

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## 3 admirals forced out in bribery scandal

BY ERIK SLAVIN

*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The commander of naval forces in Japan and two other admirals are retiring following letters of censure issued by the secretary of the Navy in connection with a wide-ranging bribery scandal in the Asia-Pacific region.

Naval Forces Japan commander Rear Adm. Terry Kraft, along with rear admirals Michael Miller and David Pimpo, were censured by Secretary Ray Mabus to “document their failure of leadership” related to dealings with Glenn Defense Marine Asia between 2006 and 2007, according to a Navy statement.

Navy officials spanning the ranks from enlisted to commanding officers, as well as high-placed civilians, have pleaded guilty since December 2013 to trading classified information in exchange for luxury travel, cash and prostitutes with ship support contractor GDMA and its owner, Leonard Glenn “Fat Leonard” Francis.

Francis, 50, pleaded guilty to bribery charges in San Diego federal court in January. Prosecutors say Francis, with help

from his naval contacts, bilked the U.S. government out of more than \$20 million by guiding ships to preferred ports in the Asia-Pacific region and then overcharging them for various services.

The three admirals do not face any criminal charges at this time, according to the statement.

In April, Mabus appointed Adm. John Richardson, who heads the Navy’s nuclear propulsion program, to convene a Consolidated Disposition Authority.

The authority is convened “to ensure that individuals are held appropriately accountable when less than criminal allegations are substantiated,” according to the Navy statement.

During the investigation time frame, Kraft served as commander of the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan, while Miller served as carrier strike group commander and Kraft’s superior.

Pimpo, who currently heads Naval Supply Systems Command’s weapons support department, was the carrier’s supply officer at the time.

Richardson’s investigation concluded that all three officers violated Navy ethical

conduct standards after they improperly accepted gifts from Francis. One of the admirals, who was not named, was also censured for soliciting gifts from GDMA.

Two of the admirals were also cited for improperly endorsing a commercial business. The admirals’ actions and overly familiar relationship with Francis “cultivated an unacceptable ethical climate within the respective commands,” according to the statement.

Kraft will retire next month, Naval Forces Japan officials said Wednesday. He was not immediately available for comment.

Rear Adm. Matthew J. Carter, who currently heads the Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan, has been appointed to assume Kraft’s present command.

Rear Adm. Paul J. Verrastro, currently assigned to the Office of Chief of Naval Operations, will replace Pimpo. Miller has been serving as an assistant to the Naval Academy superintendent, and his successor has not yet been named.

slavin.erik@stripes.com  
Twitter: @eslavin\_stripes

## Navy inquiry faults poor navigation in USS Taylor grounding

BY STEVEN BEARDSLEY

*Stars and Stripes*

NAPLES, Italy — Faulty navigation was to blame for last year’s grounding of a guided-missile frigate in a Turkish port in the Black Sea, according to a Navy investigation.

The USS Taylor struck ground while entering Samsun, Turkey, on Feb. 12, bending three propeller blades and leaking hydraulic oil into the water. The Navy eventually towed the ship to a facility on Crete for \$4.8 million in repairs.

The incident marred a high-profile cruise for the Taylor, one of two Navy warships to sail into the Black Sea a week earlier in response to threats against the Winter Olympics in

Sochi, Russia.

The Navy relieved the Taylor’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Dennis Volpe, weeks after the incident, a routine move after accidents at sea. The service approved a final version of the investigation in July and released a redacted version to Stars and Stripes this week upon request.

The investigator found the ship’s navigation team never realized it was so far to the right of its planned track into the port, even after striking ground. The track, which was determined before the ship’s approach into port, followed a narrow channel between two jetties, each of which was surrounded by shallower water marked by ship’s navigators as

a “danger zone.”

As the Taylor transited between the jetties, crewmembers failed to check the ship’s position according to Navy navigation rules, which require a fix — or a new reading on position — every three minutes in dangerous waters. By the time the ship ran aground, about seven minutes had passed since the prior fix, the report said.

The crew later freed the ship, returned to the track and then moored successfully. Volpe told an investigator he thought the ship had been within the channel when it struck something. For the second approach, he ordered a small boat to go in front of the Taylor and take depth soundings, a decision criticized in the report.

The investigator also questioned why wind speed and current weren’t watched closely as the frigate entered port. In addition, the investigator said the navigation team paid little attention to margins of error in its charts and GPS fixes.

Volpe was given a nonjudicial punishment, as was the ship navigator, assistant navigator and watch supervisor for the ship’s combat information center, the report said. The ship’s executive officer was written up administratively.

The Taylor returned to the Black Sea in April as part of ongoing Navy cruises in the region after Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea last year.

beardsley.steven@stripes.com  
Twitter: @sjbeardsley

# Obama may slow Afghan withdrawal

*The Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is considering slowing its planned withdrawal from Afghanistan for the second time, according to U.S. officials, a sign of the significant security challenges that remain despite an end to the U.S. and NATO combat mission there.

Under the still-evolving plans, Army Gen. John Campbell, the commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, could be given greater latitude to deter-

mine the pace of the drawdown in 2015 as foreign forces scramble to ensure Afghan troops are capable of battling Taliban insurgents on their own, the officials said.

The options under discussion would not alter what is perhaps the most important date in President Barack Obama's plan: ending the U.S. military mission entirely by the time he steps down in early 2017.

But Campbell might temporarily retain more than the 5,500 troops slated to remain in Afghanistan at the end of 2015,

keep regional training hubs open longer than planned or reorganize plans to close bases including Kandahar Air Field, a major endeavor that would draw troops away from efforts to advise Afghan security forces.

Campbell and top Obama aides are expected to discuss the options at a White House meeting Wednesday.

"The defining elements of the plan are more or less intact," a senior administration official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss planning. "All we're looking at at

this point is either variations within those or subtle variations of" the current framework.

Officials hope to finalize a decision before Afghan President Ashraf Ghani visits Washington in March. Ghani has appealed to Obama to "re-examine" his drawdown schedule.

"We are cognizant of the fact that we've got to get in front of the so-called spring fighting season in Afghanistan" and provide allies time to make their own troop plans, the official said.

## 3 embassies in Yemen close

*Staff and wire reports*

SANAA, Yemen — The United States, Britain and France said Wednesday they were closing their embassies in Yemen amid the turmoil in the wake of the Shiite rebels' takeover of the country.

The closures — which come as Yemen marks four years since the start of its own Arab Spring uprising that eventually ousted the country's longtime autocratic ruler — were an ominous sign for the faltering U.N.-brokered negotiations between the Houthi rebels and their political rivals.

This impoverished Arabian Peninsula country has been in crisis for months, with the Iran-linked Houthis besieging the capital, Sanaa, and then taking

control. In January, the rebels put U.S.-backed President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and all his Cabinet ministers under house arrest, leading to their resignations. Subsequently, the Houthis — who are followers of the Shiite Zaydi sect in the Sunni-majority Yemen — dissolved parliament and declared they were taking over the government.

On Tuesday, the State Department announced it suspended operations at the U.S. Embassy in Sanaa and relocated remaining diplomatic personnel "due to the ongoing political instability and the uncertain security situation." The embassy had been operating with only a skeleton staff for some weeks amid deteriorating conditions.

U.S. defense officials said

all of the U.S. troops who were guarding the embassy departed Yemen on commercial aircraft with the diplomatic staff. There had been a robust security detail at the embassy, including members of a new Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force based in Kuwait and Bahrain, according to U.S. defense officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of the evacuation.

During the evacuation, U.S. military drones circled overhead to monitor the situation, and AV-8 Harrier fighter jets from the USS Iwo Jima — which had been stationed off the coast of Yemen as the crisis there deepened — were airborne if needed, according to the senior defense official.

## Williams suspended without pay

BY PATRICK DICKSON

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — NBC has suspended "Nightly News" anchor Brian Williams for six months without pay for fabricating stories about his time in Iraq and elsewhere, the network announced late Tuesday.

"We have decided today to suspend Brian Williams as Managing Editor and Anchor of NBC Nightly News for six months," the president of NBC News, Deborah Turness, wrote to the staff.

The Iraq issue erupted online when Iraq veterans took umbrage at a news report in which Williams used a ceremony honoring a retired command sergeant major at a New York Rangers hockey game to repeat the story that his aircraft was forced down in Iraq.

Days later, Williams admitted the claim was false when Stars and Stripes reporter Travis J. Tritten contacted NBC News to ask for comment on statements by some servicemembers challenging the veteran anchor's version.

## Sex assaults involving military students drop

*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The number of reported sexual assaults involving students at three military service academies went down in the most recent school year, capping a year that saw the military continue to struggle with high-profile cases among leaders and in the schools.

A new Pentagon report finds that there were 61 reported sexual assaults involving students at the academies in the 2013-14 school year, compared with 70 in 2012-13. The report includes the results of an anonymous survey that shows a similar decrease in the number of students who say they experienced unwanted

sexual contact.

The survey, however, also found that more than 40 percent of students who said they experienced unwanted sexual contact said they also believed that they faced retaliation, either from their leadership or socially from other cadets or midshipmen.



# NBA ties helped boost Splash Brothers

*The Associated Press*

OAKLAND, Calif. — Before Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson grew up to be the Splash Brothers, they were just the sons of famous fathers trying to make it big.

Dell Curry recalls his son tagging along with him before and after games with the Charlotte Hornets, learning from 5-foot-3 Muggsy Bogues how an undersized player can be successful.

"Steph knew he wasn't going to be 7-feet tall. He knew he was going to be a point guard," Dell said.

Mychal Thompson retired after 12 years in the league, winning two titles with the Los Angeles Lakers, before his son could see him play. But he stayed close to the franchise and his teammates, allowing Klay to be around some of the game's greatest players.

"He could go in the gym and Kobe Bryant is there and he could pick his brain. Magic Johnson would pull him aside and give some advice and so would James Worthy and guys like that," Mychal said.

From being raised by the league to dreaming about playing in it, Curry and Thompson are among the top attractions now.

The Golden State Warriors' streaky shooting tandem will own the All-Star spotlight in New York this weekend. They will compete in the three-point contest Saturday night in Brooklyn and lead the Western Conference in the All-Star game Sunday night at Madison Square Garden

for what figures to be a culmination of just how far they've come.

Ever since he could remember, Curry believed he could reach this stage. He would attend his father's practices with a ball in his hand and never let it go. When he spoke up, it was usually just to ask a question.

"He was always a guy who paid attention," Dell said.

Thompson realized in college at Washington State that he had a chance to play professionally. He credits his father for keeping him on track as a youngster when he sometimes wondered if he should do something else.

"My dad, he saw my gift at an early age. He said, 'Klay, a jump shot can take you a long way someday,'" Thompson said.

Thompson and Curry consider their NBA heritage a major advantage. But for many, following a famous family member can be incredibly difficult.

Curry and Thompson are familiar with the struggle, too.

Stephen's younger brother, Seth, a former Duke standout, has spent most of the last two seasons in the NBA Development League. Klay's older brother, Mychel, who played at Pepperdine, appeared in five games with the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2012 and has been trying to work his way back since.

Stephen and Klay are the rare legacies who eclipse their father's shadow. Even rarer is that they've done it differently than their dads.

Dell Curry was a spot-up shooter and perimeter-oriented player. Stephen is a magician with the ball, putting on dazzling dribbling displays to go with his smooth long-distance stroke.

Mychal Thompson, the No. 1 overall pick in the 1978 draft by the Portland Trail Blazers, was a 6-foot-10 post player who made one three-pointer in his career. Klay could consistently hit college-level threes by the time he was 10 years old, and even then, his quick release seemed fundamentally flawless.

"He came out of the womb knowing how to shoot," Mychal joked.

Stephen and Klay merged paths when the Warriors drafted Thompson with the 11th pick in 2011. The 6-foot-7, 220-pound shooting guard provided the perfect running mate for the 6-foot-3 Curry, who was taken seventh overall in 2009 out of Davidson, where he was an NCAA tournament darling.

They led Golden State to the second-round of the playoffs in 2013, prompting then-Warriors coach Mark Jackson to proclaim Curry and Thompson "the greatest shooting backcourt in NBA history."

Thompson and Curry combined to make 484 three-pointers last season and 483 in 2012-13, both by far the most of any duo in NBA history. The previous record of 435, set by Orlando's Nick Anderson and Dennis Scott during the 1995-96 season, came when the NBA briefly shortened the distance of the three-point arc to 22 feet.

Golden State's dynamic guards are

doing more than shooting it from deep these days.

After helping the U.S. win gold in the FIBA World Cup in Spain last summer, they've been the spark for rookie coach Steve Kerr's ball-movement based offense and the biggest reason the Warriors (41-9) entered Wednesday's night game at Minnesota with the NBA's best record.

In the last month, they've also become the first teammates with 50-point performances in the same season since Jamal Mashburn and Jim Jackson in 1994-95 with Dallas, showing off an all-around game that left their fathers — now broadcasters for the Lakers and Hornets — as amazed as everybody else.

At this point, the best competition might be against each other.

Their next competition will come in front of a national television audience. They'll join Atlanta's Kyle Korver, Houston's James Harden, Cleveland's Kyrie Irving, Portland's Wesley Matthews, the Los Angeles Clippers' J.J. Redick and defending champion Marco Belinelli of San Antonio in the three-point contest Saturday night.

Count their famous fathers among those hoping to see their now-famous sons share the spotlight.

"Both families are pulling for their sons, but I would think America would like to see the Splash Brothers be in the finals," said Mychal Thompson, who is attending All-Star weekend for the first time. "That'd be the perfect scenario."

## UNLV's Tarkanian dies at 84

*The Associated Press*

LAS VEGAS — Jerry Tarkanian, one of the most famous college basketball coaches in the United States, a maverick who feuded with the establishment and built a powerhouse program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, died Wednesday. He was 84.

Tarkanian, who waged a decades-long battle with the National Collegiate Athletic Association, had been in declining health for several years.

His son, Danny Tarkanian, said his father fought an infection since he was hospitalized Monday in Las Vegas with breathing difficulty.

Tarkanian coached the "Runnin' Rebels" of UNLV, taking them to four Final Fours and winning a national championship in 1990 with one of the most dominant college teams ever.

His teams were as flamboyant as the city, with light shows and fireworks for pregame introductions and celebrities jockeying for position on the so-called Gucci Row courtside.

Tarkanian was a familiar sight, chewing towels as he sat courtside. He ended up beating the NCAA, collecting a \$2.5 million settlement after suing the organization for trying to run him out of college basketball.

Tarkanian was bitter to the end about the way the NCAA treated him while coaching, and carried the grudge the rest

of his life.

"They've been my tormentors my whole life," he said at his retirement news conference in 2002. "It will never stop."

The night before he died, fans attending UNLV's game against Fresno State draped towels over the statue of Tarkanian outside the campus arena. Tarkanian is depicted in the statue chewing on a towel while sitting in a courtside chair.

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, a longtime family friend, said Tarkanian's legacy was far more widespread than just in Las Vegas.

"Jerry's mark on American athletics is significant not only because of his coaching ability, but also his fearlessness in taking on the brutal NCAA," Reid said. "They controlled, bullied and tried to embarrass him, but he never stopped fighting until they cried uncle."

Tarkanian was an innovator who preached defense yet loved to watch his teams run. And run they did, beginning with his first Final Four team in 1976-77, which scored more than 100 points in 23 games in an era before both the shot clock and the three-point shot.

He recruited players other coaches often wouldn't touch, building teams with junior college transfers and kids from checkered backgrounds.

In 2013, Tarkanian was elected to the Naismith Memorial Hall of Fame, an honor his fellow coaches argued for years was long overdue.

## US Little League champ loses its title

*The Associated Press*

CHICAGO — Little League International has stripped Jackie Robinson West of the national title that the Chicago team won last summer after an investigation revealed it had falsified boundaries to field ineligible players.

In a stunning Wednesday announcement that came months after the all-black team, whose ages ranged from 11 to 13 years, captured the attention of the country and the hearts of its hometown, the baseball organization said it also found that after the league had changed the boundaries, some team officials went to surrounding leagues to convince them to go along with what they'd done.

"This is a heartbreaking decision," Stephen D. Keener, Little League International president and CEO, said in a statement.

"As painful as it is, we feel it is a necessary decision to maintain the integrity of the Little League program. No team can be allowed to attempt to strengthen its team by putting players on their roster that live outside their boundaries."

The team has been suspended from Little League tournament privileges until

new leadership is found. The team's manager, Darold Butler, is also suspended, and an administrator from the district that includes Jackie Robinson West has been removed from his position.

The march of the team riveted the city, all the way to its loss in the world championship game to South Korea, and when it was over, thousands of people lined Chicago's streets to catch a glimpse of the boys as they were paraded from their South Side baseball field to a downtown park. There were countless heartwarming stories about the team, including an effort by major league players to contribute money so the parents in the blue collar community could attend the World Series in Williamsport, Pa., and another about Cubs players huddled around a television watching the team during a rain delay at Wrigley Field. The team was treated to a trip to the major league World Series and to the White House to meet.

This is the third time in the 68-year history of the Little League World Series that Little League International had vacated wins after an investigation found wrongdoing. In 1992, a team from the Philippines was disqualified and in 2001 a team from the Bronx was disqualified.



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# No. 1 Kentucky survives LSU

The Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Frustrated by the way his undefeated Kentucky Wildcats were playing, coach John Calipari starting fist-pumping facetiously after LSU baskets and told his players he hoped they'd lose.

They almost did.

But Karl-Anthony Towns redeemed himself after drawing a technical foul — and the ire of his coach — for hanging on the basket. His go-head jump hook with 1:30 left and clutch offensive rebound in the final minute helped No. 1 Kentucky hold off the Tigers, 71-69 on Tuesday night.

"I'm proud of Karl because he came back and grew up," Calipari said. "Now I doubt — ever in his life — will he chin-up on a basket, ever again. But that's why I looked like an idiot on the sideline and why I refused to call timeout. I even said, 'I hope we lose. Watch this!'"

Calipari explained that he wanted to make sure his team won't lose elimination games in March over senseless fouls, so even as his assistants pleaded with him to call timeout, he just watched and joined in the ear-ringing frenzy during a stunning 21-2 LSU run that gave the Tigers a 66-60 lead.

"I'm not worried about losing," at this point of the season, said Calipari, whose team improved to 24-0, and 11-0 in the Southeastern Conference. "This is about us getting better."

As the Tigers stormed in front, Towns squirmed uncomfortably on the Kentucky bench, momentarily regretting his lack of discipline.

"It was a momentum changer. I can't be doing that," said Towns, who finished with 12 points and 13 rebounds. "During moments like that you think about your brothers and how much they've given you. You give everything back. I was more than happy to repay my brothers' efforts."

It was only narrowly enough. LSU guard Keith Hornsby had a shot to win it in the final seconds, but his off-balance three bounced off the outside of the rim.

Willie Cauley-Stein scored 15 points for the Wildcats, who can tie a school record for the best start to a season by winning at home on Saturday against South Carolina. Devin Booker added 14 and Andrew Harrison had 13 for the Wildcats.

Jarell Martin had 21 points and 11 rebounds for LSU (17-7, 6-5), while Hornsby scored 17 points.

Early in the second half, LSU appeared to be struggling with Kentucky's height, with Cauley-Stein dunking twice within

a few possessions as the Wildcats built a 10-point lead. Harrison then drained a three to give the Wildcats their largest lead at 58-45 with 12:46 to go.

LSU called timeout, and responded with its big run, starting with a three by Josh Gray. Hornsby scored eight points during the surge, including a three and a fast-break layup off of Cauley-Stein's turnover that capped the run and put LSU up 66-60.

"We've battled through some tough games this year and put ourselves in position to have a shot to win it late," LSU coach Johnny Jones said. "If you play that way throughout, some good things can happen for you. We're constantly growing, and I feel like we took some positive steps tonight. Unfortunately, we just came up a little short."

**No. 10 Notre Dame 60,** Clemson 58: Jerian Grant scored 22 points and Demetrius Jackson hit the tying and go-ahead baskets as Notre Dame outlasted host Clemson.

The Tigers (14-10, 6-6 Atlantic Coast Conference) missed two shots at the end, including a three-pointer by Damarcus Harrison that hit off the rim as time ran out.

The Irish (22-4, 10-3) overcame a four-point deficit down the stretch to push past Clemson with Grant a major factor in the rally. Notre Dame trailed 56-52 after Rod Hall's three-point play for the Tigers with 4:07 to go.

Grant followed with two foul shots, then stole the ball to lead to Jackson's tying layup. After Jackson's basket put Notre Dame up for good 58-56, Grant hit a fade-away jumper.

**No. 5 Wisconsin 65,** Nebraska 55: Sam Dekker matched his career high with 21 points, and visiting Wisconsin built a big lead early and then held off Nebraska's late comeback bid for a victory.

The Badgers (22-2, 10-1 Big Ten) won their seventh straight game and extended their lead in the Big Ten to three games over the four teams tied for second place. The Cornhuskers (13-11, 5-7) lost for the fourth time in five games.

**No. 8 Kansas 73, Texas Tech 51:** Wayne Selden Jr. scored 16 points and Kansas shot well from three-point range, beating host Texas Tech.

The Jayhawks (20-4, 9-2 Big 12) hit 11 of 20 on threes, with Selden going 4-for-7. Kansas reached the 20-win mark for the 26th straight season.

**No. 24 Arkansas 101,** Auburn 87: Bobby Portis scored 22 points and Michael Qualls had 19 to lead Arkansas to a victory over host Auburn for another comfortable Southeastern Conference win.

The Razorbacks (19-5, 8-3 SEC) did it with hot shooting, making 11 of 23 three-pointers and shooting 53.8 percent from the floor (35 of 65).

**Colorado State 70, New Mexico 59:** J.J. Avila scored 18 points and Joe De Ciman added 14 as Colorado State beat visiting New Mexico.

Daniel Bejarano had 12 points for Colorado State (21-4, 8-4 Mountain West). Deshawn Delaney led New Mexico (14-10, 6-6) with 21 points.

**Dayton 51, St. Louis 44:** Darrell Davis scored 12 points, including the go-ahead three-pointer with 3:08 to play, and Dayton held off host St. Louis.

Kendall Pollard had 11 points and 10 rebounds, Dyshawn Pierre added eight and 11 and Jordan Sibert was 4-for-4 from the free throw line in the final 40 seconds for Dayton (18-5, 8-3 Atlantic-10).

**Xavier 64, Marquette 44:** At Milwaukee, Trevon Bluiett scored 14 points, Matt Stainbrook added 13 and six rebounds, and Xavier cruised to a win over Marquette.

J.P. Macura had 11 points off the bench and Myles Davis 10 for Xavier (16-9, 7-6 Big East).

**Temple 75, Cincinnati 59:** Will Cummings scored 21 points, added five assists, and four steals to lead host Temple past Cincinnati.

Jaylen Bond added 16 points and Jesse Morgan finished with 12 for the Owls (18-7, 9-3 American Conference).

Farad Cobb led Cincinnati (17-7, 8-4) with 13 points off the bench. Shaquille Thomas had 11 and Troy Caupain 10.

**Georgetown 86, Seton Hall 67:** Junior D'Vauntes Smith-Rivera scored 23 points, freshman Isaac Copeland had a career-high 20 and Georgetown defeated host Seton Hall after blowing an early 20-point lead.

Jabril Trawick added 12 points as the Hoyas (16-8, 8-5 Big East) snapped a two-game losing streak.

Sterling Gibbs had 17 points to lead Seton Hall (15-9, 5-7).

# Harden boosts Rockets

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Houston Rockets blew an early 18-point lead and were down by one after three quarters in Phoenix.

Then, as he so often does, James Harden took over.

The NBA's leading scorer got 20 of his 40 points in the fourth quarter and the Rockets pulled away to beat the Suns 127-118 on Tuesday night.

Josh Smith added 20 in the highest-scoring game of the season for the Rockets, who trailed 89-88 at the end of the third.

"That (game) had more twists and turns than an old country road," Houston coach Kevin McHale said.

Eric Bledsoe scored 32, one shy of his career high, for the Suns, who enter the All-Star break losers of five of six. Bledsoe had 12 points in the fourth quarter.

Harden — who was to have his number retired by Arizona State on Wednesday night — ended the first and second quarters with a three-pointer, then opened the fourth with a four-point play that put the Rockets ahead for good.

Harden has 85 points in his last two games. He scored 45 — one shy of his career high — in a loss to Portland on Sunday and has six games of at least 40 points this season.

**Grizzlies 95, Nets 86:** Zach Randolph had 19 points and Marc Gasol added 14 and 11 rebounds as host Memphis beat Brooklyn.

**Bulls 104, Kings 86:** Pau Gasol continued his strong play with 26 points and 16 rebounds, Tony Snell had a career-high 24 and Derrick Rose added 23 in Chicago's win over visiting Sacramento.

It was Gasol's NBA-best 34th double-double of the season. He now has 13 straight.

**Pistons 106, Hornets 78:** Greg Monroe had 23 points and 12 rebounds, D.J. Augustin added 18 points and Detroit handed host Charlotte its third straight loss.

**Nuggets 106, Lakers 96:** Ty Lawson had season-highs of 32 points and 16 assists and visiting Denver snapped a six-game losing skid.

# Canadiens down Flyers on Desharnais' OT goal

The Associated Press

MONTREAL — Like many other times this season, the Montreal Canadiens rallied late for a win.

Trailing by a goal for most of Tuesday's game against the Philadelphia Flyers, Montreal tied it late in the third period before scoring the winner in a 2-1 overtime victory. Montreal's winning streak reached three games.

"We had a slow start," coach Michel Therrien said. "But we started the second with intensity. The compete level was there for us. We kept pressing the game and pushing."

The Canadiens were kept off the scoreboard until Tomas Plekanec tied the game at 12:38 of the third period by shoveling a loose puck under goaltender Ray Emery after a scramble in front of the net.

Montreal has scored nearly half of its

goals — 65 of 138 — in the final period this season.

In overtime, David Desharnais scored the winner at 3:27 after scooping his own rebound over Emery's shoulder.

"The pass came back to me, and I took the shot," said Desharnais, who has two goals in his past four games. "I didn't realize at first that the puck had gone in. It's good to contribute, especially in overtime, but the most important thing is the victory."

**Predators 3, Lightning 2 (OT):** James Neal scored at 4:27 of overtime to give host Nashville a victory over Tampa Bay.

Seth Jones and Taylor Beck also scored for Nashville, which has won three straight and five of six.

Brett Connolly and Nikita Kucherov had the goals for Tampa Bay.

**Islanders 3, Oilers 2:** Casey Cizikas snapped a third-period tie with 4:37 left, and host New York pulled out a win over Edmonton.

Colin McDonald, who assisted on the winning goal, and Josh Bailey also scored for New York. Jaroslav Halak made 34 saves.

**Stars 5, Bruins 3:** Jamie Benn scored twice and Trevor Daley had the second of visiting Dallas' two short-handed goals in a win over Boston.

**Rangers 5, Maple Leafs 4:** Mats Zuccarello scored his second goal of the game with 5:56 left, snapping a tie and sending visiting New York to a victory over skidding Toronto.

**Panthers 6, Ducks 2:** Roberto Luongo made 31 saves and host Florida got goals from six players in a win over Anaheim.

**Blues 2, Coyotes 1:** Dmitrij Jaskin got the go-ahead goal for the second time in four games, and host St. Louis beat Arizona.

**Senators 2, Sabres 1:** Milan Michalek scored at 12:15 of the third period, Robin Lehner made 35 saves and visiting Ottawa beat Buffalo.

Tyler Myers scored Buffalo's goal as the Sabres dropped to 1-8 in their past nine home games.

**Jets 2, Wild 1 (OT):** Dustin Byfuglien scored on a breakaway at 4:00 of overtime and host Winnipeg ended Minnesota's six-game winning streak.

Minnesota turned the puck over in Winnipeg's end and Byfuglien grabbed the loose puck, skated down the boards alone and ripped a low shot under goalie Devan Dubnyk.