

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Obama to request big DOD budget hike

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama will ask Congress for a hefty, almost 8 percent boost for the Pentagon in fiscal 2016, including \$5.3 billion to equip and train Iraqi soldiers and moderate Syrian rebels to fight Islamic State militants in the Middle East.

Obama will ask for \$534 billion for the core budget of the Defense Department — a \$38 billion increase — according to “pre-decisional” Pentagon documents obtained Tuesday by The Associated Press. That means there could be some slight changes when the budget actually comes out Monday.

An additional \$51 billion would go for “overseas contingency operations,” including

\$43 billion for ongoing operations in Afghanistan — despite a steady troop drawdown — and \$3.8 billion to train Afghan security forces.

The Pentagon’s base budget is currently \$496 billion, with an additional \$64 billion for overseas missions.

The Pentagon witnessed major budget cuts with the imposition of so-called budget sequestration in 2013 and has been held at a freeze since then. Military brass say the bleaker budgets have forced cuts in flying hours, troop training and maintenance of military equipment. The agency was due for just a \$3 billion increase under caps set in a 2011 budget pact.

The increases are likely to find support among defense hawks on Capitol Hill, but Republicans

controlling Congress are only in the early stages of figuring out how to pay for them. Simply taking the money from domestic agencies is sure to be opposed by the White House and could lead to gridlock in Washington.

“The sequester is hurting our national security and undermining our defense,” Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Md., told reporters Tuesday. But he warned against cutting domestic programs such as education and research to boost the Pentagon budget. “You’ll undermine investments in education, research, health and other matters critically important to individuals and our country’s economy and shift that money to the defense side.”

House Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price, R-Ga., said Republicans are consider-

ing cuts to so-called mandatory programs to find money for the Pentagon, but a decision is still far away.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Wednesday morning, fielding questions about the Pentagon’s plan versus the effects of budget pains the agency would otherwise face.

The Pentagon plan anticipates cutting 15,000 Army soldiers this year and cutting another 25,000 soldiers by 2018 for an Army “end strength” of 450,000. The Navy would get an uptick of 5,600 sailors this year.

Most of the proposed increase would go to procurement of new warfighting equipment and to operations and maintenance accounts.

Report: Panel to recommend killing 20-year retirement

Stars and Stripes

The Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission will release its long-awaited report Thursday that will propose fundamental changes to military benefits, including ending the 20-year retirement, Military Times reported, citing sources familiar with the report.

The plan calls for Congress to create a hybrid system of smaller defined-benefit pensions along with more cash-based benefits and lump-sum payments. A significant portion of retirement benefits would come in the form of government contributions to 401(k)-style investment accounts, those familiar with the report told Military Times.

In addition to the 401(k) for troops serving less than 20 years, the commission will suggest promising a pension to

troops who serve a long-term career, but one that would be more modest than what military retirees receive today, a defense official briefed on the plan told the Times.

Unlike the current system, this pension would not start upon separation from service; instead, those payment checks would begin at a traditional retirement age, such as 60 or older, according to the official.

While retirement changes would affect only future servicemembers, changes to health care could affect those serving now.

According to the Times, the commission will also propose:

- A change to health care benefits for current military families and retirees. Tricare customers could move into the health care coverage provided to federal employees.

- A new health care allow-

ance for troops designed to cover some expenses, such as doctor visit copays and eyeglasses.

- A new four-star medical command to oversee military health care, a significant break from the tradition of each service operating its own health care system.

- Keeping current commissary benefits, such as continuing to sell products at cost plus a 5 percent surcharge. A separate Department of Defense budget proposal is expected to call for increasing prices to cover operating costs.

- Consolidating the commissary and exchange systems. Initially, they would keep their separate branding — Navy Exchange, Defense Commissary Agency, etc. — but eventually would be combined.

- Building more child development centers on military bases.

The proposal also calls for automatically enrolling each servicemember in the Thrift Savings Plan, an investment account that accrues savings. Individual troops would be responsible for managing their accounts, and the money is typically not available for withdrawal without penalty until age 59.5.

The government contributions likely would be a percentage of basic pay and could vary depending on years of service and/or deployment status. Full ownership of the thrift savings account would come only after troops have completed several years of service.

Any change to military retirement would require Congress to pass changes in law. Many experts say Congress is unlikely to summon the political will to take action on the controversial issue of military compensation.

Ex-master chief guilty in prostitution scheme

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The former command master chief of the USS Germantown admitted Wednesday at a court-martial that he oversaw a prostitution research ring operated by four senior chief petty officers aboard the ship.

Command Master Chief Petty Officer Jesus Galura pleaded guilty to conspiracy to procure prostitutes, violation of a general order and making a false official statement to a law enforcement agent.

He pleaded not guilty to one count of sexual harassment and two counts of unwanted sexual contact directed toward a subordinate aboard the Sasebo, Japan-based ship.

Testimony at the trial re-

vealed a series of sexual assault accusations involving Galura and others that prompted the 7th Fleet to initiate an investigation of the Germantown, Amphibious Squadron 11 and Expeditionary Strike Group 7.

An investigation report later described the situation among Germantown's chiefs as "out of control," according to court testimony.

Galura testified that he and the four chiefs researched websites offering prostitution services in the Philippines, where the chiefs had expected to make a port call.

Galura also testified that he encouraged Senior Chief Petty Officer Paul Swank, whom he said was negotiating prices, to see if the women he found would be available for parties. Swank

was reduced in pay grade to E-7 after being found guilty in October of conspiracy to patronize a prostitute and a related charge.

Galura later used his ship email to send a picture of two scantily clad women with the message, "I got my first two for the day," which was a violation of a Defense Department regulation regarding use of government communications.

Galura, who is still technically attached to Germantown but temporarily assigned to squadron shore duty, also admitted to lying about the intent of his illicit website browsing, claiming it was part of a safety briefing for sailors.

He made no excuses for his efforts at prostitution planning while entering his pleas to military judge Capt. David

Harrison.

"It's hypocritical on my part, because I would tell a sailor not to do it," Galura said.

Lt. Brandon Sargent, his defense attorney, argued that the charges directed against Galura constituted unlawful command influence.

Galura's permanent removal from Germantown was directed by the four-star Pacific Fleet command, rather than any of the lower local commands.

Sentencing was deferred until the end of the trial, which is scheduled to reconvene Feb. 23. At that time, Galura will face charges that he harassed, forcibly kissed and improperly touched a subordinate.

slavin.erik@stripes.com
Twitter:@eslavin_stripes

Israel-Lebanon border attacks escalate

JERUSALEM — The Lebanese Hezbollah group claimed responsibility for firing a missile that targeted an Israeli military convoy on Wednesday, an attack that prompted Israel to fire at least 50 artillery shells into Lebanon in a significant escalation along the volatile border.

In a statement, Hezbollah said its fighters destroyed a number of Israeli vehicles that were carrying Israeli officers and soldiers and caused casualties among "enemy ranks." It said the attack was carried out by a group calling itself the "heroic martyrs of Quneitra" — suggesting it was in retaliation for an Israeli airstrike on the Golan Heights on Jan. 18 that killed six Hezbollah fighters and an Iranian general.

The Israeli military said an anti-tank missile hit an Israeli military vehicle near the Israeli-Lebanese border on Wednesday. It did not immediately report any casualties and said residents of the area have been ordered to remain in their homes.

From The Associated Press

Army: No decision yet on Bergdahl case

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Army and Pentagon officials said Tuesday there has been no decision on what, if any, criminal charges will be filed against Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the soldier who left his post in Afghanistan and was held by the Taliban for five years before being released in a prisoner exchange.

Gen. Mark Milley, head of U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., has a broad range of legal options. The case is also fraught with politics. Some members of Congress and former members of Bergdahl's unit criticized the Obama administration for trading someone they considered a deserter for five top Taliban commanders held at the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. If Bergdahl is severely punished, that trade could be called into question again. On the other hand, some believe that five years in Taliban captivity is punishment enough.

At a Tuesday briefing with reporters, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, Rear Adm. John

Kirby, emphasized the point. "Let me just put a fork in this right now ... No decision has been made with respect to the case of Sgt. Bergdahl. None," he said. "And there is no timeline to make that decision. And Gen. Milley is not being put under any pressure to make a decision, either way."

Kirby's comments came after news outlets reported that Bergdahl was going to face desertion charges.

Should the Army decide to pursue charges, here are possible charges and punishments:

Absent without leave. Because Bergdahl was in a war zone, leaving his combat post is a more serious offense than leaving a U.S. military base without authorization for a few days. So officials are likely to go for a more serious charge.

Desertion with intent to avoid hazardous duty or to shirk important service. This is more serious because it involves deserting a hazardous duty, which includes combat service.

Desertion with intent to remain away permanently.

This charge is less likely because the Army would have to be able to prove that Bergdahl left his post and at some point decided he had no intention of returning.

Failure to obey a lawful order. This charge and other similar infractions are also likely to be added to bolster the contention that Bergdahl violated regulations and committed a serious breach of military conduct.

Possible punishments. Desertion in a time of war with the intent to stay away is punishable by death. That outcome is almost inconceivable in this case. Desertion with the intent to avoid a certain duty or shirk a certain service carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, along with a dishonorable discharge and forfeiture of all pay and benefits. AWOL can carry a broad range of punishments, ranging from a letter in a servicemember's file, getting extra duties or having pay docked to getting thrown out of the service.

Stars and Stripes editor Patrick Dickson contributed to this report.

Lynch speaks, says nothing on Super Bowl media day

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Marshawn Lynch smiled politely, waved at the crowd and answered every question the same.

"I'm here so I don't get fined," the Seattle Seahawks' star running back constantly repeated for five minutes before leaving the podium at Media Day on Tuesday. It's not clear if his plan will work.

About 200 reporters crowded around Lynch's podium for at least 15 minutes before he arrived. But the media-shy Lynch made it clear right from the start he wasn't saying anything except variations of his scripted answer.

Lynch set a timer on his phone and told everyone he showed up just to avoid a fine. Lynch caught a bag of Skittles tossed from Olympic gold medal gymnast Shawn Johnson and stopped to pick up a reporter's recorder off the floor before he walked away.

Lynch later spoke to "Entertainment Tonight" about his foundation, the "Fam 1st Family Foundation."

The Professional Football Writers of America was talking to the league about the session and Lynch had been apprised of a potential fine. He is also required to be at media sessions Wednesday and

Thursday.

In November, the NFL fined Lynch \$50,000 for violations of the league's media policy in addition to collecting the \$50,000 fine that was imposed against Lynch for violations last season. The fine from 2013 was held in anticipation of future cooperation from Lynch.

"I'm fine sitting up here, but not everybody is comfortable with it so I don't think he should be forced to do it," All-Pro cornerback Richard Sherman said.

Lynch has much more to say when the price is right. Insurance company Progressive and candy maker Skittles released commercials featuring Lynch saying a bit more than his usual: "Yeah" and "Nope" and "Thanks for asking."

At Media Day last year, Lynch's reclusiveness became a major story. Lynch appeared for 6½ minutes, left the arena, and then returned to a "mixed zone" the NFL created for players not on podiums or in microphone-equipped speaking areas at the Prudential Center in Newark, N.J.

With the exception of briefly speaking with the NFL Network's Deion Sanders, to the Seahawks' website, and to American Forces Network, he did not deal with reporters that day.

Sanders, the Hall of Fame cornerback,

tried again to interview Lynch, but got nowhere this time and left laughing.

Teammates defended Lynch's behavior. "This is who he is. I don't nitpick or judge, so I just accept a person for who they are," All-Pro safety Earl Thomas said. "I just love who he is. He is so random."

Sherman even continued answering questions after the 60-minute session ended.

"I don't think (players) should be obligated any more than the commissioner is obligated to speak to the media," Sherman said. "I think that if players are going to be obligated to speak to the media then every one of the NFL personnel should be obligated to speak to the media weekly, and that's not the case."

"It's unfortunate, but I think that every team should be forced to present certain players, obviously a few of them. Obviously, if someone is uncomfortable in front of the media and uncomfortable answering questions, then you have to find a way to accommodate the NFL. This is a game; you find a way to accommodate everyone else who's uncomfortable."

Lynch was fined \$20,000 for making an obscene gesture during Seattle's overtime win over Green Bay in the NFC championship game.

US teen eliminates Venus

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Venus Williams lost her quarterfinal match against Madison Keys on Wednesday at the Australian Open. Serena Williams, the other sister in a family that has won a combined 25 Grand Slam singles titles, will attempt to right the wrong in the semifinals on Thursday.

The 19-year-old Keys overcame a left thigh injury to beat No. 18-ranked Venus 6-3, 4-6, 6-4 and advance to the last four against top-ranked and 18-time major winner Serena, who had little trouble beating last year's finalist, Dominika Cibulkova, 6-2, 6-2.

In men's play, top-seeded Novak Djokovic didn't face a break point against hard-serving Milos Raonic in beating the Canadian 7-6 (5), 6-4, 6-2 in exactly two hours to advance to his 25th Grand Slam semifinal. Djokovic has only dropped his serve once this tournament.

He broke Raonic early in each of the second and third sets and will play defending champion Stan Wawrinka, who earlier beat Kei Nishikori 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (6). Wawrinka let slip a 6-1 lead in the third-set tiebreaker and eventually needed six match points to close the victory on Rod Laver Arena.

There had been some hope that the semis might feature an all-Williams matchup at a major for the first time in more than five years. The Williams sisters last met in a Grand Slam match at Wimbledon in 2009, when Serena won the final.

The semifinalists from the other half of the women's draw have already been determined — No. 2 Maria Sharapova will play No. 10-seeded Ekaterina Makarova, also on Thursday.

Serena's win doesn't bode well for the other three women left — all five past times Williams has advanced to the semifinals at Melbourne Park, she's won the tournament.

Venus Williams' loss ended an encouraging 10 days at Melbourne Park for the 34-year-old, seven-time Grand Slam singles champion. She hadn't advanced to the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam since the U.S. Open in 2010 and had struggled to recapture her earlier form after being diagnosed in 2011 with Sjogren's syndrome, an auto-immune disease that causes fatigue and joint pain.

"It already feels like a long season already, so many matches in a row," she said. "Hopefully I'll be able to keep this up."

Djokovic looked impressive as he proceeds towards a fifth Australian Open title, adding to the ones he captured in 2008 (his first major), and three years in a row from 2011.

Wawrinka looked to be cruising in his tiebreaker with Nishikori, but the Japanese player saved match point after match point with a combination of great shots and errors by Wawrinka.

Nishikori made the biggest error at the wrong time, however, attempting a drop shot from the back of the court that bundled into the net. That set up another match point for Wawrinka, which he converted with an ace, his 20th of the match.

Revis, Sherman get to settle feud

The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Darrelle Revis long reigned supreme among NFL cornerbacks.

Then came along this upstart Richard Sherman, who proclaimed himself the best and backed it up.

Now they get to state their case on the NFL's biggest stage — Revis' New England Patriots against Sherman's Seattle Seahawks in the Super Bowl.

They have a bit of history, these two — a Twitter feud from a couple of years ago. The gist of it: Revis was the proven pro and Sherman hadn't done enough yet to start crowing.

At Tuesday's media day, any animosity was buried. Each expressed respect for the other, although Revis referred to the fact that in Seattle's defense, Sherman plays only half the field.

"Sherman, he plays left corner and he does great," Revis said. "He's great at what he does. I'm not really knocking him on what he does. He's a playmaker and that's what he does for his team."

Cornerback, Revis said, is "by far" the hardest position to play in football.

The handful of those who excel at the position may bicker, Sherman said, but they share a common bond.

"There's a respect level between elite cornerbacks in the National Football League," he said. "It takes a certain mentality to play at a high level in this game,

to deal with the pressure, to deal with the intensity of being out there against the best athletes in the world. ... There's a definite admiration for their ability."

Sherman's a talker — opinionated, self-assured. He says he cares little what people think of him.

"It doesn't bother me too much, honestly," he said. "I kind of go to the beat of my own drum. ... I have my own way of doing things and it might not align with everybody, but I'm going to keep it that way."

Sherman stirred up trouble shortly after the Seahawks landed in Arizona when, referring to the fairness of the investigation into deflated footballs, he noted NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Patriots owner Robert Kraft are good friends.

Sherman didn't back down Tuesday, saying that he found their relationship "interesting."

A small crowd gathered around Revis on media day. Sherman drew a mob, and he reveled in it, answering bizarre questions — such as, what super power would he like to have while playing? (He would fly). He danced with a woman reporter, confidently showing his moves.

He said he was sure his girlfriend, due soon to deliver the couple's first child, would not have the baby on Super Bowl Sunday.

To the young Seattle star, media day was no chore.

Sherman earned a Super Bowl ring last

year, in his third NFL season. Revis is playing in the big game for the first time in his eight years in the league.

For the first six, he played for the New York Jets, becoming "Revis Island." Twice he made it to the AFC championship game, but no farther.

Revis and the Jets parted ways after an injury-plagued 2012, and after a season in Tampa Bay he landed with the Patriots, the team he had fought without much success for so long.

"It's pretty awesome," Revis said. "I mean, this is what you play for every year. In the offseason you work hard to get to this point and when you get there, like right now, it's so surreal for me."

Sherman said his left elbow, hurt in the NFC championship game, "is feeling pretty good."

"It's been good all week," he said. "I'm done getting treatment."

And he shrugged off cornerback Brandon Browner's suggestion that he would tell his New England teammates to break Sherman's elbow.

"I think he was just caught up in the moment," Sherman said. "He didn't mean any malice by it. It's one of those things, we know him as a person and sometimes he exaggerates a little bit."

Far be it for Sherman, of all people, to be bothered by a pointed remark from a foe.



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Rose, Bulls top Warriors in OT

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — One after another, teams trotted into rowdy Oracle Arena the past two months confident they could cool off the NBA's hottest team on their home floor.

It took 113 points, 53 minutes and one big shot from a former MVP to finally make it happen.

Derrick Rose hit a step-back jumper with 7 seconds remaining in overtime, and the Chicago Bulls ended Golden State's franchise-record 19-game home winning streak with a thrilling 113-111 victory over the Warriors on Tuesday night.

Rose dribbled to his left and created space to get off the 20-footer over Klay

Thompson.

Thompson misfired a wide-open runner off the glass as time expired.

Wizards 98, Lakers 92: John Wall had 21 points, 13 assists and nine rebounds, and Washington rallied from a 19-point deficit to send host Los Angeles to their ninth straight loss.

Cavaliers 103, Pistons 95: Kyrie Irving matched his season high with 38 points and LeBron James added 32 to lift visiting Cleveland to its seventh straight victory.

Bucks 109, Heat 102: Brandon Knight had 17 points and six assists and Milwaukee put seven players in double

figures on the way to beating host Miami.

With fighters Floyd Mayweather and Manny Pacquiao watching courtside, Milwaukee beat Miami for the third time in as many meetings this season, moving three games clear of the Heat in the race for No. 6 in the Eastern Conference.

Grizzlies 109, Mavericks 90: Zach Randolph had 22 points and 10 rebounds, and Memphis handed host Dallas its first three-game losing streak of the season.

Raptors 104, Pacers 91: DeMar DeRozan scored 24 points and Kyle Lowry added 19 to lead visiting Toronto to the win.

Davis lifts Xavier by Hoyas

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It never hurts to try something different after a bunch of unsuccessful out-of-town trips. Xavier broke the routine with a game-day visit to House Speaker — and school alum — John Boehner at the U.S. Capitol, then showed up at the Verizon Center a half-dozen blocks away and beat Georgetown for the second time this season.

Myles Davis scored 19 points in his third start of the season, and the Musketeers held the No. 21 Hoyas without a field goal for more than 11 minutes in the first half Tuesday night in a 66-53 victory that snapped a five-game road losing streak.

Xavier (14-7, 5-4 Big East) had been 4-0 at home and 0-4 on the road in conference play, but the Musketeers cut off passing lanes and effectively used double-teams to shut down Georgetown's motion offense and forced 17 turnovers. Aaron Bowen made a layup with 11:17 remaining in the first half, and the Hoyas didn't make another field goal until Isaac Copeland's mid-range buzzer-beater made the score 29-16 at halftime.

No. 14 VCU 72, George Washington 48: Freshman Terry Larrier scored 15 points and host VCU pulled away with a 16-2 run early in the second half for its 12th consecutive victory.

Larrier's point total was his highest since conference play began for the Rams (17-3, 7-0 Atlantic 10), and it came on a night when VCU scoring leader Treveon Graham managed just seven points on a still-tender left ankle and struggling Melvin Johnson continued to do so, scoring eight on 4-for-10 shooting.

No. 17 West Virginia 65, Kansas State 59: Tarik Phillip matched a career-high 12 points and West Virginia, relying on its high-pressure defense, shut down host Kansas State for a victory.

In a game marred by fouls and poor play, the Mountaineers (17-3, 5-2 Big 12) forced the Wildcats (12-9, 5-3) into 25 turnovers while holding them to 36 percent shooting from the field.

Oklahoma State 64, No. 20 Baylor 53: Phil Forte scored 16 points and Le'Bryan Nash added 13 to help host Oklahoma State.

Forte, a 5-foot-11 shooting guard, made four of seven three-pointers and matched a career high with five rebounds for the Cowboys, who claimed their second win over a ranked opponent this season.

Isles stay perfect against Rangers

The Associated Press

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — Jaroslav Halak faced more traffic on the ice inside than in the snow outside. He handled both nearly flawlessly and carried the New York Islanders to yet another win over the New York Rangers.

Halak stopped 40 shots, falling 8.1 seconds short of his second consecutive shutout of the Rangers, and the Islanders beat their biggest rivals 4-1 on Tuesday night in their return from the NHL All-Star break.

"It was easy for us coming in, no cars. It took me less time than usual," Halak said one day after a snowstorm blanketed the area.

Carl Hagelin spoiled Halak's shutout bid in the closing seconds.

Ducks 4, Canucks 0: Frederik Andersen made 17 saves in his third ca-

reer shutout as visiting Anaheim defeated Vancouver.

Blue Jackets 4, Capitals 3: Cam Atkinson and Fedor Tyutin each had a goal and an assist, and Curtis McElhinney made 25 saves to lead host Columbus.

Flyers 4, Coyotes 3 (SO): Wayne Simmonds scored in regulation and got the winning goal in a shootout to lift the host Flyers.

Penguins 5, Jets 3: David Perron and Brandon Sutter scored power-play goals less than 4 minutes apart in the third period and the host Penguins rallied.

Hurricanes 4, Lightning 2: Eric Staal and Justin Faulk each had a goal and an assist to lift the host Hurricanes.

Canadiens 3, Stars 2: Carey Price stopped 40 saves for his 25th victory of the season as the host Canadiens held

off the Stars.

Red Wings 5, Panthers 4: Luke Glendening scored twice and Stephen Weiss had a goal and two assists against his former team to lift the visiting Red Wings to their sixth straight victory.

Predators 4, Avalanche 3 (OT): Craig Smith scored on a breakaway at 2:46 of overtime for the host Predators.

Flames 4, Sabres 1: Flames rookie Johnny Gaudreau scored twice to lead host Calgary past Buffalo, extending the Sabres' team-record losing streak to 12 games.

Wild 2, Oilers 1: Charlie Coyle scored the tiebreaking goal on a breakaway with 4:23 remaining to lift visiting Minnesota over Edmonton.

Winningest goalie Brodeur calls it a career

The Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Martin Brodeur is retiring to take a front office job with the St. Louis Blues. The New Jersey Devils have a spot waiting for one of the greatest goaltenders in NHL history whenever he is ready to come back home.

"Absolutely. He is aware of that and has always been aware of that," Devils president and general manager Lou Lamoriello said Tuesday. "He could have come back even now if he wanted to."

The 10-time All-Star and four-time Vezina Trophy winner finished his career with St. Louis after a standout, two-de-

cade run with New Jersey. A news conference was set for Thursday morning before the Blues return from the All-Star break to play Nashville.

The 42-year-old Brodeur wrapped up his 22-year career with St. Louis after signing as a free agent on Dec. 2. He was 3-3 with a 2.87 goals-against average and in his final victory became the fifth-oldest goalie to post a shutout in a 3-0 win over Colorado on Dec. 29.

He last played on Jan. 2 in a loss at Anaheim and had not returned since being granted a one-week leave of absence on Jan. 14.

Brodeur played his first 21 seasons with the Devils, who did not re-sign him after

committing to Cory Schneider as the No. 1 goalie.

The Montreal native was 691-397-176 with a 2.24 goals-against average, .912 save percentage and 125 shutouts in 1,266 career appearances. He holds regular-season NHL records for wins, games and minutes.

Brodeur also holds postseason records for starts (204) and shutouts (24), and is second in wins (113). He appeared in 70 or more games in 10 consecutive seasons from 1997-98 to 2007-08.

He won three Stanley Cups with the Devils and was a two-time Olympic gold medalist with Team Canada in 2002 and 2010.

Marlins finalize \$2M, 1-year deal with OF Suzuki

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Ichiro Suzuki has passed his physical and finalized a \$2 million, one-year deal with the Miami Marlins.

The Marlins made the announcement Tuesday night.

Suzuki signed the deal in his native Japan. A news conference will be held there for him Thursday.

The 41-year-old Suzuki, is expected to be the team's fourth outfielder behind

Giancarlo Stanton, Christian Yelich and Marcell Ozuna.

In other baseball news:

■ The Baltimore Orioles have acquired outfielder Travis Snider from the Pittsburgh Pirates for a minor league pitcher and a player to be named.

■ The San Francisco Giants and shortstop Brandon Crawford have avoided arbitration by agreeing to a one-year contract for \$3,175,000.

■ The Texas Rangers have acquired right-hander Anthony Ranaudo from the

Boston Red Sox for left-hander Robbie Ross.

2 ex-Vanderbilt players convicted of rape

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — A jury convicted two ex-Vanderbilt football players on Tuesday of raping a former student, rejecting claims that they were too drunk to know what they were doing and that

a college culture of binge drinking and promiscuous sex should be blamed for the attack.

The jury deliberated for three hours before announcing that Brandon Vandenburg and Cory Batey were guilty.

Both men were convicted of four counts of aggravated rape, one count of attempted aggravated rape and two counts of aggravated sexual battery.

They face decades in prison when they are sentenced March 6.