

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Deadly Kabul restaurant attack comes as government reaches out to Taliban

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*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — The deadly Taliban bombing on Friday of a Kabul restaurant popular with foreigners and wealthy Afghans provided a dramatic reminder of just how distant the prospect of peace in Afghanistan remains a year after the United States declared an end to its combat mission in the country.

The militant group claimed responsibility for the suicide bomb attack on Le Jardin, a French restaurant owned by the governor of Kabul province, who is close to President Ashraf Ghani. A 12-year-old boy and a security guard were killed; 18 others were injured.

The New Year's Day bombing, which shook the exclusive Taimani neighborhood in central Kabul and shattered the windows of buildings in the restaurant's vicinity, came a day after Ghani had announced a new effort at peace talks with the Taliban. Later this month, Pakistan will host a four-country meeting in Islamabad to discuss a framework for negotiations to end the 14-year-old war.

Saturday, in the wake of

the attack, Ghani released a fiery statement.

"Those who kill innocent Afghans don't have any place with the government of Afghanistan in peace talks," he said in the statement. "Those who are unwilling to put down their weapons and want to continue fighting against our people, the government of Afghanistan will fight until they are eliminated."

Friday's blast occurred about 5 p.m., when a suicide car bomb detonated at the gate of Le Jardin, which doubles as a guesthouse, police said.

One armed suspect was arrested nearby, Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said in a statement.

The Taliban, who often exaggerate the effects of their attacks, said on their website that a number of attackers with suicide vests had stormed a guesthouse and killed foreigners.

The day after the attack, it was clear that ordinary Afghans had taken the brunt of the blast.

Residents gathered in the neighborhood around the restaurant to clean up broken glass and bricks scattered on the road.

Massoud Bayat, 21, surveyed his family's destroyed shop, whose blood-soaked floor was littered with soda cans, bags of

chips and broken eggs. He was in the shop, next to the boy who was killed, when the bomb went off. The boy, named Basit, died when a piece of shrapnel struck him in the head, Bayat said.

"Everything is destroyed," he said.

Another man, Jamil Nasiri, 22, sifted through debris from his heavily damaged home, wearing a shirt stained with blood from a head wound he sustained from broken glass.

"My father is dead and I am the sole breadwinner for my family, so I hope the government will help us rebuild," he said.

The Taliban have staged several high-profile attacks in the past three weeks, including the siege of a guesthouse for Spanish Embassy employees. Most of those killed and injured have been Afghans, not the foreigners the group said it was targeting.

A statement from Resolute Support, the international military coalition in Afghanistan, condemned the attack.

"A Taliban group has started the new year the same way they ended last year: by again targeting defenseless civilians and showing their complete disregard for the safety of Afghan people," said coalition spokesman

Brig. Gen. Wilson A. Shoffner.

Le Jardin, one of the last remaining restaurants in the capital that foreigners frequent, has tighter security than many establishments catering to expatriates. The January 2014 massacre of 21 people at a Lebanese restaurant caused many expatriates to become more careful in their movements.

Friday's attack was the second to hit the capital in a week. On Monday, a Taliban suicide attack killed one civilian and injured more than 30, 18 of them children studying at a nearby school.

The meeting Ghani announced Thursday is to take place on Jan. 11 in Islamabad with representatives from the United States, Pakistan and China. Ghani did not say whether the latest attack would change plans for the meeting. The president has made a peace agreement with the Taliban his foremost goal.

Violence has been rising as the U.S.-led international military coalition has scaled back and has become focused on training and advising Afghan security forces. NATO-led Resolute Support is made up of roughly 13,000 troops. That's down from a high of 130,000 coalition troops in 2012.

## Suicide car bombs target Iraqi troops in Ramadi

*Associated Press*

BAGHDAD — Iraq's military said Islamic State militants have launched suicide attacks in the western city of Ramadi days after troops drove them out of the city center.

Brig. Gen. Ahmed al-Belawi told The

Associated Press on Saturday that the militants stuck security forces the day before with seven suicide car bombs in two areas on the city's outskirts.

Al-Belawi said there were casualties among government troops, but he could not provide a specific figure. He

said the troops repelled the attacks and did not lose territory.

Ramadi, the provincial capital of sprawling Anbar province, fell to Islamic State militants in May, marking a major setback for U.S.-backed Iraqi forces. Iraqi troops retook the city center on Monday, but insurgents are still holed up in parts of the city.

# UN: 980 Iraqis killed in Dec. violence

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Violence has claimed the lives of 980 Iraqis in December, up from 888 the previous month, the United Nations said on Friday.

The U.N. Assistance Mission for Iraq, known as UNAMI, said in a statement that 506 of those killed in December were civilians, while the rest were security forces, including Kurdish peshmerga and paramilitary troops. It added that 1,244 civilians

were wounded in December.

The worst-affected province was Baghdad, with 261 killed, followed by Ninevah province with 68, the statement said.

Citing its local health authorities, the U.N. said 124 civilians were killed in Anbar province, which has large areas under Islamic State group control. The U.N. said it could not fully verify the Anbar figures due to the increased volatility of the situation on the ground and the disruption of services.

December figures brought the total number of civilian casualties in 2015 to 7,515 killed and 14,855 wounded, according to U.N. figures.

“The year 2015 has seen thousands of Iraqis killed and injured as a result of conflict and terrorism. This is unacceptable,” the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq Jan Kubis said in the statement.

“The Iraqi people have every right to live in peace and

tranquility. The United Nations continues to deplore this continuing loss of life,” Kubis added.

The Islamic State group seized much of northern and western Iraq, including the second-largest city, Mosul, in the summer of 2014.

The extremists have declared a caliphate in the areas of Iraq and Syria under their control and have imposed a harsh and violent version of Islamic law.

## Pro-government fighters in Yemen kill al-Qaida chief

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Pro-government fighters in Yemen attacked and killed a senior al-Qaida leader and three people traveling in his convoy near a security checkpoint in the southern Abyan province on Friday, Yemeni officials said.

Ali Abed al-Rab bin Talab, better known as Abu Anwar, was the extremist group's chief judge in Yemen's largest province, Hadramawt, which

al-Qaida largely controls. He survived a suspected U.S. drone attack in 2014.

Before the attack, Abu Anwar's convoy was heading to the southern port city of Aden, the officials said.

Al-Qaida and Islamic State-linked militants have exploited the chaos of Yemen's civil war to make incursions into the strategic city, where militant attacks targeting pro-government officials have escalated in recent months.

Al-Qaida's Yemen branch is considered by Washington to be the most dangerous offshoot of the terror network. Yemen's conflict pits the country's internationally recognized government and a U.S.-backed, Saudi-led coalition against the Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, who are allied with Yemen's longtime former president.

A day earlier in Aden, Yemeni Maj. Gen. Ahmed Seif, the commander of pro-government forces in five regional

provinces, survived a roadside bombing that killed one of his companions and wounded two, Aden officials said.

All the officials, who remain neutral in the conflict that has torn Yemen apart, spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The United Nations says the civil war in the Arab world's poorest country has killed more than 5,800 people since March.

## MOH recipient faces hit-and-run charge

Associated Press

A Medal of Honor recipient who lost an eye while taking a grenade blast to save a fellow Marine now faces a hit-and-run charge in South Carolina, police say.

Retired Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, 26, turned himself in and appeared in court Thursday with an attorney on misdemeanor charges of hit-and-run and making an improper left turn, police said in a news release. Carpenter was released on bond.

Police say a pedestrian who was struck shortly after 8:30 p.m. Dec. 8 was treated at the

scene for scrapes and a leg injury. The pedestrian, Michael Haddad, declined to be taken to a hospital, police said.

Surveillance tapes showed that a pedestrian was struck in a crosswalk as he walked to the fitness center at the University of South Carolina, police said. After the pedestrian was struck, the driver pulled over and turned on his hazard lights, but didn't leave his vehicle, police said.

The driver left the scene after the pedestrian stood up and walked to the side of the road. The pedestrian then went in the fitness center and police were called.

Attorney Butch Bowers, who represents Carpenter, said in an email that Carpenter believed the pedestrian hadn't been injured based on his “reaction and his ability to continue walking across the street, apparently without difficulty.”

Carpenter, a Mississippi native, received the Medal of Honor in June 2014 for his actions as a Marine in Afghanistan in 2010, when he lost an eye. He required almost 40 surgeries and multiple skin grafts, leaving him with a prosthetic eye and a new jaw and teeth, President Barack Obama said at the Medal of Honor ceremony.

## Singer Natalie Cole dies in LA at age 65

LOS ANGELES — Natalie Cole, the daughter of jazz legend Nat King Cole who carved out her own success with R&B hits like “Our Love” and “This Will Be,” has died. She was 65.

While Cole was a Grammy winner in her own right, she had her greatest success in 1991 when she rerecorded her father's classic hits — with him on the track — for the album “Unforgettable ... With Love.”

Cole died Thursday evening at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles due to complications from ongoing health issues, her family said in a statement.

From The Associated Press

# Stanford romps in Rose Bowl

Associated Press

PASADENA, Calif. — The first time Christian McCaffrey touched the ball in the 102nd Rose Bowl, he took it 75 yards for a spectacular touchdown. A few hundred yards later, Stanford's sophomore star had smashed the oldest bowl game's record for all-purpose yards while leading the Cardinal to a blowout win over Iowa.

Sure, McCaffrey didn't win the Heisman Trophy, and Stanford barely missed out on the College Football Playoff.

McCaffrey and the mighty Cardinal are still headed into the new year with the Pac-12 champions' most coveted post-season trophy — and the brightest of futures.

McCaffrey caught a touchdown pass on the opening snap and returned a punt 66 yards for another score while racking up 368 all-purpose yards, propelling No. 5 Stanford to a 45-16 victory over the sixth-ranked Hawkeyes on Friday.

Three-time Rose Bowl starter Kevin Hogan passed for 223 yards and three TDs in his final game for the Cardinal (12-2) as this unlikely Bay Area football powerhouse won the Granddaddy of Them All for the second time in three trips over the past four years.

"It's so fun when a team can come together," McCaffrey said. "We've got a bunch of fighters on this team that will never give up. Just love playing with these guys."

McCaffrey was sublime in his Rose Bowl debut, breaking the all-purpose yards record set by Wisconsin's Jared Abbrederis in 2012. McCaffrey finished second behind Alabama's Derrick Henry in the Heisman voting, but the speedy running back turned in one of the most dynamic performances in the Rose Bowl's lengthy history.

"I think he was the best player in America before this game, so I think it's just the icing on the cake," Stanford coach David Shaw said. "I do think it's a shame that a lot of people didn't get to see him during the course of the year.

## Cardinals' drubbing of Iowa shows what's still wrong with the College Football Playoff

PASADENA, Calif. — Stanford left tackle Kyle Murphy thinks the bowl performances of two Big Ten teams demonstrated what's still wrong with the College Football Playoff.

Television ratings were down for the playoff semifinals Thursday, but Murphy was clearly among those watching as Michigan State was dismantled by Alabama. A

dd in the Cardinal's own 45-16 drubbing of Iowa in the Rose Bowl on Friday, and the two teams that played in the Big Ten title game were routed by a combined total of 67 points.

To Murphy, that meant the Pac-12 champion should have been in the field instead.

"The Big Ten has a lot of pub, (but) they had a couple big blowouts the last two days, so it kind of goes to show they got exposed," Murphy said. "It shows a four-team playoff probably isn't the best way, because you don't know who the four best teams are."

Iowa was the second Big Ten team the Cardinal faced this sea-

son. They opened with a 16-6 loss at Northwestern. Their other loss was a 38-36 defeat to Pac-12 rival Oregon at home.

After the blowout win Friday, Stanford coach David Shaw found himself in the same position as Pete Carroll during Southern California's run of Rose Bowl dominance in the Bowl Championship Series era: wishing there were more games ahead.

While Carroll stumped for a plus-one or a playoff, which was finally adopted for the 2014 season, Shaw is firmly in favor of an expanded field of six or eight teams.

"I just think four teams is too little, regardless of our situation," Shaw said. "But I'm also fine with the fact that it's going to stay this way for a while. We're going to go through many different years with this four-team playoff. And with enough evidence of how the seasons end ... I think at some point we're going to change it."

Apparently the games were too late."

The world was wide awake to see McCaffrey in Pasadena — and he scored 11 seconds in. Hogan's throw to McCaffrey was the second-longest TD pass in Rose Bowl history and the longest play given up all season by the stingy Iowa defense.

McCaffrey finished with 172 yards rush-

ing, 105 yards receiving and 91 on kick returns, putting an appropriate cap on the season in which he set the NCAA record for all-purpose yards. He also became the first player ever to rack up more than 100 yards rushing and 100 yards receiving in a Rose Bowl — and he even became the single-season rushing leader in Stanford history with 2,109 yards on the ground.

# Buckeyes hand ND another bowl loss

Associated Press

GLENDALE, Ariz. — Notre Dame fell behind early and never could catch up with powerful Ohio State.

The result was yet another major bowl defeat for the Irish, 44-28 to the Buckeyes in the Fiesta Bowl on Friday.

Ohio State (12-1) scored touchdowns the first two times it had the ball.

The game started at 11 a.m., local time, and the Irish were slow to wake up. They were scoreless in the first quarter for the first time all season.

"Obviously their first series was outstanding. They ran the ball effectively right down the field," Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly. "So I just think that they executed very well early on. It was the difference in the game really, those 14 points early. We had to play catch-up from there."

The score reached 28-7 but No. 8 Notre Dame (10-3) climbed back into it with a touchdown late in the first half and another in the third quarter, a 4-yard scoring pass from DeShone Kizer to Chris Brown to cut seventh-ranked Ohio State's lead to 28-21 with 8:58 still to go.

Ezekiel Elliott ended that threat by running up the middle on a 47-yard touchdown run, one of his four TDs for the day, and the Irish never got it to single digits again.

Notre Dame, for all its national football notoriety, has gone 22 years without a major bowl victory. The Irish are 0-7 in those big games since beating Texas A&M in the 1993 Cotton Bowl.

Notre Dame gave up a total of 106 points in its three losses this season — to Clemson, Stanford and Ohio State. The 44 allowed Friday were the most it gave up all season.

Kelly, though, said his team in headed in the right direction.

"I like where we are," he said. "We're going to keep banging at the door. Keep playing Ohio State, keep playing Florida State, keep playing Alabama, keep playing these teams in these kinds of venues, in these kinds of games."

The Irish were depleted, especially on defense.

Linebacker Jaylon Smith, arguably Notre Dame's best defensive player and a potential top-10 draft pick, went down early with a knee injury when he was shoved to the ground by an Ohio State player. Smith was on crutches at game's end with what Kelly called "a significant knee injury."

"The guy is so impactful on our defense," Kelly said. "You lose a guy like that early on, it significantly affects what you're doing defensively."

Elliott, who has announced he is leaving for the NFL, tied a Fiesta Bowl record with his four scores, three of them on short runs.

# Mississippi tramples Oklahoma State

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy watched a once-promising season end on a downward spiral, with the No. 13 Cowboys getting tricked and trampled by 16th-ranked Mississippi.

Oklahoma State struggled on both sides of the ball in a 48-20 loss in the Sugar Bowl on Friday night, with perhaps the low moment coming when the defense was completely fooled on a trick play that produced a touchdown by an offensive lineman catching a backward pass.

The loss was Oklahoma State's third straight after a 10-0 start. The last two were blowouts, starting with a 58-23 drubbing by Oklahoma to cap the regular season.

"What I told the team was that we needed to do a better job of coaching. I

may have fatigued them the way we practiced," Gundy said. "And they made a lot of plays. So you tie all of that together and you end up in a game like this."

"I just don't want to take away from this team and the guys coming together and winning 10 football games," Gundy added. "It's not easy to win 10 football games and we're proud of them for that."

Cowboys quarterback Mason Rudolph, who is trying to work his way back from a foot injury that required surgery in November, was held to 179 yards passing and was unable to lead his unit into the end zone before he was relieved.

"It's hard to come back from something like that (in) a short period of time," receiver David Glidden said. "Mason is a competitor and he wanted to be there for his team and do the best he could. ... Personally, in an injury like that, I think he

left it out there for us."

The Cowboys didn't score until backup quarterback J.W. Walsh's 2-yard TD run late in the third quarter. Walsh added another TD on an 8-yard run, but it was far too late.

Playing in the high-octane Big 12, Oklahoma State's defense was giving up 429.5 yards per game. The Cowboys yielded 554 yards to the Rebels, with 347 coming through the air.

"The snowball started downhill on us in the second quarter," Gundy said. "We couldn't slow them down from big plays on offense and they started running trick plays, kind of like what we did last year in our bowl game."

"Offensively, we couldn't establish a running game," Gundy added. "We became one-dimensional ... so if it was tough for us to play catch-up."



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# Heat snap two-game slide

Associated Press

MIAMI — With 17 games to play in 31 days and two brutal road trips awaiting, the Miami Heat know January will be far from easy.

At least it's off to a flying start.

Hassan Whiteside had 25 points and 19 rebounds, Gerald Green added 19 points off the bench and the Heat rolled past the Dallas Mavericks 106-82 on Friday night to snap a two-game slide.

"You want to be tested," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "You want to be measured in this league. You want to be pushed to adversity. ... But I don't want these guys thinking about 16 more games right now."

Chris Bosh scored 16 points and Goran Dragic had 15 points and seven assists for the Heat. Miami adjusted its starting lineup shortly before tip-off when Dwyane Wade was stricken by flu-like symptoms. Wade got some intravenous fluids and checked in early in the second quarter, just his 10th time playing off the bench in his 13-year career. He finished with 10 points on 5-for-6 shooting.

Whiteside made 12 of 16 shots, and the Heat enjoyed their biggest victory margin of the season.

"I'm just trying to get my All-Star ratings up," Whiteside said.

Dallas had just 10 points in the first quarter — its low for any period this season — and shot just 36 percent for the game, compared to 56 percent for Miami. The Heat have just four home games left in January, two of those in the next five days, and have separate five- and six-game trips this month.

"The bottom line with this tonight is they played an angrier game," Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle said. "The combina-

tion of that, and our shot-making was just not there all night, we just lost a little bit of our edge."

Zaza Pachulia led the Mavericks with 14 points and 13 rebounds. Wesley Matthews made four three-pointers for his 12 points, and Dirk Nowitzki added 11 points for Dallas — which was playing for the first time since topping Golden State on Wednesday.

Dallas' four-game winning streak was snapped.

"Just not a good night overall, on both ends of the floor," Nowitzki said. "But we kept fighting. Every time we got a little momentum, we either made a big mistake on the other end or they made a big shot."

**Bulls 108, Knicks 81:** Jimmy Butler scored 23 points, and Nikola Mirotic had 17 points and seven assists to help host Chicago beat New York.

Pau Gasol added 17 points and eight rebounds as the Bulls won for the fourth time in five games while avenging a blow-out loss at New York on Dec. 19. Rookie reserve Bobby Portis had 16 points and 10 rebounds in his third consecutive game scoring in double figures.

The Bulls blew a 17-point lead before pulling away from the Knicks in the fourth quarter.

Carmelo Anthony scored 20 for New York, which has dropped five of six.

Chicago played without Derrick Rose, who missed his second straight game due to right hamstring tendinitis.

**Raptors 104, Hornets 94:** DeMar DeRozan had 23 points and Kyle Lowry added 18 points and 11 assists as Toronto rallied to beat visiting Charlotte.

It was the fourth double-double of the season for Lowry, who helped the Raptors come back from a seven-point deficit en-

tering the fourth quarter and avenge a 109-99 loss in Charlotte last month.

DeMarre Carroll and Patrick Patterson both added 14 points for Toronto.

Kemba Walker had 18 points for the Hornets.

**Wizards 103, Magic 91:** John Wall scored 24 points with 13 assists, Otto Porter had 20 points and 11 rebounds, and host Washington extended its dominance of Orlando.

The Wizards won their 11th straight game over the improving Magic, who entered with a 13-5 record since Nov. 25, best in the Eastern Conference.

Wall had 12 points in the fourth quarter and Kris Humphries scored 11, all in the final period.

Humphries' jumper with 7:38 to play started the Wizards on a 15-3 run that gave them a 93-81 lead with 3:51 left.

Victor Oladipo led Orlando with 20 points.

**Lakers 93, 76ers 84:** Lou Williams scored 12 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter against his former team and Jordan Clarkson added 19, leading Los Angeles over visiting Philadelphia.

Rookie forward Larry Nance Jr. had a season-high 14 rebounds and eight points for the Lakers on his 23rd birthday while playing on a tender right ankle.

Julius Randle scored 15 off the bench for Los Angeles in a matchup between teams with the NBA's two worst records. Kobe Bryant didn't play for the Lakers (7-27) against his hometown team because of a sore right shoulder.

Nerlens Noel had 15 points and 12 rebounds for the Sixers (3-32), who tied an NBA record with their 0-18 start before beating the Lakers on Dec. 1 at Philadelphia.

# Stanford overtakes Utah in OT

Associated Press

STANFORD, Calif. — The Pac-12's top free-throw shooting team entering Friday missed its final seven chances from the stripe — and No. 21 Utah lost the game because of it.

Perhaps its place in the Top 25, too.

Rosco Allen scored five of his 17 points in overtime after banking in the tying basket with 10.5 seconds left in regulation, and Stanford took advantage of all those missed free throws to beat the Utes 70-68 on Friday night in the conference opener for both schools.

"We missed shots, missed free throws. That's what happened," said Jordan Loveridge, who missed two free throws with 18.9 seconds left in regulation and another two in OT. "Can't win like that."

Utah shot free throws for 15 minutes during its shootaround earlier in the day, just as it does during every practice.

The Utes (11-3, 0-1) got one final play with 7 seconds left and Lorenzo Bonam drove into traffic and traveled.

Utah, shooting 73.2 percent from the line coming in, missed four free throws in the final 18.9 seconds of regulation.

Brandon Taylor missed two with 1.8 seconds left after the two misses by Loveridge, who missed two more with 2:27 to go in overtime.

Allen then drove the baseline for a dunk and his long jumper with 1:31 left in the extra period put Stanford ahead again.

"There are a million different elements to the game," Utah coach Larry Krystkowiak said. "Free throws might be the one most glaring, but there are a lot of plays along the way."

Stanford shot 14-for-25 at the line. "Maybe a little hangover from the holidays," coach Johnny Dawkins said of both teams' poor free-throw performance.

Freshman Marcus Sheffield scored a season-high 17 points and Marcus Allen added 14 for Stanford (8-4, 1-0), which made 10 of its first 18 shots out of half-time to get back in the game.

Jakob Poeltl, Utah's leading scorer at 17.8 points and one of four starters averaging in double figures, scored 16 points but fouled out before OT. He converted a three-point play with 2:22 to go in regulation as Michael Humphrey fouled out, then Poeltl fouled out with 39.6 seconds left.

The Utes missed a third straight game reaching 100 points.

Bonam scored 15 points and Kyle Kuzma added 14 as the Utes had their four-game winning streak snapped.

**Washington 96, No. 25 UCLA 93 (20T):** At Seattle, Andrew Andrews matched his career-high with 35 points, including five straight points midway through the second overtime, for the Huskies in a game that featured 64 fouls.

Washington (9-4, 1-0 Pac-12) held on in the closing seconds of the second overtime. The teams combined to shoot 90 free throws and five players fouled out.

UCLA (9-5, 0-1) forced both overtimes on three-pointers by Bryce Alford. He hit the first with 7 seconds left in regulation to tie the game at 71 then hit another with 13 seconds left in the first overtime to pull the Bruins even at 83. Alford finished with 30 points despite missing his first 11 shots to start the game.

Washington had five players in double figures including 15 points from reserve Malik Dime. Matisse Thybulle and David Crisp both had 13 points including three-pointers in each overtime.

Thomas Welsh added 19 points for UCLA.

# Canadiens rout Bruins in Winter Classic

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The Montreal Forum was the Canadiens' home for one of the most successful dynasties in professional sports.

The Bruins and Celtics filled the Boston Garden rafters with championship banners.

The Original Six rivals met at the home of the defending Super Bowl champions for the NHL Winter Classic on Friday, and it was the visiting Canadiens and their locally grown goalie who managed to mimic the New England Patriots' success.

Wearing a mask decorated with a Patriots theme and autographed by their coach and quarterback, Mike Condon stopped 27 shots to help Montreal beat the Bruins 5-1 on Friday at the home of the reigning NFL champions.

"I'm pretty sure anything Tom Brady touches turns to gold," said the Boston-bred goalie whose father is a policeman who works a security detail at Gillette Stadium during Patriots games. "Hopefully got some mojo on my helmet there. I'm a huge fan of his, huge fan of this organization, and I'm just happy to pay respect to them on the ice."

Paul Byron scored twice, and Brendan Gallagher returned from two broken fingers to score a goal and add an assist. David Desharnais and Max Pacioretty also scored for the Canadiens, who passed Florida and moved into first place in the Atlantic Division with 47 points.

Tuukka Rask stopped 25 shots for the Bruins, and Matt Beleskey scored in the third period to avert the first shutout in

Winter Classic history. The four-goal win was the largest for the event since it began in 2008.

Both goalies paid tribute to the Patriots and Brady on their masks, and coach Claude Julien worked the Bruins bench in a hoodie straight from the wardrobe of his NFL counterpart, Bill Belichick.

Condon's mask had pictures of Brady and Belichick, New England's four Super Bowl trophies and their motto: "Do your job." The two Patriots icons rewarded his loyalty by signing the backplate for him; Belichick even listed the team's four championships.

Condon shut out the Bruins for more than two periods, gloving Ryan Spooner's wrist shot with 0.1 seconds left in the second period to protect a 3-0 lead.

"Anytime a player is coming back home, it's a special place for him," said Montreal's Michel Therrien, who also coached Pittsburgh to a win in the inaugural Winter Classic in 2008 and is the first NHL coach to win twice. "And we all are happy about the way he performed."

Rask had Brady and tight end Rob Gronkowski on his, along with a scowling minuteman — in black and gold, rather than the red, white and blue colors that the Patriots share with the Canadians. But the Bruins fell to 0-1 in a building where the Patriots have lost only one meaningful game in three years.

"We definitely feel like we let everybody down," Bruins defenseman Dennis Seidenberg said. "It was such a big build-up. I'm sure everybody in here wanted to come out on the ice with a little bit more jump and bring a little bit better effort.

But that wasn't the case today."

Before a crowd of 67,246 on a cloudy day with the temperature for the opening faceoff at 40 degrees, the teams dodged the slushy ice that has greeted other Winter Classic events, including the old-timers and women's exhibitions on Thursday. Organizers compensated for the lack of snow in the Boston area so far this winter by spreading white, puffy fabric over the football field.

But they couldn't account for such a lackluster effort from the Bruins, who were facing their longtime rival with a chance to take over first place in the Atlantic Division.

**Canucks 2, Ducks 1 (SO):** Alexandre Burrows scored in the first round of the shootout and Jacob Markstrom made 27 saves to help host Vancouver beat Anaheim.

Burrows whipped a shot past Frederik Andersen, and then Markstrom stopped Ryan Kesler, Jakob Silfverberg and Corey Perry to end Anaheim's three-game winning streak.

Christopher Tanev tied it with 9:36 left on a wrist shot from the blue line that slipped through traffic and past Andersen. Tanev had missed the previous two games with a foot injury.

Kesler, a former Canuck, put Anaheim ahead 7:24 into the second period on a power play. Kesler was checked down by Matt Bartkowski while taking in a feed from Chris Stewart atop the crease but still tipped the puck in past Markstrom.

The Canucks won for the first time this season when trailing after two periods.