

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## 8 key items in '16 DOD budget request

BY JON HARPER

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama released his fiscal 2016 budget request Monday, asking for \$534.3 billion for the Pentagon's base budget plus an additional \$50.9 billion for "overseas contingency operations."

For those who don't want to scour federal budget documents, here are eight things you need to know about the president's budget request.

**1. It far exceeds budget caps:** Obama's budget blows past the caps imposed by lawmakers, by about \$35 billion. Unless Congress changes the law known as "sequestration," the Pentagon will have to make do with about \$499 billion — 8 percent less than the president wants.

Analysts are skeptical that the White House and a GOP-controlled Congress can reach an agreement about how to pay for higher defense spending.

"There are four paths to increasing defense spending: cut nondefense discretionary spending, reduce entitlement expenditures, add tax revenue, or relax the restrictions on adding to the deficit," wrote Ryan Crotty, a defense analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The first two of these solutions are anathema to Democrats, and the last two are anathema to Republicans."

**2. It attempts to limit growth in pay and benefits:** Obama is proposing a 1.3 percent pay increase for troops and federal workers. That would be more than the 1 percent bump the past two years but well below the estimated 2.3 percent increase in private-sector wage growth, which, by law, military raises are supposed to match. It would require servicemembers to pay about 4 percent more out-of-pocket for housing over the next two to three years. It would

### 7 percent funding increase sought for USMC

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is calling for a 7 percent increase in the Marine Corps budget as the service seeks to buy new high-tech platforms while returning to its roots.

The president's fiscal 2016 request seeks \$24 billion for the Marines base budget.

The request would buy top-priority items including nine F-35B Joint Strike Fighters (Marine Corps variant), two KC-130J Super Hercules aerial refueling aircraft and 19 MV-22B Osprey troop transport aircraft.

— Jon Harper

cut commissary subsidies by \$100 million, and patrons could see reduced operating days and hours. It would phase in changes to Tricare call, including a steady increase in Tricare-for-Life annual enrollment fees for retirees age 65 and older, as well as increased deductibles and pharmacy copays over the next decade.

**3. The Army would get significantly less than the other service departments:** The Army would receive \$126.5 billion; the Navy and Marines, \$161 billion; the Air Force, \$152.9 billion. The active-duty Army would shrink by 15,000 soldiers, while the other services would see no change or grow slightly.

**4. The Pentagon still wants to kill the A-10:** To save money, the budget request calls for retiring the A-10 Thunderbolt II close-air support aircraft. The A-10, also known as the "Warthog," has significant support on Capitol Hill, and the Defense Department's proposal to get rid of the Warthog went down in flames last year.

**5. The DOD wants another round of Base Realignment and Closure:** The budget calls for authorization to initiate another round of BRAC to save money by shedding excess infrastructure. But there is little support among lawmakers, who don't want to see bases in their districts get shuttered and their

constituents put out of work.

**6. Overseas contingency operations money is down but still sizable:** The \$50.9 billion request to fund OCO is down from the \$64.3 billion enacted last year, a 21 percent decrease. A major reason for the decline is the significant reduction in troop levels in Afghanistan. But the OCO request funds a number of items that aren't clearly associated with wartime operations, including \$1.3 billion for training and equipping Iraqi troops and Syrian rebels who are fighting the Islamic State group; \$800 million for troop rotations through Europe to reassure NATO allies worried about Russia's resurgence; and \$7.9 billion for investments in "equipment reset and readiness."

**7. There's a major Navy build-up in the works:** The fleet would increase from 271 to 282 ships in fiscal 2016. The new USS Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier will come into service, as well as 13 other battle force ships. The introduction of the Ford will allow the Navy to keep the number of carriers available at 10 while the USS George Washington undergoes refueling.

**8. Modernization money is way up:** \$107.7 billion would go toward procurement, a \$14.1 billion increase over fiscal 2015. The Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation budget would see a \$6.3 billion bump.

Much of that money will go toward cutting-edge platforms, including the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the V-22 Osprey troop transport, which can take off and land vertically like a helicopter but fly at airplane speeds.

It's important to remember that Obama's request is just that — a request. Congress has the power of the purse. That's why the defense budget that Congress approves might look very different from the one being proposed by the president and the DOD.

It's clear that a major budget battle lies ahead, especially when it comes to nondefense spending and finding ways to pay for a potential increase in the Pentagon's budget.

Speaker of the House John Boehner, R-Ohio, called the overall federal budget proposal more of the same from Obama, criticizing plans for "more taxes, more spending" and more "Washington gridlock."

"Like the president's previous budgets, this plan never balances — ever," he said in a written statement. "While the president's budget is about the past, our budget will be about the future. We will address our government's spending problem and protect our national security."

Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said the White House proposed tax increases "and other budget gimmicks" knowing full well that they "will never be enacted into law."

"We need a real budget," Rogers said, "one that allows responsible investment in critical federal programs — including our national defense — without breaking the bank and pushing our country further into deficits and debt."

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# Navy requests more funding, ships, people

BY JON HARPER  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Navy is hoping for an 8 percent increase in its budget from last year as the service seeks to bring aboard more sailors and build more ships.

President Barack Obama's fiscal 2016 budget request, unveiled Monday, calls for the Navy to receive \$137 billion for its base budget. That's \$9.7 billion more than it received this fiscal year, and billions more than the Navy will be allowed to spend if the congressionally imposed budget cap known as "sequestration" isn't lifted.

The service is also requesting \$5.6 billion for "overseas contingency operations," also known as OCO.

At a time when the size of the Army is being slashed, the Navy wants to add about 5,600 people

## Navy purchases eyed with procurement funds

The Navy's request calls for about \$33 billion in Navy procurement funding for fiscal 2016 to buy new ships and aircraft, including:

- 2 nuclear attack submarines.
- 2 destroyers.
- 3 littoral combat ships.
- 1 amphibious transport dock.
- 4 F-35C Joint Strike Fighters.

to its active-duty rolls and increase the number of ships in the fleet.

There are currently 323,000 active-duty sailors in the Navy. That number would increase to 329,200 in fiscal 2016 if the Navy gets its way. Navy Reserve end strength would remain roughly the same at 57,400.

At a time of high operational tempo, sailors will continue to see more sea pay, incentive

- 16 P-8A Poseidons.
- 5 E-2D Hawkeyes.
- 3 MQ-4C Triton unmanned aircraft.
- 2 MQ-8C Firescout unmanned helicopters.
- Detailed design and construction of the USS John F. Kennedy aircraft carrier (with estimated delivery in fiscal 2018).

pay for critical skill sets and bonuses for those who undergo extended deployments. Obama has proposed that military basic pay and civilian pay increase 1.3 percent in fiscal 2016.

The Navy is seeking a fleet increase from 271 to 282 ships. The USS Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier will come into service in 2016, keeping the number of available carriers at 10 while the USS George Wash-

ington undergoes refueling and modernization.

Thirteen other battle-force ships will be delivered, including two nuclear attack submarines, five littoral combat ships, two joint high-speed vessels, three destroyers and an amphibious transport dock. Three nuclear attack submarines will be retired.

The Navy aims to have a 306-ship fleet by fiscal 2020.

The planned naval buildup comes at a time when China is undergoing rapid military modernization, and its forces pose a growing threat to American dominance of the high seas.

The Navy is playing a leading role in the Pentagon's rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region, and the service intends to have 60 percent of its fleet based in the region by 2020.

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## Navy plans carrier overhaul, new amphibious ship in budget

BY STEVEN BEARDSLEY  
*Stars and Stripes*

The Navy plans to move forward with an overhaul of its aircraft carrier USS George Washington and seek funding for another amphibious ship.

Both requests are part of a \$16.6 billion shipbuilding budget that assumes the repeal or offset of sequestration budget caps, an uncertainty in the new Congress.

They were part of the Defense Department budget proposal released Monday for fiscal 2016, which begins in October.

Navy leaders are asking for \$678 million in funding for a midlife refueling and modernization of the nuclear-powered Washington. The project, estimated to cost \$4.7 billion and take almost four years to complete, has become a focal point of government debates over defense budgeting.

The military had planned to retire the carrier before its overhaul, citing budget caps and a strategic reassessment of the nation's carrier needs.

Dropping the ship would leave the U.S. with 10 carriers in its fleet.

Congress has already set aside more than \$800 million in advance funding for the carrier overhaul, and plans call for the Navy to seek the \$3.2 billion balance over fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

The shipbuilding budget also requests \$550 million for the funding balance of another San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock, the 12th ship in a line the Navy had planned to keep at 11, citing high costs and other priorities. The 26,000-ton vessel can carry roughly 800 Marines, their aircraft and landing craft for a variety of operations.

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## Senate approves bill to reduce vet suicides

WASHINGTON — A bill aimed at reducing a suicide epidemic among military veterans won unanimous approval from the Senate on Tuesday, sending the measure to the president for his expected signature.

The bill is named for Clay Hunt, a 26-year-old veteran who killed himself in 2011, and comes in response to suicides that on average claim the lives of 22 military vets every day.

White House spokesman Josh

Earnest said President Barack Obama strongly supports the bill and will sign it.

The House passed the bill unanimously last month.

The measure would require the Pentagon and the Department of Veterans Affairs to submit to independent reviews of their suicide prevention programs and offers financial incentives to psychiatrists and other mental health professionals who agree to work for the VA. It also would help troops as they transition from active duty to veteran status.

From The Associated Press

## Militants claim to kill Jordanian pilot

IRBIL, Iraq — The Islamic State group executed Jordanian pilot Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh by burning him alive in a steel cage, according to a video released Tuesday on Internet forums associated with the jihadi group.

The spokesman for the Jordanian armed forces confirmed

the death and vowed "punishment and revenge," according to The Associated Press.

If verified, the convincingly brutal video marks a new level of savagery for the group and ends the monthlong saga of the first lieutenant, whose plane crashed in late December over Raqqa, Syria, during the American-led bombing campaign against the Islamic State group.

From McClatchy foreign staff

# Seattle's Carroll stands by call

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Less than 16 hours later, Seahawks coach Pete Carroll was still stunned by the outcome while defending the decision to call a pass from the 1-yard line in the Super Bowl's closing seconds, a choice that will long be debated.

So close to another celebration. So close to becoming the next NFL dynasty.

"The shock of disappointment that this game gets away from us and goes another way right at the finish line," a somber Carroll said Monday, before Seattle returned to the Pacific Northwest after the 28-24 loss to New England. "It's something that we have to deal with that in the long

run of it will make us stronger, and we'll be able to put it in some kind of perspective. It's pretty hard right now."

Carroll stood by the decision for Russell Wilson to throw from the New England 1 with 26 seconds left, a pass that was intended for Ricardo Lockette and intercepted by Malcolm Butler.

Carroll also defended offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell, who was widely criticized for calling a pass with Marshawn Lynch in the Seattle backfield.

"We're so lucky to have him. He's been absolutely instrumental in everything that we have done," Carroll said. "There is no reservation in that thought, and don't make it out like there is, because he is an

awesome guy on our staff, and he is crucially important to our future as well."

Carroll said the clock and the Seahawks' timeout situation dictated they would have to throw once and possibly twice from the 1. He gave credit to Butler for making the interception and fellow cornerback Brandon Browner for jamming up wide receiver Jermaine Kearse on the play, creating open space for Butler to break on the ball.

Seattle decided to throw after seeing New England bring in its goal-line defenders, Carroll said. The Seahawks were also attempting to melt as much time from the clock with Tom Brady standing on the other sideline.

# Pats' Brady looks to get more wins

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Tom Brady knows what's next: more Super Bowl wins.

At least he hopes so.

The most successful quarterback of his era was still riding the high of his fourth NFL championship on the morning after New England's 28-24 victory over Seattle. Brady had every right to look back at his four touchdown passes against the NFL's top-ranked defense and beam. Instead, he was looking ahead.

"I am still kind of in the midst of my career," Brady said Monday before being presented with a car and his third Super Bowl MVP trophy, tying him with his boyhood idol, Joe Montana. "I just love the game. I love playing. I love representing our team."

That team — or previous versions of the Patriots he has quarterbacked — won three Super Bowls in four years, then lost in its next two trips to the big game. Brady knows how close the Patriots came to a third straight flop against the NFC champion, needing an interception with 20 seconds to go to clinch the crown.

"We've been on the other end of this two times in the last seven years, being ahead late in the game with the chance to win it, and not closing it out," Brady said of losses in 2008 and 2012 to the New York Giants. "I'm glad we had the opportunity to do it. Coach talked all week about how it was going to take all 60 minutes and it certainly did."

"It never broke our will. We were down 10 in the fourth quarter and (Seattle) being on the 1-yard line with 20 seconds left, but the guys never gave up. And you fight until the end and great things happen."

Brady knows all about great things, obviously. A two-time league MVP, he threw for four touchdowns against the NFL's stingiest defense, and led a comeback from a 10-point deficit through three quarters. He connected on all eight of his throws on the decisive drive that ended with a 3-yard TD pass to Julian Edelman.

Brady is 37 and has said he hopes to play well into his 40s, and he works hard to stay in top physical shape. So he doesn't see his winning toss to Edelman as his final Super Bowl moment.

But he certainly recognizes how difficult the journey is.

"Yeah, absolutely," he said. "I was a young kid when we won those first three. I know in '04 after we beat the Eagles, I was like, 'I'm just ready for this to be over, get the offseason started,' just because we had experienced it. Obviously, with some perspective of that game, it's a hard thing to get here and then it's a hard thing to win the game."

"Playing against the other best team, obviously, one play here, one play there, all things change, and we've been on the other end of that, too. So I'm just proud that we really got a chance to finish it out."

# Seahawks' play latest of questionable calls

The Associated Press

The Seattle Seahawks had both the Lombardi Trophy and greatness in their grasp with 36 inches and 26 seconds to go.

They watched their coronation as a modern day dynasty slip away with the decision not to put the ball in Marshawn Lynch's hands.

In what some are viewing as one of the great miscalculations in sports history, offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell, backed by head coach Pete Carroll, called for a pass play, leaving Lynch — and ultimately the rest of the Seahawks — stunningly empty-handed.

It also added Bevell and Carroll to the long list of sportsmen whose decisions backfired so spectacularly so as to haunt and taunt the also-rans and their crestfallen fans.

Some choices that stand out for their deleterious results:

**Meadowlands miracle:** In the final seconds of a 1978 NFL game, all the

New York Giants had to do was take a knee and they had the Philadelphia Eagles beaten. But they inexplicably called a running play and quarterback Joe Pisarcik botched the handoff. Defensive back Herman Edwards scooped up the loose ball and scored the winning touchdown.

**Pooped Pedro:** Just five outs from guiding Boston to the World Series, manager Grady Little left an exhausted Pedro Martinez in Game 7 of the 2003 AL Championship Series. Martinez had just given up three consecutive hits and was clearly done. After Little returned to the dugout without his ace, Jorge Posada hit the game-tying double and the Red Sox went on to lose. The curse lived on for another year.

**Best benched:** While Al Michaels was shouting, "Do you believe in miracles? Yes!" Soviet hockey fans on Feb. 22, 1980, were asking, "Why isn't Vladislav Tretiak between the pipes? No!" Soviet coach Victor Tikhonov benched the world's best goaltender with the score tied at 2 after

the first period. The American team made up of mostly college kids capitalized against backup Vladimir Myshkin to beat the mighty Soviets 4-3 in the "Miracle on Ice."

**Vexed Van de Velde:** Needing just a double bogey to win the 1999 British Open, Frenchman Jean Van de Velde decided not to play things conservatively and triple bogeyed the 18th hole, forcing a three-way playoff with Paul Lawrie and Justin Leonard that he lost. The lasting image from golf's biggest implosion was Van de Velde slipping off his socks and shoes and stepping into the knee-deep water to reclaim his third shot.

**Fab Five fail:** Chris Webber's Michigan Wolverines trailed North Carolina 73-71 in the closing seconds of the 1993 NCAA men's basketball championship when he found himself double-teamed and called a timeout. Because Michigan had no timeouts left, Webber was assessed a technical foul and the Tar Heels cruised to the title.

# Super Bowl champs return to snowstorm

The Associated Press

BOSTON — The New England Patriots arrived safely in snowbound Massachusetts on Monday night, following their dramatic 28-24 Super Bowl victory over the Seattle Seahawks in Arizona.

The team landed at Boston's Logan International Airport just before 7:30 p.m. local time and retweeted a message from running back Shane Vereen: "Boston! Your Champs just got home!! #hellonow #itscoldbutourtrophieskeepuswarm."

Players returned to a region weathering another major workday snowstorm that brought over a foot of new snow on top of nearly 3 feet already on the ground in places. Coach Bill Belichick and several players greeted fans braving the cold as they arrived at the stadium.

Boston had initially planned a victory parade through downtown on Tuesday,

but that celebration was pushed back to Wednesday morning because of the weather.

## Sherman played with torn elbow ligaments

PHOENIX — Seattle Seahawks cornerback Richard Sherman played the Super Bowl with torn ligaments in his left elbow and will likely need Tommy John surgery in the offseason.

Seattle coach Pete Carroll said Monday before the team left Arizona that it was his understanding that Sherman would need the surgery after the All-Pro cornerback was injured in the NFC championship game against Green Bay.

Sherman, who played in the Seahawks' 28-24 loss to New England without a brace on the elbow, is not the only Seattle star who could be facing offseason surgery.

All-Pro safety Earl Thomas may need to have the labrum in his left shoulder repaired and strong safety Kam Chancellor may need knee surgery.

## NFL investigating fake crowd noise in Atlanta

ATLANTA — The NFL is trying to determine if the Atlanta Falcons pumped fake crowd noise into the Georgia Dome for home games the last two years.

Team spokesman Reggie Roberts said the team became aware of the league's investigation during the 2014 season.

The Falcons could be fined or penalized with the loss of a draft pick if found to have added fake crowd noise during the opposing team's huddles or when trying to call a play.

The investigation was first reported by ESPN.



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# Pelicans halt Hawks' streak

The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The Atlanta Hawks' club-record 19-game winning streak was snapped Monday night in a 115-100 loss to the New Orleans Pelicans.

Anthony Davis had 29 points and 13 rebounds to help New Orleans win for the sixth time in seven games, a stint which includes victories over several contending squads including Dallas and the Los Angeles Clippers.

Jeff Teague scored 21 for Atlanta, but the Hawks fell behind by double digits in the first quarter and failed to even tie it.

Eric Gordon scored 20 points for New Orleans, while Tyreke Evans scored 15 points and tied a season high with 12 assists for the fourth time in five games.

**Cavaliers 97, 76ers 84:** Kyrie Irving scored 24 points, LeBron James added 18 points and 11 assists, and host Cleveland staggered to their 11th straight win.

The winning streak is Cleveland's longest since reeling off 13 in a row — a franchise record — in 2010, the last season of James' first stint with the club.

**Nets 102, Clippers 100:** Jarrett Jack made a tiebreaking jumper with 1.3 seconds left, and Brooklyn used a late rally to beat visiting Los Angeles.

The Nets ended a seven-game home los-

ing streak by erasing a nine-point deficit in the final 1:35, getting two three-pointers from Alan Anderson — one a four-point play — one from Joe Johnson and another from Deron Williams in his return from an 11-game absence.

But they went to Jack for their final possession after Chris Paul's layup tied it at 100 with 8.6 seconds to go. Jack dribbled right and lofted a jumper over 6-foot-11 center DeAndre Jordan, who had switched onto him.

**Thunder 104, Magic 97:** Russell Westbrook's second triple-double of the season and 10th of his career helped host Oklahoma City defeat Orlando without the injured Kevin Durant.

Westbrook, an All-Star point guard, had 25 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds.

Durant sat out with a sprained big toe on his left foot. He has played in just 22 games this season, having missed time earlier in the season with a sprained right ankle and a broken bone in his right foot.

**Hornets 92, Wizards 88:** Al Jefferson had 18 points and 12 rebounds, leading Charlotte past host Washington.

Michael Kidd-Gilchrist added 13 points and 13 rebounds, Brian Roberts scored 18 points, and Gerald Henderson put in 17 for the Hornets, who have won six of eight.

Bradley Beal led Washington with 18 points and a season-high 11 rebounds.

**Bucks 82, Raptors 75:** Khris Middleton scored 25 points, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 12 points and 12 rebounds, and short-handed Milwaukee snapped a six-game losing streak against host Toronto.

Reduced to nine players when guard Brandon Knight was ruled out before the game with a sore right quadriceps muscle, Milwaukee lost another body when guard O.J. Mayo was ejected after picking up a double technical at 4:07 of the second.

**Mavericks 100, Timberwolves 94:** Monta Ellis scored 23 points and Dallas won their first game without injured point guard Rajon Rondo, beating visiting Minnesota in the first game in nearly three months for Timberwolves point guard Ricky Rubio.

Rubio, sidelined since severely spraining his left ankle Nov. 7, had 10 points on 4-for-9 shooting with four assists in 21 minutes.

**Grizzlies 102, Suns 101:** Jeff Green converted a three-point play with 4.5 seconds to play as Memphis rallied from seven down in the final 1:35 to beat host Phoenix for the seventh straight time.

Marc Gasol blocked Markieff Morris' shot at the finish to preserve the victory.

# Virginia dominates 2nd half to down UNC

The Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — Virginia responded to its first loss by sharpening its focus back on what had carried the third-ranked Cavaliers to their best start in three decades.

The result was an impressive road win against a highly ranked league opponent, the kind that proves — if there was any question — that Tony Bennett's veteran-led team isn't easily shaken.

Malcolm Brogdon scored 17 points and Virginia's defense locked up No. 12 North Carolina in the second half to win 75-64 on Monday night.

Justin Anderson added 16 for the Cavaliers (20-1, 8-1 Atlantic Coast Conference), who regrouped after blowing an 11-point second-half lead in a 69-63 home loss to Duke over the weekend.

**No. 8 Kansas 89, No. 11 Iowa State 76:** Wayne Selden Jr. scored 19 points in a hot-shooting second half to spark host Kansas past Iowa State.

Selden, after missing all three of his shots and scoring only one point in the first half, drilled four of his first five three-pointers after intermission, often finding himself virtually unguarded on the right wing, as the Jayhawks (19-3, 8-1 Big 12) padded their lead in the Big 12 race to 1½ games.

Georges Niang had 24 points for Iowa State (16-5, 6-3), which dropped out of a second-place tie with West Virginia.

Leading 35-28 after a seesaw first half, the Jayhawks reeled off a 14-6 run the first 4 minutes, 45 seconds after intermission, with Selden scoring eight points, including two uncontested three-pointers. Iowa State called time out and tried to regroup after Selden's second three-pointer put Kansas on top 49-34 but never got the lead under nine points.

# Oilers outlast Sharks in shootout

The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Jordan Eberle scored twice in regulation and Rob Klinkhammer scored in the 13th round of the shootout to help the Edmonton Oilers snap a 15-game losing streak in California by beating the San Jose Sharks 5-4 on Monday night.

Justin Schultz tied the game with 2:37 remaining and Derek Roy also scored for the Oilers, who last won in the Golden State on April 1, 2012, when they beat Anaheim 2-1.

Viktor Fasth made 33 saves, robbing Joe Pavelski of a potential hat trick in the

closing seconds of regulation and stopping 12 of 13 shots in the shootout.

Brent Burns and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins traded goals in the fifth round of the shootout and that was all either team got until Klinkhammer ended it by beating Niemi with a forehand.

**Rangers 6, Panthers 3:** Dan Boyle scored a deflected goal 8:10 into the third period, and Rick Nash and Mats Zuccarello added insurance late as host New York beat Florida.

Boyle flipped a shot from the left point that hit the stick of veteran Florida defenseman Willie Mitchell and bounded

past surprised goalie Roberto Luongo. Zuccarello made it 5-3 with 4:02 left.

Carl Hagelin was stopped by Luongo on a penalty shot with 3:19 remaining to keep it a two-goal game, but Nash scored into an empty net at 18:07.

**Flames 5, Jets 2:** Brandon Bollig and Raphael Diaz scored their first goals of the season as host Calgary beat Winnipeg.

With a one-goal lead heading into the third period, the Flames struck on the power play at 4:24, making it 3-1 when Diaz let a rocket go from the blue line that found the top corner.

# Judge removes Hernandez juror for discussing case

The Associated Press

FALL RIVER, Mass. — The judge overseeing the murder trial of former New England Patriots player Aaron Hernandez removed a juror Tuesday, saying there was evidence she had spoken about the case in previous years and had an early interest in being seated on the panel.

Bristol County Superior Court Judge Susan Garsh dismissed the juror after questioning her individually and closing the courtroom to hear evidence on the matter.

After a closed-door hearing that lasted more than 90 minutes, Garsh said there was credible evidence the juror specifically discussed an opinion about the case, including that it would be hard to convict Hernandez without the murder weapon. She said the juror also discussed several items of evidence that the court has ruled are inadmissible in this case.

"Over the last few years, the juror has expressed an interest in serving on this particular jury," Garsh said. "There is credible evidence that the juror has attended more Patriots games than were

disclosed on the questionnaire."

Hernandez listened as Garsh spoke and tapped his thigh with the palm of his hand.

"Discharge of the juror is indeed in the best interest of justice," Garsh said.

It wasn't immediately clear what the judge would do about the dismissed juror's spot.

Previously, there were 18 jurors on the panel. Six of those will be randomly chosen as alternates immediately before deliberations begin.

The former Patriots standout is accused of the June 2013 killing of Odin Lloyd, a semipro football player who was dating his fiancée's sister. Hernandez, 25, had a \$40 million contract with the Patriots when he was arrested.

In a separate murder case that has yet to go to trial, Hernandez was charged last year in Boston with killing two men in 2012 after someone spilled a drink on him at a nightclub. The judge has ruled that prosecutors in the Lloyd case cannot tell the jury about those slayings.

## Bird hopeful George can play again this season

INDIANAPOLIS — Larry Bird hopes Paul George can return to the game this season after breaking his leg in a gruesome accident last summer — perhaps as soon as next month.

The Pacers president of basketball operations told reporters Tuesday that if George is cleared by doctors and ready to play, he would like to see the two-time All-Star compete.

George hasn't played since sustaining a compound fracture in his right leg on Aug. 1. Bird says he had been told a full recovery would take about seven months.

## PGA caddies file lawsuit

SAN DIEGO — A group of PGA Tour caddies has filed a class-action lawsuit demanding that the tour compensate them for wearing bibs.

Some 80 caddies joined the federal suit

filed Tuesday in Northern California. At issue is having to wear bibs that have the logo of the tournament sponsor. The caddies contend the PGA Tour is making \$50 million off the sponsors while the caddies get nothing.

## Prince gets US backing to seek FIFA's top job

LONDON — FIFA vice president Prince Ali bin al-Hussein disclosed Tuesday that the United States was among the national associations to nominate him to stand against Sepp Blatter for the top job as he decried a "culture of intimidation" within the governing body.

The Jordanian was also endorsed for the May election by his home federation, Belarus, Malta, England and Georgia. But his inability to gain widespread backing beyond his homeland in the Asian Football Confederation highlights the tough task unseating Blatter, who is running for a fifth, four-year term.