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FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

\$583B DOD budget proposal built around potential 'full spectrum' threats

By TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense Ash Carter on Tuesday submitted a proposed \$583 billion Defense Department budget for 2017 that focuses more on high-tech future conflicts and less on counterterrorism operations against militants such as the Islamic State group.

The request is the last from President Barack Obama's administration, and includes a \$524 billion base budget and a separate wartime spending account of \$59 billion. The 2017 DOD budget request is slightly less than 2016's \$585.3 billion proposal.

The Pentagon proposal puts more focus on emerging threats, including intensified military activities by Russia, which invaded Crimea in 2014 and launched unannounced ship-based missiles into Syria last year. It addresses increased tensions with China, which has aggressively hacked U.S. computer networks and continues its buildup of man-made islands in the South China Sea. The budget also targets North Korea, which further aggravated tension on the Korean Peninsula over the weekend with a ballistic missile test launch.

The fiscal year 2017 budget "reflects recent strategic threats that have taken place in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe," the Pentagon said in a statement accompanying the documents released Tuesday.

Counterterrorism operations also drive the 2017 budget, with \$200 million requested for operations in Africa to counter the rising influence of the Islamic State group and other terrorist groups there.

Each of the services released its portion of the 2017 budget, with \$148 billion for the Army, \$137 billion for the Navy, \$167 billion for the Air Force and \$23 billion for the Marine Corps.

Those funds would support 460,000 active-duty forces for the Army — down from 475,000; about 323,000 for the Navy — down from 327,300; and current levels of 317,000 for the Air Force and 182,000 for the Marines.

Carter's budget priorities target what he calls "full spectrum" threats — where the battleground for U.S. forces stretches from the bottom of the ocean to cyberspace, involving networked heavy armor, ships and aircraft, and differs from the ground counterinsurgency operations that have dominated the last decade.

Carter used a visit last week to the West Coast to highlight the additional funding he seeks for DOD's research labs, which are busy modifying future missiles, satellites and global positioning system defenses. His trip also focused on the U.S. fleet of ships and next-generation fighter jets.

"The U.S. military will fight very differently in coming years than we have in Iraq and Afghanistan or in the rest of the world's recent memory," Carter said last week as he previewed the 2017 budget. "We will be prepared for a high-end enemy."

However, the DOD's spending proposal will face resistance from Republicans in Congress.

On Thursday, the chairmen of the Republican-controlled House and Senate budget committees released a joint statement to un-invite Shaun

Donovan, the White House director of the Office of Management and Budget, from testifying about Obama's overall 2017 budget.

The committees traditionally listen to the proposal each year, if only to criticize it. But this year, Senate Budget Committee Chairman Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., and House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price, R-Ga., said they would not consider the president's plan.

"Rather than spend time on a proposal that ... will double down on the same failed policies that have led to the worst economic recovery in modern times, Congress should continue our work on building a budget that balances and that will foster a healthy economy," they said last week in a joint statement.

The DOD portion of the budget request is usually treated separately from ongoing war operations. Pentagon leadership will address the House and Senate Armed Services committees this week about its request.

Budget increases include:

- Long Range Strike Bomber: A stealth bomber known as "B-3" receives \$1.4 billion for engineering and development.

- Two F/A-18E Super Hornets are planned for 2017 and 14 more through 2021 to cover what Navy and Marine Corps officials have warned is an upcoming fighter gap.

- Arleigh Burke-class destroyers: Two Flight III ships, which have the newest Aegis missile defense capability are planned for 2017 with a total of 10 in the 2017-22 budget plan. Carter is also planning to modernize the Aegis firing systems on 12 older destroyers.

- Drones: The Pentagon plans to increase spending to get the number of simultaneous combat patrols the Air Force can support from about 60 to 90 by 2020.

- Military and DOD civilian personnel would get a 1.6 percent pay raise.

- \$3.4 billion to station another brigade of troops and equipment in Europe to bolster defenses against Russia.

- \$7.5 billion to continue operations against the Islamic State group and other terror groups. The fund includes \$1.8 billion to replenish 45,000 bombs for the Air Force, which has dropped more than 35,000 munitions against the Islamic State group since Operation Inherent Resolve began in August 2014. \$200 million would be set aside to address growing threats in Africa.

Budget decreases include:

- Army continues troop decreases from 475,000 active-duty forces in 2016 to 460,000 in 2017.

- The Navy will go from 52 planned Littoral Combat Ships to 40, resulting in about \$8 billion in savings, Carter said.

- The Pentagon proposes another round of base closures, a request that has been repeatedly rejected by House and Senate leaders.

- Air Force variant of the Joint Strike Fighter: Five jets are cut from the Air Force's planned buy over the next five years.

- \$1.3 billion decrease in planned buys of Army aircraft.

- Delayed purchase of Marines' Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, which is planned to replace the Humvee.

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Army's suicide rate DOD's highest

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

The military saw a slight increase in active-duty suicides in 2014, while the suicide rate among National Guard and reserve members saw a significant decrease from the previous year, according to the latest annual report on military suicides from the Pentagon.

In 2014, 269 active-duty troops and 169 reserve and National Guard members were found to have killed themselves, according to the 2014 Defense Department Suicide Event Report, a comprehensive analysis of suicide and suicide attempts in the U.S. military.

The Army had the highest suicide rate among the active components, at 23.8 per 100,000 soldiers, according to the report. The lowest rate, 16.3, was in the Navy.

The overall suicide rate in 2014 among all active-duty personnel was 19.9 per 100,000 troops. That's up slightly from 18.7 in 2013, but down from 22.7 in 2012.

The suicide rate among the National Guard saw the biggest drop — from 28.9 per 100,000 in 2013 to 19.4 per 100,000 in 2014. The rate in the reserves

declined from 23.4 per 100,000 in 2013 to 21.9 in 2014.

A total of 1,126 suicide attempts were reported from the four services.

This year's report for the first time matched suicides and attempts against servicemembers who reported a sexual assault. According to the data, there were no suicides and 28 suicide attempts associated with an unrestricted report of sexual assault during the year prior to the event.

The report, released last month, found the military rates were similar to U.S. civilian suicide rates when adjusted for age and gender, according to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The goal of compiling an annual suicide report is to identify characteristics of suicide-related behavior within the military, information that can be used to guide suicide-prevention strategies and programs within the DOD, officials said in the report.

Most servicemembers who ended their lives or attempted to do so in 2014 were white men younger than 30, from the enlisted ranks, with a high school diploma or lesser education. Of

the 269 active-duty troops who committed suicide in 2014, only 17 were women. Nearly half of the women — eight — were from the Air Force.

Of all troops who killed themselves, most did so with a gun or by hanging or asphyxiation. Sixty-three percent had a gun in the home or in their immediate environment, though most were not a military-owned firearm, the report said.

For some, there were signs of trouble before their deaths. Many had a mental health diagnosis prior to the suicide. Mood and adjustment disorders were identified as the most common, as was a history of substance abuse.

Some had seen combat and been injured, but the most frequently cited stressors were failed relationships and administrative or legal issues within the last 90 days, including civil legal procedures, nonjudicial punishment, medical evaluation board proceedings and "under investigation" for unspecified reasons.

The report found that a history of deployment was a factor in 54.4 percent of suicides and 39.4 percent of suicide attempts across all services, a decrease from 2013.

Navy to use Iceland base to hunt subs

By STEVEN BEARDSLEY
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The Navy is turning to a former Cold War air base for a familiar mission — hunting Russian submarines.

The service is asking for funds to upgrade an aircraft hangar at its former base in Keflavik, Iceland, as part of the Defense Department's fiscal 2017 budget request, according to Navy officials. The hangar will house the P-8 Poseidon, successor to the sub-hunting P-3 Orion once stationed at the base.

Naval Air Station Keflavik was home to thousands of servicemembers who supported Navy and Air Force fighter jets, tankers and rescue helicopters before closing in 2006.

The Navy now routinely sends P-3s to Keflavik from its air base in Sicily to patrol for Russian subs in the North Atlantic, a Navy official said. The P-8 will fill the same role once the hangar is updated with new wiring, flooring and a rinse station, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak on the record about the project.

NATO plans a boost in face of Russian threat

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

NATO members this week will approve plans for a more robust military presence along Russia's periphery, a stakes-raising move as Moscow threatens countermeasures to U.S. plans to bolster its forces along NATO's eastern flank.

NATO faces a difficult balance as it seeks to deter Russian aggression against vulnerable eastern allies without inciting a military escalation, which some analysts warn could result.

"As long as we are firm, predictable and strong, we can also engage with Russia in political

dialogue," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Tuesday. "We don't seek confrontation with Russia. We do not seek a new Cold War."

Stoltenberg, speaking ahead of a two-day meeting of alliance defense ministers that starts Wednesday, said effective deterrence requires a forward presence that can also be quickly reinforced. "I expect ministers to agree to enhance our forward presence in the eastern part of our alliance," he said.

The new steps are likely a prelude to more NATO action expected to come later this year when allies convene in Warsaw for a major summit on NATO's

adaptation as it faces the dual threat of Russia in the east and widespread instability to the south in northern Africa and the Middle East.

However, with NATO stepping up its presence in the east and Russia bolstering its own forces, some military analysts warn that the moves could increase the risk of confrontation.

"Both Russia and NATO see their deployments and increased focus on exercises as necessary development of their previous force postures," says a new report by the European Leadership Network, a London-based think tank. "Each side is convinced that its actions are

justified by the negative changes of its own security environment caused by the other side."

While the report blames Russia as the cause for Europe's deteriorating security environment — pointing to Russia's actions in Ukraine and an aggressive, nuclear saber-rattling posture — allies should avoid an excessive buildup in the east, the report cautions.

Russia's envoy to NATO, Alexander Grushko, warned Monday that a buildup of NATO forces along Russia's periphery "can't be left without a military-technical answer," The Associated Press reported.

QB Newton defends behavior

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Cam Newton isn't apologizing for acting like a "sore loser" after the Super Bowl.

The league's MVP has been widely criticized for walking out of a three-minute press conference after a 24-10 loss to the Denver Broncos on Sunday in which he answered questions with mostly one- and two-word responses while sulking in his chair wearing a black Carolina Panthers hoodie over his head.

"Show me a good loser and I'll show you a loser," Newton said Tuesday as players cleaned out their lockers at the team's downtown stadium.

Newton said he believes the situation is being overblown by the media, and added he doesn't plan to change how he reacts to losing just to appease critics.

"If I offended anybody, that's cool, but I know who I am and I'm not about to conform nor bend for anybody's expectations because yours or anybody's expectations would never exceed mine," Newton said.

The quarterback went on to say, "Who are you to say that your way is right? I have all of these people who are condemning and saying this, that and the third, but what makes your way right?"

At one point during Newton's nearly seven-minute interview, his teammates walked behind the media gathered three-deep around his locker and starting saying, "We love you, Cam," and even sang him a song lightning the mood.

Newton said his emotions were raw after the game and he simply didn't want to talk to the media.

"When you invest so much time and sacrifice so much and things don't go as planned, I think emotions take over," Newton said. "I think that is what happens."

Panthers coach Ron Rivera said while he prefers his fifth-year quarterback would have handled the situation a little better, he understands where he is coming from and what he felt at the time.

"That's who he is. He hates to lose, that's the bottom line," Rivera said. "That is what you love in him. I would much rather have a guy who hates to lose than a guy who accepts it. The guy who accepts it, you might as well just push him out of your locker

room because you don't want him around.

"That is a beauty of a guy like that — he wants to win and his teammates know it. That is what it is about. We don't play this game for a participation trophy. We want to win."

Newton takes losing harder than most.

In some past Carolina defeats, he's sat distraught at his locker still in his uniform for more than 30 minutes after the conclusion of the game. There are times it has taken him more than an hour before addressing the media.

Because this was the Super Bowl, Newton was forced into the interview room a little sooner than normal.

At one point, his attention appeared to drift to listening to Broncos players who were celebrating and talking about their win on the other side of the interview room.

Rivera suggested in the future Newton may need more time before addressing the media to get his emotions in check.

"There are a lot of young people out there looking at who we are, and we are role models for them," Rivera said. "I think again we know who he is and he does take it hard. Quite honestly if he is going to take it hard, as a public service, we should avoid having him talk right away. People take losses, not just football losses, but personal losses different ways. Time is probably the best thing."

Teammates rallied behind Newton on Tuesday.

They said they know how badly he wanted to win and how hard he takes losing games.

"He's a competitor just like everybody else," fullback Mike Tolbert said. "He's not happy at all about what happened. I'm not happy about what happened. I think everyone on our team is not happy, so why should we be all smiles after? I can't expect anybody to be laughing and joking and ecstatic about losing a football game."

Panthers general manager Dave Gettleman refused to criticize his franchise quarterback for the way he acted after the game.

"I want players that hate to lose," Gettleman said. "I want players that I know when the game is over they are crawling into the locker room and they need help getting their gear off and they are going to need time getting into the shower. I want the buses to be late to the airport if we're traveling. We all handle defeat differently."

Senators get Phaneuf

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Ottawa Senators acquired defenseman Dion Phaneuf from the Toronto Maple Leafs on Tuesday in a nine-player blockbuster trade weeks before the deadline.

Ottawa gets Phaneuf, forwards Matt Frattin, Casey Bailey and Ryan Rupert, and defensive prospect Cody Donaghey from the Maple Leafs for defenseman Jared Cowen, forwards Milan Michalek, Colin Greening and Tobias Lindberg and a second-round pick in the 2017 draft. There is no salary being retained by either team.

Phaneuf, the Maple Leafs' captain for the past six seasons, is the centerpiece of the deal. The 30-year-old has five years left on his contract at a salary-cap hit of \$7 million.

With the Senators, Phaneuf won't have the pressure of being captain nor the expectation of being a top-pairing defenseman. Two-time Norris Trophy-winner Erik Karlsson fits the bill there.

Ottawa hopes that adding Phaneuf, who has three goals and 21 assists this season, helps its playoff push. The Senators are four points out of the second wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

The deal represents a housecleaning for Toronto and clears roster and salary space for president Brendan Shanahan's rebuilding project. It will do nothing to quiet speculation about the Maple Leafs' possible pursuit of Steven Stamkos.

Manziel's ex: Hit caused ruptured eardrum

Associated Press

DALLAS — Johnny Manziel's ex-girlfriend says in an affidavit that he hit her so hard during a late-night confrontation that she lost hearing in one ear.

Colleen Crowley's affidavit was obtained by KXAS-TV and published online Monday. Crowley suffered a ruptured eardrum, which is expected to eventually heal, Crowley's lawyer, Kathy Kinser, told the television station.

Crowley detailed Manziel's alleged attack as part of proceedings to obtain a protective order against the troubled Cleveland Browns quarterback, who is under criminal investigation on allegations of domestic violence.

Manziel, a Heisman Trophy winner whose professional career has been marred by headlines about his drinking and other personal issues, is expected to be cut by the Browns next month.

In the affidavit, Crowley said she and Manziel had a confrontation in his hotel room at about 1:45 a.m. Jan. 30. Crowley accused Manziel of throwing her onto his bed after the two discussed him "being with a girl who had caused us problems in the past."

Crowley said she tried to leave, but he restrained her and led her downstairs to the valet, where he directed her to his car. She said the valet disregarded her pleas for help.

Crowley and Manziel eventually made it to her vehicle in front of a Dallas bar, her affidavit says. Manziel alleg-

edly got into the driver's seat of her car and started to back out of the spot. She said she opened her door and jumped out, trying to hide.

She accused him of chasing her down, throwing her back into the car and hitting her left ear.

"Fearful for my life, I hit [Manziel] several times, hoping I could back out of the car," she said in the affidavit, adding Manziel "threw me off of him and I hit my head on the car window and I fell into the passenger floorboard."

Police have said the two drove to Fort Worth, where they continued arguing before Manziel fled on foot.

Manziel's attorney did not return a phone message Monday.

Crowley spoke to Dallas police on Friday, and shortly afterward, authorities announced they were investigating a domestic violence complaint against Manziel.

Agent confirms Lynch retiring

SEATTLE — Marshawn Lynch intends to retire from football.

Doug Hendrickson, the agent for the Seattle Seahawks star running back, confirmed his client's plans to The Associated Press on Monday.

Lynch had indicated as much Sunday night by tweeting a picture with a pair of cleats hanging from a power or telephone line, along with an emoji depicting a peace sign. The Seahawks' official Twitter account later added the hashtag #ThankYouBeastMode to Lynch's original message. A spokesman said the tweet stood as the

team's comment.

Lynch won a Super Bowl with Seattle and played nine seasons in the NFL.

Police investigating RB McCoy

PHILADELPHIA — Buffalo Bills running back LeSean McCoy is under investigation over the alleged assault of two off-duty police officers at a Philadelphia nightclub.

The incident occurred early Sunday after an argument broke out between McCoy's party and the officers over a bottle of champagne.

After one 40-year-old officer was knocked to the ground, he was punched, kicked and stomped multiple times on his body and head, police said Monday.

When the second officer, also 40, intervened with security guards, he was also injured, police said. All were ejected from the club.

One officer had a broken nose, broken ribs and a sprained thumb, police said, and the second was hospitalized with a possible skull fracture.

"Certainly over a bottle of champagne, nothing warrants an assault like this," police Lt. John Stanford said.

A person familiar with the investigation confirmed to The Associated Press that McCoy was one of the four men under investigation. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to publicly discuss the case.



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Hield saves No. 3 Oklahoma against Texas

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — Buddy Hield had done just about everything this season. He did the ultimate Monday night.

Hield's three-pointer from the left wing with 1.3 seconds remaining lifted No. 3 Oklahoma to a 63-60 victory over No. 24 Texas.

Hield scored 12 of his 27 points in the final 3:11, including two three-pointers.

"I had been struggling all night trying to get a shot off," he said. "I finally made the last two, which is more important, so thank God for the win."

Hield was given the option to drive or shoot the jumper.

"It wasn't a special play, it was a special shot," Oklahoma coach Lon Kruger said. "I thought their defender did a really good job, had a hand up, and Buddy still made a tough shot."

Texas coach Shaka Smart gave Hield credit for the way he closed the game.

"He's a terrific player," Smart said. "Best player in the country. For most of the game, we did a really good job on him, considering how good a player he is. Down the stretch, he really was aggressive. He got to the foul line, and obviously, hit that big shot."

Isaiah Cousins added 17 points for the Sooners (20-3, 8-3 Big 12), who trailed for most of the game. Oklahoma bounced back from a loss at Kansas State on

Saturday that cost it the No. 1 ranking. The Sooners beat the Longhorns for the sixth straight time and increased their home winning streak to 19 games.

Isaiah Taylor scored 19 points and Kendal Yancy added a season-high 13 for Texas (16-8, 7-4), which had won four straight and seven of eight. The Longhorns entered the Top 25 for the first time this season earlier Monday.

Notre Dame 89, Clemson 83: Notre Dame coach Mike Brey was glad Zach Auguste got mad after spending much of the first half on the bench in foul trouble.

Auguste dominated both the offensive and defensive end, scored 15 of his 19 points during the final 20 minutes and held the Tigers' two centers to just five points and five rebounds.

"He was a man — what he gave us in the second half," Brey said. "He came out and gave us a great physical effort and set the tone."

The win keeps Notre Dame (17-7, 8-4 Atlantic Coast) in line to finish in the top four in the ACC and get a double bye at the conference tournament. The Irish had one last year, and took advantage of only having to win three games to pick up their first ACC title.

Notre Dame never trailed, but Clemson (14-10, 7-5) kept it close for most of the game. The Fighting Irish were up 50-47 when Clemson's Donte Grantham was called for a charge on a close call driving

to the basket.

Duke 72, No. 13 Louisville 65: The Cardinals aren't eligible for any tournament title this season, so the best they can do is finish atop the ACC standings. They missed a chance to grab the top spot for themselves.

Freshman Brandon Ingram had 18 points and 10 rebounds, Grayson Allen scored 19 points and Luke Kennard had 11, and the Blue Devils (18-6, 7-4 ACC) hit 10 of 12 free throws in the final 3:14 while beating a ranked opponent for the first time this season.

Donovan Mitchell scored 17 points and Quentin Snider added 12 for the Cardinals (19-5, 8-3), who shot 56 percent in the second half and erased a 15-point deficit before losing to slip a half-game behind first-place North Carolina.

This was Louisville's first road game since announcing it would self-impose a postseason ban this year amid an ongoing investigation into a sex scandal involving escorts.

Army 82, Colgate 72: Kevin Ferguson scored a career-high 24 points, grabbed 12 rebounds, and host Army beat Colgate.

It was Ferguson's third consecutive game with a double-double and the 11th overall for his career. Tanner Plomb finished with 18 points and Kyle Wilson added 13 for Army (14-11, 5-8 Patriot League).

The Black Knights finished with 16 team assists and won the rebounding battle

39-26.

Austin Tillotson scored 16 and Jordan Robertson added 13 to lead Colgate (11-13, 7-6), which opened 6-2 in league play but has since lost four of its last five.

Two Dana Batt free throws for Colgate cut the Army lead to 56-53 with 11:11 to go. But a Plomb jumper and a Ferguson three-point play started a 9-2 spurt for the Black Knights, extending their lead back to 10. The Raiders never seriously threatened again, falling behind by as many as 16.

Stony Brook 85, Hartford 72: Jameel Warney scored a career-high 36 points on 16-for-18 shooting and grabbed 13 rebounds, while Ahmad Walker had 12 points, 10 rebounds and five assists to help host Stony Brook.

Warney has 17 double-doubles this season and 56 in his career.

Carson Puriefoy added 22 points for Stony Brook, which has won 16-consecutive games — the longest active winning streak in Division I men's basketball. The Seawolves (20-4, 11-0 America East) have won at least 20 games in five-straight seasons.

Stony Brook scored the first nine points of the second half to take a 46-31 lead and Hartford (7-18, 2-8) trailed by at least nine the rest of the way.

Pancake Thomas led the Hawks with 23 points. Jalen Ross scored 16 and Jack Hobbs added 13.

Pistons can't stop Lowry, Raptors

Associated Press

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — When Andre Drummond's shot from about 80 feet dropped straight through the net to end the third quarter, Toronto's lead was down to five points, and it looked like this game against the Detroit Pistons might come down to the wire.

Instead, Kyle Lowry and the Raptors put it out of reach pretty quickly.

"That shot could have gave them some momentum, but we had the ball coming up the court, and we had to be aggressive," Lowry said.

Lowry began the fourth quarter with a three-point play, and the Raptors went on an 11-2 run to pull away for their 14th victory in 15 games, 103-89 over Detroit on Monday night. Terrence Ross added 18 points for the Raptors.

Toronto led 70-65 at the start of the fourth after Drummond's long shot, but the Atlantic Division-leading Raptors eventually turned the game into a rout, to the delight of the many Toronto fans in attendance at the Palace.

Drummond had 12 points and 13 rebounds for the Pistons.

Cavaliers 120, Kings 100: LeBron James had 21 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for his 40th career triple-double, leading host Cleveland over Sacramento.

Kyrie Irving matched his season high with 32 points for Cleveland.

Clippers 98, 76ers 92 (OT): J.J. Redick had 23 points, including the tying three-pointer late in regulation, and Jamal Crawford also scored 23 points to lead the short-handed Clippers to the win.

Magic 117, Hawks 110 (OT): Nikola Vucevic scored 25 of his 28 points after halftime, and Orlando rallied from 20

points down to beat host Atlanta in overtime.

Orlando took its first lead at 96-94 on Mario Hezonja's three-pointer with 3:33 remaining in regulation.

Trail Blazers 112, Grizzlies 106 (OT): Damian Lillard scored 33 points for visiting Portland, and C.J. McCollum had six of his 21 points in overtime.

McCollum scored the first three baskets of OT to create a buffer for the Trail Blazers.

Thunder 122, Suns 106: Kevin Durant scored 25 of his 32 points in the second half and Oklahoma City pulled away in the final four minutes to hand host Phoenix its eighth consecutive loss.

The Suns, losers of 23 of their last 25 games, were in it most of the way and led by as many as six late in the third quarter.

Nets 105, Nuggets 104: Joe Johnson's three-pointer at the buzzer lifted host Brooklyn.

Thaddeus Young scored 20 points for the Nets. Markel Brown added a career-high 19 and Johnson finished with 12 points and eight assists.

Pelicans 116, Timberwolves 102: Anthony Davis and Jrue Holiday scored 27 points apiece, and host New Orleans snapped a four-game losing streak.

Pacers 89, Lakers 87: Indiana's Paul George scored all seven of his second-half points in the final 71 seconds, and Monta Ellis made two free throws with 20.6 seconds left to clinch the win for host Indiana.

Hornets 108, Bulls 91: Kemba Walker scored 30 points, powering host Charlotte to the victory.

Penguins' Crosby continues hot streak

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Pittsburgh Penguins star Sidney Crosby felt Cam Fowler's stick desperately tugging at his jersey and kept right on skating. Breaking in all alone against Anaheim goaltender John Gibson, Crosby kept Fowler at bay long enough to rip a wrist shot over Gibson's glove and into the net, the most elaborate display of a hot streak that shows no signs of slowing.

The captain that muddled through the fall is surging in mid-winter. So is his team.

Crosby scored on a pair of breakaways to extend his goal streak to a career-best seven games and added two assists while the Penguins rolled past the Ducks 6-2 on Monday night.

"His game is at another level right now," Pittsburgh coach Mike Sullivan said. "He's a big reason we continue to gain traction in the standings."

The Penguins have won six of seven during Crosby's latest binge, one that has propelled him all the way to fifth in the league-scoring race, a stunning turnaround for a player that had just 18 points in 28 games when Sullivan took over for Mike Johnston on Dec. 12. Crosby has 34 points in Sullivan's 23 games on the bench.

"It's been good here lately," Crosby said. "Everybody's playing good. As a team we're finding our game. Our starts have gotten a lot better."

Chris Kunitz, Conor Sheary, Carl Hagelin and Olli Maatta also scored for the Penguins. Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 36 shots after playing poorly in his last two starts.

Having Crosby at the top of his game certainly helps. The two-time MVP failed

to make the All-Star team while healthy for the first time in his career. He now has 12 points (six goals, six assists) in four games since spending the break at home instead of Nashville with teammates Kris Letang and Evgeni Malkin.

"It gives us confidence on the ice every time he's got the puck," Kunitz said. "It gives us a good feeling that we're going to have something we can accomplish out there and get points."

Ryan Getzlaf and Patrick Maroon scored for the Ducks. Gibson made 25 saves before being pulled early in the third. Pittsburgh's six goals were the most allowed by Anaheim this season.

Red Wings 3, Panthers 0: Pavel Datsyuk scored twice in a 1:08 span midway through the third after Tomas Tatar broke a scoreless tie earlier in the period and Petr Mrazek made 23 saves for host Detroit.

Mrazek has a career-high four shutouts this season.

Detroit has won two straight home games for the first time in two months.

Rangers 2, Devils 1: Henrik Lundqvist made 27 saves and host New York posted its first three-game winning streak since November with a victory over New Jersey.

Kevin Klein, who broke a thumb last week, scored for the first time in 28 games and the streaking J.T. Miller scored for the ninth time in 10 games while the Rangers beat the Devils for the first time in three games this season.

Senators 5, Lightning 1: Mark Stone had two goals and an assist and host Ottawa beat Tampa Bay.

Stone has five goals and three assists in his past four games. He went eight straight without a point prior to this stretch.