns 96: C.J. McCollum scored 26 points and made five three-pointers, and Damian Lillard added 18 points as visiting Portland held Phoenix to 14 fourth-quarter points.

Portland went on a 13-0 run in the fourth to take control after trailing by four to start the quarter. McCollum and Lillard, one of highest-scoring guard duos in the NBA, hit three-pointers during the stretch.

Eric Bledsoe led the Suns with 31 points.

Heyward inks deal with Cubs

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs already boasted one of the best young cores in baseball — and that was before they added one of the top outfielders.

Free agent Jason Heyward agreed to a \$184 million, eight-year contract with the Cubs, according to a person familiar with the negotiations.

The person spoke Friday on the condition of anonymity because the deal has not been announced.

The agreement with the three-time Gold Glove winner is the latest in a series of big moves by the Cubs as they try to build on a breakthrough season and bring home their first World Series title since 1908. The Cubs won 97 games and reached the NL Championship Series before getting swept by the New York Mets.

Chicago also has added pitchers John Lackey and Adam Warren along with infielder Ben Zobrist. Lackey, like Heyward, left the rival Cardinals for the Cubs and figures to be Chicago's No. 3 starter behind NL Cy Young Award winner Jake Arrieta and Jon Lester.

An All-Star in 2010, the 26-year-old Heyward hit .293 with 13 homers and 60 RBIs this year, helping St. Louis win the NL Central. He spent his first five big league seasons with Atlanta.

Also:

■ Tony Sipp agreed Friday to an \$18 million, three-year contract to remain with the Houston Astros.

A 32-year-old left-hander, Sipp had a career-best 1.99 ERA in 60 games last season. He was 3-4 with 62 strikeouts in 54¹/₃ innings.

Over the last two seasons, Sipp has held opponents to a .184 batting average. He pitched 5¹/₃ scoreless innings of one-hit relief in this year's playoffs, appearing in all six of Houston's games.

Sipp signed with the Astros in May 2014 after he was released by San Diego. He pitched for Arizona in 2013.

■ The Baltimore Orioles have withdrawn their multi-million dollar offer to free agent first baseman Chris Davis.

Executive vice president Dan Duquette said Saturday that the team still wants the slugger. But he added, "I'm not exactly sure where that's going to end up."

He says, "At some point we're going to have to look at some other options. I can tell you this: We're going to have a good ballclub either way."

Davis hit 47 homers and drove in 117 runs for the Orioles last season. According to Duquette, the team was "aggressive" in its pursuit of Davis over recent weeks.

Now, Duquette says, "There's no offer on the table."

■ Rebuilding their middle relief corps, the Washington Nationals agreed Friday with right-hander Shawn Kelley on a \$15 million, three-year contract and with left-hander Oliver Perez on a \$7 million, two-year deal.

Kelley, 31, was 2-2 with a 2.45 ERA in 53 appearances for the San Diego Padres last season, when he made \$2,835,000. His new deal calls for a \$4 million salary next year and \$5.5 million in each of the final two seasons.

In addition, Kelly can earn \$200,000 annually in performance bonuses based on relief appearances: \$50,000 each for 40 and 50, and \$100,000 for 60.

Perez, 34, who previously was with the Nationals' Double-A Harrisburg affiliate, was a combined 2-4 with a 4.17 ERA in 70 games with the Diamondbacks and Astros in 2015.

Palmieri's OT goal lifts Devils over Wings

Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — Kyle Palmieri scored in overtime to give the New Jersey Devils a 3-2 victory over the Detroit Red Wings on Friday night.

Palmieri took a lead pass from Lee Stempniak and streaked into the Detroit zone ahead of defenseman Tomas Tatar, skated in on the goal and put a backhand past a sprawled out Jimmy Howard with 39.3 seconds remaining. It extending Palmieri's goal-scoring streak to four games.

Damon Severson and Sergey Kalinin also scored for the Devils who rallied after trailing 2-0 in the third period. Cory Schneider finished with 27 saves.

Gustav Nyquist and Tatar scored power-play goals in the second period for Detroit and Howard made 35 saves.

The Red Wings extended their point streak to 13 games (8-0-5) since their losing in regulation on Nov. 14.

Each team had 10 shots in the scoreless opening period, with each also having a great opportunity on the power play.

Kings 3, Penguins 2 (SO): Marion Gaborik's shootout goal lifted visiting Los Angeles to its sixth straight win.

Pittsburgh's David Perron and the Kings' Anze Kopitar also scored in the shootout.

Jake Muzzin and Tanner Pearson had Los Angeles' goals in regulation, and Jonathan Quick stopped 40 shots through overtime. The Pacific Division-leading Kings have a point in eight straight games (7-0-1).

Blackhawks 2, Jets 0: Patrick Kane ex-

tended his franchise-record points streak to 25 games with a power-play goal and Corey Crawford stopped 25 shots for his third shutout of the season to lead host Chicago.

Jonathan Toews also scored during a man advantage, ending a seven-game goal-scoring drought, as the Blackhawks won for the third time in four contests and beat the Jets in Chicago for the second time this week.

Kane, who entered the the NHL's leading scorer, got his 19th goal midway through the second period to match Sidney Crosby's 25-game streak, set in 2010-11, for the longest in the league since 1992-93. Kane has 16 goals and 23 assists during his run.

Oilers 7, Rangers 5: Lauri Korpikoski scored three goals for his first career hat trick, Taylor Hall added two goals and two assists, and host Edmonton scored twice in the final 1:34 to pull out its fifth straight win.

Teddy Purcell and Darnell Nurse also scored for the Oilers, who have won their last six at home dating back to Nov. 20.

Derick Brassard scored twice and Mats Zuccarello, Rick Nash and Chris Kreider also had goals for the Rangers. New York has lost two in a row and four of the last five.

After Nash tied the score 5-5 on a power-play goal with 1:46 remaining in regulation, Hall put the Oilers back ahead for good 12 seconds later with his second of the night. Korpikoski completed his hat trick into an empty net with 38 seconds to go.

Coyotes 2, Wild 1 (OT): Mikkel Boedker scored his second goal of the night 34 seconds into overtime and Anders Lindback stopped 27 shots to help host Arizona end a five-game losing streak.

The Wild dominated most of the first two periods, going up on Jared Spurgeon's goal in the second period.

Lindback kept the injury-depleted Coyotes in it with some big saves and Boedker scored on a breakaway late in the second period to tie it. Lindback continued to make tough saves in the third period, assuring Arizona its first point in six games (1-5).

Hurricanes 5, Ducks 1: Jeff Skinner scored into an empty net to complete his hat trick and Elias Lindholm connected on a power play, leading visiting Carolina past Anaheim.

Jordan Staal also scored and Eddie Lack made 31 saves, losing his shutout bid with 5:51 left in the third period when Jakob Silfverberg converted a pass from behind the net by Sami Vatanen.

Lack got a break with 7:46 left in the second period when Vatanen's 50-foot slap shot hit the post with the Hurricanes leading 2-0.

Stars 3, Flyers 1: Antoine Roussel scored the tiebreaking goal late in the second period and host Dallas went on to beat Philadelphia.

Roussel, whose five goals all have come at home, pulled the puck out of a pileup in front and sent a wrist shot past Flyers goalie Michal Neuvirth with 2:32 to go in the second.