

# STARS AND STRIPES®

Sunday, January 4, 2015

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Hostage praises captors in video tour

*Los Angeles Times*

BEIRUT — A video released Saturday shows a British photojournalist held captive by Islamic State giving a stylized media tour of the beleaguered northern Iraqi city of Mosul, visiting a market and a hospital and even climbing onto a police motorcycle to dispute reports that the city's infrastructure has been crippled.

The video provides a window on a city that has largely been off-limits to journalists since the Islamic State seized control in June, although reports have trickled out from residents and those who have escaped.

"The media likes to paint a picture of life in the Islamic State as depressed, people walking around as subjugated citizens in chains, beaten down by strict, totalitarian rule," John Cantlie says as he appears to be driving to the market.

"This isn't a city living in fear, as the Western media would have you believe," he says. "This is just a normal city going about its daily business."

The video, which lasts slightly more than eight minutes, is one of a series in which Cantlie, 43, has faulted Western governments while praising the Islamic State and its "caliph-

ate." Its authenticity was still being examined late Saturday. It was not immediately clear under what circumstances he made the video. The date of the recording could not be independently verified, but Cantlie references news reports from autumn and notes the "sunny December weather."

In the video, Cantlie visits a hospital where he says children are being treated for "psychiatric problems as a direct result of bombs and explosions falling from above," a reference to U.S.-led airstrikes.

"We're told that just two days ago an ambulance was hit by

a bomb or a missile that fell from an aircraft," Cantlie says, standing in the hospital. "Despite these things the doctors are getting what they need and the Islamic State is prevailing. They can take it."

Moments later, Cantlie appears standing outside as a plane passes overhead, shouting and apparently mocking Western powers.

"Here! Here! Over here! You've come to rescue me again? Do something! Useless! Absolutely useless!" he shouts, waving his arms.

Cantlie has been held for two years.

## Admiral: Expand access to Navy sabbatical program

*The (Norfolk) Virginian-Pilot*

NORFOLK, Va. — Thousands of sailors get out of the Navy every year because they want to start families. Or to enroll in school. Or because they are burned out on frequent deployments and months away from home.

With the national unemployment rate dropping and more servicemembers leaving for the private sector, the chief of naval personnel said he wants to do everything he can to keep the best sailors in uniform longer — even if that means letting them go for a while.

"We need to offer meaningful incentives to keep the best talent we can, both men and women," said Vice Adm. Bill Moran, whose job is best summarized as the Navy's director of human resources.

One way to keep the best, Moran said: Let servicemembers take sabbaticals from service.

He believes sailors should be allowed to leave the Navy for a

few years — to have kids, to go back to college, to travel or just to take a break — then to return to service at the same rank and on the same career path.

The Navy already offers a program that does just that. But the Career Intermission Pilot Program, authorized by Congress in 2009, is limited to 40 sailors per year. Because of complicated restrictions on who can participate, many of the sailors who most desire a break are excluded.

An example: Sailors trained to work on nuclear reactors leave the service at high rates, in part because of a demanding work schedule, but because they receive a special re-enlistment bonus, they are often ineligible for the sabbatical.

The Navy was initially the only service branch to launch a career intermission program. The Air Force, the Army and the Marine Corps are all in the process of implementing their own pilot programs.

Moran plans to ask Congress for authority to expand the pro-

gram and to open it up to more sailors, regardless of their years of service or job descriptions.

He acknowledges that so far there hasn't been a groundswell of interest. Only about 40 sailors — sometimes fewer — have applied each year for the program, which grants servicemembers up to three years off. Moran thinks sailors are hesitant to risk their careers on a pilot program, another reason he hopes to make it permanent.

The gamble paid off for Capt. Valerie Overstreet, an E-2C Hawkeye pilot. She entered the program in 2010 after becoming the first woman to command a Hawkeye squadron.

The one-year break allowed Overstreet to align her career path with that of her husband, a fellow naval aviator. For years, they lived apart while stationed at different locations.

During the time off, the couple had their first child, something that seemed unlikely while stationed on opposite coasts. That's a common predicament, according to Navy

surveys. Women leave the service at a rate twice that of men, and the desire to start a family is the most reported reason, Moran said.

Overstreet had the baby, returned to service with new orders that allowed her to live full time with her husband, and was soon promoted to captain. "It was fantastic," Overstreet said of the program.

Most of the enlisted sailors who've taken advantage of the pilot program have used the time off, along with the G.I. Bill, to get a degree. Several have since returned and were commissioned as officers.

Two years ago, a SEAL officer took the sabbatical to get a break after years of constant combat deployments and to pursue a degree. He didn't want to get out of the Navy — he just wanted some time off to recharge, to learn something new and to spend time with his wife and young children.

Those are the sorts of people Moran said he's trying to keep.

# Scores of militants killed in Pakistan

*The Associated Press*

PESHAWAR, Pakistan — Pakistani airstrikes killed 31 militants and a suspected U.S. drone strike killed another seven, officials said Sunday, as local troops pressed an ongoing offensive in the country's tribal regions along the Afghan border that have been longtime insurgent havens.

The airstrikes late Saturday in the Tirrah valley of the Khyber region destroyed four militant hideouts and a suicide bomber training center, an army statement said. The military said several would-be suicide bombers were among the dead. No further details were provided.

The military says the operation in Khyber is aimed at militants who have fled a massive offensive in neighboring North Waziristan that was launched on June 15. The army says that offensive has resulted in the killing of 1,200 militants.

Last month's school massacre in Peshawar — in which 150 people were killed, mostly schoolchildren — is believed to have been launched from Khyber. The attack prompted both Afghanistan and Pakistan to vow tougher action along their porous border.

Two Pakistani intelligence officials said U.S. drone-fired missiles struck a militant compound

in the Datta Khel area of North Waziristan early Sunday, killing seven militants and wounding four. The compound, some 330 yards from the Afghan border, was used by fighters loyal to Pakistani Taliban commander Hafiz Gul Bahadur, as well as Uzbek militants.

They said Bahadur's men, who frequently launch attacks in neighboring Afghanistan, and Uzbek fighters were among those killed. It was unclear if Bahadur was present at the time.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to media.

The covert U.S. drone program has eliminated several top militants but has also resulted in civilian casualties, making it extremely unpopular among Pakistanis, who condemn it as a violation of their country's sovereignty.

Also Sunday, a bomb exploded near a volleyball court in the Kadda Bazaar area of the Aurakzai tribal region, killing four teenagers and injuring seven who were preparing to start their game, senior government official Fazal Naeem Khan said. Khan said some of the wounded were critically injured and that the death toll could increase.

## Official says nine Afghan police killed by insurgents

*The Associated Press*

KABUL, Afghanistan — An Afghan official said insurgents killed five policemen, including their commander, in the volatile eastern province of Logar, a day after four policemen who were abducted in the same region were found dead.

Din Mohammad Darwesh, spokesman for the provincial governor, said insurgents ambushed the five men early Sunday in Baraki Barak district, where the Taliban launch frequent attacks on government security forces.

Insurgents had kidnapped four policemen from neighboring Wardak province on Saturday. Their bodies were found near the provincial capital of Pul-i-Alam hours later, he said.

The violence follows the transition of security sovereignty to Afghan forces on Jan. 1 following the 13-year U.S. and NATO-led mission to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban-led insurgency.

## Backs turned on NY mayor during eulogy

*The Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Thousands of city police officers turned their backs Sunday as they watched Mayor Bill de Blasio eulogize an officer shot dead with his partner, repeating a stinging display of scorn for the mayor despite entreaties from the police commissioner not to do so.

The show of disrespect came outside the funeral home where Officer Wenjian Liu was remembered as an incarnation of the American dream: a man who had emigrated from China

at age 12 and devoted himself to helping others in his adopted country. The gesture among officers watching the mayor's speech on a screen added to tensions between the mayor and rank-and-file police even as he sought to quiet them.

"As we start a new year, a year we're entering with hearts that are doubly heavy" from the loss of Officer Liu and his partner, Officer Rafael Ramos, de Blasio said. "Let us move forward by strengthening the bonds that unite us and let us work together

to attain peace."

Liu, 32, had served as a policeman for seven years and was married just two months when he was killed with his partner on Dec. 20. Liu had long wanted to be a police officer, a desire that deepened after the Sept. 11 terror attacks, his father, Wei Tang Liu, said through tears.

Dignitaries including FBI Director James Comey and members of Congress joined police officers from around the country to mourn Liu.

## Prayers held as AirAsia site search hampered

*The Associated Press*

SURABAYA, Indonesia — Relatives of those who died in the AirAsia crash sought strength in prayer Sunday, one week after the disaster killed all 162 on board, as rough weather again prevented searchers from reaching a large object on the ocean floor believed to be the plane's fuselage.

Emotionally exhausted family members sang and cried at a tiny chapel in Surabaya, the city from which Flight 8501 de-

parted Dec. 28. The Rev. Philip Mantofa, who heads the congregation at Mawar Sharon Church — where more than a quarter of the victims were members — urged those gathered to find comfort in their faith.

"If God has called your child, allow me to say this: Your child is not to be pitied," Mantofa said. "Your child is already in God's arms. One day, your family will be reunited in heaven."

It is not known what caused the Singapore-bound plane to crash into the Java Sea 42 min-

utes after taking off on what was supposed to be a two-hour flight. Just before losing contact, the pilot told air traffic control that he was approaching threatening clouds.

Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city, has been gripped by grief as bodies, one by one, continue arriving in simple, numbered coffins after being painstakingly pulled from the water. Three more corpses were recovered Sunday, raising the total to 34.

## Jagr is oldest to record an NHL hat trick

The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — A month shy of 43, Jaromir Jagr is still setting scoring records.

Jagr scored three times to pass Gordie Howe and become the oldest NHL player to record a hat trick, leading New Jersey to a 5-2 victory over the Philadelphia Flyers on Saturday night.

Jagr had his 15th career hat trick, his first since March 26, 2006, against the Flyers while a member of the New York Rangers. Howe was 41 in 1969 when he had a three-goal game.

The line of Jagr, Adam Henrique and Scott Gomez combined for four goals and eight points, helping the Devils end a two-game skid.

Patrik Elias and Gomez also scored, and Cory Schneider made 18 saves.

**Predators 7, Kings 6 (OT):** Roman Josi scored 18 seconds into overtime after Pekka Rinne gave up three goals in the final 2:01 of regulation, and Nashville eked out a wild victory over host Los Angeles.

Mike Fisher and Colin Wilson scored goals 1:22 apart in the first period, Mattias Ekholm and Mark Acrobello scored 1:41 apart in the second, and the Predators also got goals from Ryan Ellis and Olli Jokinen in opening a 5-1 lead.

**Blues 7, Sharks 2:** T.J. Oshie scored his second career hat trick to move past the 100-goal milestone in his career and St. Louis ended a five-game road losing streak by beating the Sharks.

**Rangers 6, Sabres 1:** Derick Brassard, Chris Kreider and Rick Nash scored power-play goals 2:32 apart in the first period, and host New York rolled past slumping Buffalo.

**Canadiens 4, Penguins 1:** Max Pacioretty and David Desharnais scored early in the first period and visiting Montreal beat Pittsburgh to move into first place in the Eastern Conference.

Carey Price stopped 30 shots for his 22nd win of the season.

**Stars 7, Wild 1:** Vernon Fiddler scored two goals and host Dallas scored six or more goals in consecutive games for the first time since 1997, beating Minnesota.

**Coyotes 6, Blue Jackets 3:** Sam Gagner scored twice, Martin Hanzal had a goal and three assists and host Phoenix rode a rare big night on the power play to a victory over Columbus.

**Jets 5, Maple Leafs 1:** Bryan Little had a goal and two assists to stretch his point streak to six games and Michael Hutchinson made 20 saves to help host Winnipeg beat Toronto.

**Senators 3, Bruins 2 (OT):** Mike Hoffman scored for visiting Ottawa to send it to overtime and Bobby Ryan ended it 46 seconds into the extra period.

**Canucks 4, Red Wings 1:** Ryan Miller made 29 saves, Henrik Sedin scored two empty-netters to pass 200 goals for his career and the host Vancouver beat Detroit.

# Seton Hall stuns Villanova

The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — Seton Hall is back with the best in the Big East Conference.

Freshman Khadeen Carrington hit a go-ahead, spinning layup with 1:38 to play in overtime and Seton Hall knocked off its second ranked foe this week, defeating No. 6 Villanova 66-61 on Saturday.

The Pirates (12-2, 2-0 Big East) upset No. 15 St. John's on Wednesday and came back to deny Villanova coach Jay Wright his 300th win with the Wildcats (13-1, 1-10), prevent them from setting a school record for wins to start the season.

**No. 3 Virginia 89, Miami 80 (2OT):** Virginia squandered a 19-point first-half lead and then came from behind in both extra periods to remain unbeaten.

Virginia never led in the first OT, but the Cavaliers' Justin Anderson made three free throws with 20 seconds left. He sank a game-tying three-pointer with 15 seconds remaining to force the second extra period.

The Cavaliers (13-0, 1-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) are off to their best start since 1980-81. Host Miami (10-4, 0-1 ACC) lost for the fourth time in the past six games.

**No. 2 Duke 85, Boston College 62:** Freshman Jahliil Okafor scored a career-high 28 points for the host Blue Devils.

Quinn Cook added 15 points to help Duke (13-0, 1-0) win their Atlantic Coast Conference opener.

Olivier Hanlan finished with 22 points for the Eagles (7-5, 0-1).

**No. 7 Gonzaga 87, Portland 75:** Kevin Pangos and Prezemek Karnoski scored 21 points each to lead the visiting Bulldogs past the Pilots.

Gary Bell Jr. added 12 points to help the

Bulldogs (14-1, 3-0 West Coast) win their seventh straight.

**South Carolina 64, No. 9 Iowa State 60:** Duane Notice scored 15 points and the Gamecocks picked up its first win over a top-10 team in nearly five years by nearly holding the Cyclones without a three-pointer for the first time in over seven years in a victory at Barclays Center.

**No. 10 Oklahoma 73, No. 22 Baylor 63:** TaShawn Thomas scored 24 points to help the host Sooners beat the Bears.

Thomas, a senior who transferred from the University of Houston before the season, made 11 of 17 shots and grabbed eight rebounds.

**No. 11 Texas 70, Texas Tech 61:** Javan Felix scored 15 points and Jonathan Holmes added 14 to lead the visiting Longhorns over the Red Raiders in each team's Big 12 opener.

Holmes became the 34th player in Texas history to score 1,000 points.

**No. 12 Maryland 70, Minnesota 58:** Melo Trimble scored 20 points, and the Terrapins used a strong defensive performance to beat the Golden Gophers in Maryland's inaugural Big Ten home game.

Dez Wells added 12 points, seven rebounds and four assists, and sophomore Damonte Dodd had a career-high 12 rebounds for the Terrapins (14-1, 2-0), who have won seven straight.

**No. 14 Notre Dame 83, Georgia Tech 76, 2 OT:** Jerian Grant scored 24 points to lead the host Fighting Irish to a comeback win in double overtime over the Yellow Jackets.

After not scoring in the first half, Steve Vasturia added 17 points for Notre

Dame (14-1, 2-0 ACC), which won its 10th straight.

**Butler 73, No. 15 St. John's 69:** Kellen Dunham scored a season-high 28 points, including a pivotal three-pointer with just more than 2 minutes left that helped the Bulldogs hold off the host Red Storm.

**No. 17 West Virginia 78, TCU 67:** Gary Browne sparked the visiting Mountaineers with 16 points while leading scorer Juwan Staten watched from the bench with an illness as West Virginia opened Big 12 Conference play with a win over the Horned Frogs.

**No. 19 North Carolina 74, Clemson 50:** Justin Jackson scored 13 points, Kennedy Meeks had 12 points and 12 rebounds and the Tar Heels opened Atlantic Coast Conference play with a victory over the host Tigers.

North Carolina (11-3) led by 20 points in the first half en route to their seventh straight victory over the Tigers — and 17th in the past 18 meetings in the series.

**No. 20 Ohio State 77, Illinois 61:** D'Angelo Russell scored 22 points, including eight during a decisive 15-0 second-half run, to lead the host Buckeyes past the Illini.

**New Mexico 66, No. 24 Colorado 53:** Reserve guard Sam Logwood scored 15 points on perfect shooting to help the Lobos hand the visiting Rams its first loss of the season.

**No. 25 Georgetown 76, Creighton 61:** Freshmen L.J. Peak, Tre Campbell and Paul White combined for 37 points for the Hoyas and Georgetown defeated the visiting Bluejays.

## Hawks top Blazers to win 4th straight

The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Even a late threat from the Trail Blazers didn't rattle the steady Hawks.

Paul Millsap had 27 points and Atlanta held off a late Portland rally for a 115-107 victory Saturday for their fourth straight win.

Jeff Teague added 22 points and the Hawks, playing the second game of a back-to-back, improved to 11-5 on the road, including six straight wins away from home.

The loss snapped a four-game winning streak for the Trail Blazers, who have lost just three games at home this season. LaMarcus Aldridge led Portland with 30 points and 12 rebounds.

The Hawks were coming off a 98-92 victory at Utah on Friday, which popped them into the top spot in the Eastern Conference for the first time since Dec. 27, 1997.

The victory improved the Hawks to 8-2

over Western Conference opponents.

The Blazers got a hard-fought 102-97 overtime victory at home against Toronto on Tuesday, which extended their winning streak at home to seven straight games.

**Rockets 115, Heat 79:** James Harden scored 28 points, Dwight Howard added 23 and host Houston rebounded quite nicely from its most lopsided loss of the season.

Coach Kevin McHale said his team was "terrible" in a 111-83 loss at New Orleans on Friday but the Rockets used a 19-point second quarter from Howard to build a double-digit lead against Miami, and then put together a big run in the third before coasting to their biggest win of the season.

**Nuggets 114, Grizzlies 85:** Ty Lawson scored 25 points, rookie Jusuf Nurkic provided a lift inside by blocking a career-best five shots, and Denver ended a three-game losing streak.

**Spurs 101, Wizards 92:** Cory

Joseph had 19 points and host San Antonio overcame Washington's fast start to beat the Wizards for the 17th straight time.

**Clippers 127, 76ers 91:** Chris Paul had 24 points and 12 assists, J.J. Redick added 17 points and the host Clippers earned their third consecutive victory.

**Jazz 101, Timberwolves 89:** Trey Burke bounced back from a horrendous shooting night to score a season-high 28 points, and the Jazz handed the Thost imberwolves their 11th straight loss.

**Bulls 109, Celtics 104 (OT):** Pau Gasol had 29 points, 16 rebounds and five blocked shots, leading host Chicago to the win.

**Hornets 98, Magic 90:** Kemba Walker scored 30 points, and the visiting Hornets stopped a five-game losing streak.



## Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

www.navyauto.com or nasinfo@navyauto.com

## Longtime ESPN anchor Scott dies

The Associated Press

BRISTOL, Conn. — Stuart Scott, the longtime “SportsCenter” anchor and ESPN personality known for his enthusiasm and ubiquity, died Sunday. He was 49.

Scott had fought cancer since a diagnosis in late 2007, the network said, but remained dedicated to his craft even as he underwent chemotherapy, radiation and surgery.

ESPN President John Skipper said in a statement that Scott was “a true friend and a uniquely inspirational figure” and that his “energetic and unwavering devotion to his family and to his work while fighting the battle of his life left us in awe, and he leaves a void that can never be replaced.”

Born in Chicago, Scott attended high school in North Carolina. After graduating from the University of North Carolina in 1987, Scott worked at three TV stations in the southern U.S. before joining ESPN for the 1993 launch of its ESPN2 network. He often anchored the 11 p.m. “SportsCenter,” where he would punctuate emphatic highlights with “Boo-ya!” or note a slick move as being “as cool as the other side of the pillow.”

## Florida tops E. Carolina

The Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Florida Gators got big plays from star cornerback Vernon Hargreaves III, quarterback Treon Harris and two of their lesser-known teammates.

Harris threw an 86-yard scoring pass to mostly unheralded receiver Ahmad Fulwood, and Hargreaves intercepted a pass in the end zone late to preserve Florida's 28-20 victory over East Carolina on Saturday in the Birmingham Bowl.

The big plays helped the Gators (7-5) finish a disappointing season with a winning record while new coach Jim McElwain was among the spectators. Brian Poole also scored on a 29-yard interception return and Florida's defense repeatedly turned East Carolina's high-powered offense away from the end zone.

Shane Carden was 34 of 66 for 427 yards for the Pirates (8-5), but Hargreaves' pick with 1:20 left ended his day.

## Jones outpoints Cormier in UFC 182

LAS VEGAS — Jon Jones was true to his long-ago guess.

The UFC light-heavyweight champion can indeed take down former Olympic wrestler Daniel Cormier.

And by doing so on at least three occasions in the fourth round, Jones set himself apart from the previously unbeaten challenger en route to gaining a unanimous-decision triumph over Cormier on Saturday night in UFC 182 at the MGM Grand.

The three judges each scored it 49-46 in the champion's favor.

From the Los Angeles Times

# Ravens pull away in Pittsburgh

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — The Baltimore Ravens survived the tumultuous dismissal of Ray Rice, a sometimes spotty fall and a critical month without their suspended, all-everything nose tackle.

Winning in Pittsburgh in January hardly seemed too much to ask.

Allowed to hit the reset button in the playoffs, Joe Flacco and the NFL's post-season road warriors are heading to New England with their swagger fully intact.

Rarely flustered in the face of a pass rush that barely laid a hand on him, Flacco tossed two second-half touchdowns as the Ravens pulled away from the Steelers 30-17 in the AFC wild-card game.

“That's playoff football,” Baltimore coach John Harbaugh said. “That's Joe Flacco. The best quarterback in football. I'll take him every day of the week and twice on Sunday or Saturday night.”

Once was more than enough.

Flacco hit Torrey Smith for an 11-yard score in the third quarter and found Crockett Gillmore with a 21-yard pass in the fourth one play after Terrell Suggs picked off Ben Roethlisberger. The Ravens won a playoff game in Pittsburgh for the first time in franchise history, avenging postseason losses in 2008 and 2010 by quieting the NFL's second-ranked offense.

Baltimore (11-6) sacked Roethlisberger five times and kept All-Pro wide receiver Antonio Brown largely in check.

Roethlisberger passed for 334 yards, but the Steelers (11-6) settled for field goals while the Ravens kept scoring touchdowns.

“I didn't play well enough,”

Roethlisberger said. “I didn't play well enough to win and guys look at me as the leader and the quarterback to make plays and do what it takes to win the football game, and I don't believe I did that today.”

Flacco had no such problems. Baltimore heads to top-seeded New England next Saturday, a place where it upset Tom Brady and company two years ago on the way to the franchise's second Super Bowl title.

The Ravens turned it over just once, scored on six of nine possessions and had an answer every time it seemed the Steelers were ready to grab momentum.

“The big thing is we have a good team and we didn't hurt ourselves tonight,” Flacco said. “We didn't have a lot of possessions early. We made the most of them by getting some kind of points.”

“We played a clean football game and kept it at it.”

The Ravens won their third wild-card game as the sixth seed. It provided another twist in a season that began with Rice's suspension and eventual release following a domestic dispute with his fiancée (now his wife). When the chaos died down, the Ravens emerged galvanized.

Flacco did what he always seems to do when the calendar flips to January. His seven road playoff wins are the most by a quarterback since the 1970 merger. He completed 18 of 29 passes for 259 yards and the two scores. The Ravens gained a measure of revenge after the archrival Steelers knocked them out of the post-season in 2008 and 2010 at Heinz Field.

Yet Flacco has come of age in the interim. And while Pittsburgh's bounce-back season included its first AFC North title in

four years, the Steelers' revamped roster could do little when it mattered.

Pittsburgh played without All-Pro running back Le'Veon Bell, out with a hyper-extended right knee. Fill-ins Ben Tate, Josh Harris and Dri Archer managed just 43 yards on 15 carries as the Steelers' four-game winning streak came to an abrupt and decisive end.

Pittsburgh fell to 9-1 when facing a team for the third time in the same season, and it was not close. Baltimore's 13-point victory was the fourth-biggest win by a road team in Steelers postseason history.

Flacco escaped pressure from James Harrison to find Smith in the back of the end zone to make it 20-9 in the third quarter. Pittsburgh drew within 20-15 on a 6-yard pass from Roethlisberger to Martavis Bryant with 11:01 to go. But there would be no 2.0-version of the Steelers' rally from 14 points down to Baltimore in the divisional round four years ago.

Justin Tucker drilled a 52-yard field goal to push the lead to 23-15 and Suggs made a juggling interception from his knees on Pittsburgh's ensuing possession. The Ravens did not hesitate to put the Steelers away. Flacco rolled right and flipped to Gillmore. The tight end outraced two defenders to the end zone.

In the end it was Ravens coach John Harbaugh enjoying a rare celebratory moment in a place that has long been a stumbling block. No more. With his brother Jim — the newly minted head coach at Michigan — watching in a Wolverines winter jacket, the elder sibling sprinted off the turf and on to the divisional round for the sixth time since 2008.

## Panthers' 'lights out' defense tops Cards

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Luke Kuechly knows Carolina's defense didn't have much bite earlier in the season.

He said that made Saturday all the more special.

The Panthers held Arizona to 78 yards and forced three turnovers in a 27-16 win, the franchise's first postseason victory in nine years. It's the fewest yards ever allowed in an NFL postseason game.

“We know who we are — menacing, stifling and we are going to get after you,” cornerback Josh Norman said. “We know when there is blood in the water and when there is, our sharks are going to eat.”

The Panthers (8-8-1) held Arizona to 12 yards in the second half, intercepted Ryan Lindley twice and sacked him four times in a dominating performance.

Carolina's defense has undergone a remarkable turnaround this season, going from 27th in the league in Week 7 to 10th entering the playoffs.

And the Panthers only seem to be getting better by the week.

“We had a lot of new guys early on who had to get accustomed to each other,” said Kuechly, the All-Pro middle linebacker who had a game-high 10 tackles and a key interception. “Now we're all together and communicating — and that's huge.”

The New York Giants held the previous NFL record for fewest yards in a post-season game, limiting Cleveland to 86 yards on Dec. 21, 1958.

Cam Newton overcame two turnovers and threw for 198 yards and two touchdowns and Jonathan Stewart ran for 123 yards and a score on a rain-soaked afternoon.

The Panthers had 386 yards.

Newton was quick to deflect attention to his defensive teammates after his first career playoff win, calling their performance “lights out.”

“When those guys play like that, it makes it easier on us on our part,” Newton said. “Those guys did everything, turnovers, they stopped them. That is championship football right there and we've got to do our part offensively to put points up on the board.”

The Panthers will play at Seattle next weekend if Dallas beat Detroit on Sunday. If the Lions won, the Panthers play at Green Bay.

It appeared the Panthers wouldn't get the yardage record, but Arizona began lateralizing the ball around the field on the final play and lost 19 yards.

It was a fitting end to the Cardinals' offensive ineptitude.

Panthers linebacker Thomas Davis, the only player remaining from the last Carolina team that won a playoff game, called it the most dominating defensive performance he's ever been around.

“Our coaches did a great job and when they lined up in their formations we knew exactly what to expect,” Davis said. “We just ran to the ball and made plays.”

After a 9-1 start, Arizona's once promising season was undone by a rash of injuries, including to quarterbacks Carson Palmer and Drew Stanton.

Lindley simply wasn't up to the task of leading a playoff team.

Trailing 27-14, Arizona recovered a Newton fumble and returned to the Carolina 8. But with a chance to get his team back in the game, Lindley was intercepted by Kuechly, essentially sealing the Carolina win with 11:48 left in the game.

Arizona coach Bruce Arians refused to pin the blame on his young quarterback.

“I thought he did great up until the first interception,” Arians said. “He managed the game as well as he could. We didn't do a good job of putting ourselves in manageable third downs. But we got the big break and he tried to force one in that should have never been thrown.”

The Cardinals finished the season 11-6, but lost five of their final seven games.

“As a team, we always fought,” defensive tackle Frostee Rucker said. “It was always the next man up. At some point, we just didn't have anything left. Everyone should hold their heads high. Every person gave it their all, this whole season, win or loss.”

Trailing by one at halftime the Panthers scored two touchdowns in a span of 1 minute, 32 seconds late in the third quarter to take control.

Rookie running back Fozzy Whittaker caught a pass in the flat from Newton, reversed fields and got a key block from Kelvin Benjamin to spring him for a 39-yard touchdown.

On the ensuing kickoff, Melvin White stripped returner Ted Ginn Jr., a former Panther, at the Arizona 3 and Kevin Reddick recovered for Carolina. A pass interference penalty on Tony Jefferson on third down gave Carolina a new set of downs, and Newton took advantage. He found wide-open fullback Mike Tolbert in the left flat for a 1-yard touchdown and a 27-14 lead.

Carolina outgained Arizona 208-65 in the first half, but entered the locker room trailing 14-13 after two costly turnovers led to two Cardinals touchdowns.