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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Pacific Fleet shrinks despite assertive China

Associated Press

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii — When the U.S. wanted to show the world it didn't recognize what it called China's "excessive" territorial claims in disputed waters in the South China Sea last fall, it sent a warship near one of Beijing's newly built artificial reefs.

The move came amid a debate about whether the U.S. has enough ships to meet challenges posed by a fast-growing, increasingly assertive Chinese navy that is unsettling some of its neighbors. China announced last week that it would build its second aircraft carrier, this one with domestic technology.

The Navy and its regional component, the U.S. Pacific Fleet, both have fewer ships now than in the mid-1990s. Navy officials say vastly improved technology on those vessels outweighs any disadvantage from a drop in numbers.

Questions about whether the Pacific Fleet has enough resources are more of a reflection of regional anxieties than the Navy's actual capability, said its commander, Adm. Scott Swift.

Even if the entire fleet was in the South China Sea, he said, he'd still get asked whether the U.S. was bringing more forces.

"It's this sense of angst that I hear from those in the region, driven by the uncertainty and the rhetoric and, you know, the challenges that the region is facing right now,"

Swift said. "But I'm very comfortable with the resources I have."

Peter Jennings, an expert at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute think tank, said the issue in peacetime is whether there are enough American vessels to reassure friends and allies and demonstrate U.S. capacity to use power when it needs to.

In wartime, it comes down to whether enough platforms survive missile strikes to carry on their work, Jennings said. "I think this is emerging as a serious long-term problem."

The Pacific Fleet currently has 182 vessels, including combat ships like aircraft carriers as well as auxiliary and logistics vessels, said spokesman Cmdr. Clay Doss. That compares with 192 nearly two decades ago.

Around the world, the Navy has 272 ships usable in combat or to support ships in combat, nearly 20 percent less than 1998. The current total includes 10 aircraft carriers.

Swift said he would rather have the Navy he has today — and its advanced technology — than the Navy of two decades ago.

He cited as examples the USS Benfold, a guided-missile destroyer upgraded with new ballistic missile defenses, as well as three new stealth destroyers, the DDG-1000, in the pipeline.

One consequence of a smaller fleet has been more time at sea. Retired Adm. Zap Zlatoper, who commanded the Pacific Fleet in the 1990s, said six-month deployments

used to be "sacrosanct," as anything longer made it harder for the Navy to retain sailors.

Ships now deploy for an average of seven to nine months, although the Navy plans to lower that to seven.

Ship conditions have also suffered. The USS Essex left a 2011 exercise with Australia early and skipped another with Thailand the following year because it developed mechanical problems after delaying maintenance to stay at sea.

Bryan Clark, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a Washington think tank, said those are signs the status quo is unsustainable.

In a November report, Clark outlined alternatives: Build more ships, although that would require money Congress may not give the Navy, or deploy fewer, although the Pentagon has been reluctant to accept less of an overseas presence.

The other choices: Keep more ships at overseas bases where they would be closer to where they operate, or mix up how ships deploy — for example, send fewer escorts with an aircraft carrier, freeing up some ships to operate separately.

China's People's Liberation Army Navy has more than 300 surface ships, submarines, amphibious ships and patrol craft, according to the Pentagon's Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy report released in August.

CNO releases plan for Navy to stay ahead of rivals

BY STEVEN BEARDSLEY

Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The Navy needs to focus less on specific rivals, such as Russia and China, and more on operating in an increasingly complicated world, the service's new boss said Tuesday.

Re-examining fleet designs and developing concepts for operations that fall short of conflict are among the Navy's future priorities, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson wrote in a 10-page "strategic guidance" document, his first effort to craft a vision for the service since

taking command in October.

Titled "A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority," Richardson's plan offers few specifics, and it doesn't address one of the major questions facing the Navy — how best to allocate a limited amount of resources among commanders in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Those details will be laid out in future budget documents, Richardson said.

The guidance instead attempts to separate American naval strategy from specific threats, such as those posed by Russia and China, by calling for a broader response to

a changing maritime environment. Those changes include the widespread availability of cheap technology; the increased networks and connectivity that make it easier to operate that technology from a distance; and the diverse amount of traffic at sea, from growing navies to merchant ships and migrant populations.

Richardson said the Navy must give commanders more options at sea that fall short of conflict, while managing escalation on favorable terms and defending against precision-strike missiles — weapons whose proliferation continues

to concern Navy planners.

Richardson's plan emphasizes decentralizing Navy operations and exploring new manned and unmanned systems. Modernization of the Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine, which is capable of carrying a nuclear payload, will remain a Navy priority, he said.

Leaning more heavily on technology to train sailors and continuing the personnel reforms mapped out by the Navy in recent years are also emphasized in the plan. Budget issues will remain a concern, Richardson said, but must inspire creativity.

US servicemember killed in Afghanistan

2 other Americans wounded during special forces operations in Helmand province

BY HEATH DRUZIN AND TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — One U.S. servicemember was killed and two others injured as American and Afghan troops came under rifle and mortar fire Tuesday during operations in Afghanistan's Helmand province, a military spokesman confirmed.

The servicemembers, along with their Afghan counterparts, were involved in a firefight and a mortar attack on a U.S. medevac helicopter, according to U.S. officials. The helicopter was responding to the attack. It was not shot down, though it was struck by a mortar while it was on the ground supporting the forces, U.S. defense officials said.

"U.S. special forces were conducting train, advise and assist with their Afghan counterparts," said Col. Michael Lawhorn, spokesman for the international military coalition in Afghanistan.

A statement released by U.S. Forces-Afghanistan confirmed one U.S. servicemember died as a result of the incident and two others were injured. The Department of Defense did not immediately release the name of the soldier killed.

The death marks the first U.S. servicemember killed in 2016, which happened near Marjah, where thousands of American troops battled six years ago to control the city.

"We are deeply saddened by this loss," said Brig. Gen. Wilson A. Shoffner, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan spokesman. "On behalf of General Campbell and all of [U.S. Forces-Afghanistan], our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families and friends of those involved."

U.S. special forces have been on the ground in Helmand province for weeks to aid beleaguered Afghan soldiers who are at risk of losing the province to the Taliban. Insurgents have taken over several districts and have made it to the outskirts of the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah.

Several injured by blast at US Embassy in Kabul

KABUL, Afghanistan — Several people at a U.S. Embassy compound in Kabul were among the injured in Monday's massive truck bomb attack, an embassy spokesman said.

Two Afghans were killed in the blast and more than 30 wounded, said Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi.

The blast from the bomb, which contained an estimated 3,000 pounds of explosives, could be felt miles away. Photos by witnesses showed heavily fortified walls obliterated, damaged buildings and a gaping crater in the road. The bomb damaged buildings and shattered glass far from the blast site.

From staff reports

US bases in Iraq still use burn pits despite dangers

BY TARA COPP
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military still relies on burn pits to dispose of waste in Iraq despite concerns that toxic smoke and fumes released by fires can cause serious illnesses to troops.

During the bulk of wartime operations in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001, the military relied on hundreds of large, open-air pits to burn solid waste, exposing personnel working the pits and others living nearby to toxic smoke.

In 2009, the Department of Defense limited the times when burn pits could be used in response to Congress and growing health concerns. DOD regulations require an incinerator to be used at any base where there are more than 100 personnel and require base commanders to come up with contingency

plans for the disposal of solid waste, noting burn pits should be a short-term solution only.

However, when U.S. forces returned to Iraq in late 2014 and summer 2015 to assist the Iraqis in rebuilding their army and security forces, burn pits were put back in use, said Army Capt. Traun Moore, spokesman for Operation Inherent Resolve.

"Coalition forces at al-Asad Air Base and al-Taqaddum Air Base disposed of garbage by using burn pits, in accordance with Central Command environmental guidelines," Moore said. "The burn pit at al-Asad has been replaced by an incinerator and is no longer in use. Regular garbage at [al-Taqaddum] is disposed of by a local contractor. However, a registered medical waste burn pit is still in use. An incinerator has been shipped to [al-Taqaddum] and is in the process of being put into operation."

El Nino storms set to drench parts of West

SAN FRANCISCO — El Nino storms lined up in the Pacific, promising to drench parts of the West for more than two weeks and increasing fears of mudslides and flash floods in regions stripped bare by wildfires.

Stronger systems are predicted starting Tuesday following light rain a day earlier. At least two more storms are expected to follow on Wednesday and Thursday, possibly bringing as much as 3 inches of rain.

The National Weather Service issued a flash-flood watch for Northern California communities affected by several destructive wildfires last summer and fall.

The brewing El Nino system — a warming pattern in the Pacific Ocean that alters weather worldwide — is expected to affect California and the rest of the nation in the coming weeks and months.

Feds biding time as activists hold refuge

BURNS, Ore. — The armed activists who flocked to a remote wildlife refuge to take a stand against the federal government also looked prepared for a nippy day of hunting or fishing.

They were bundled in camouflage in the bleak, snow-covered high desert of eastern Oregon where they seemed more likely to encounter a bird or animal than a member of the public outside their own group blocking the entrance to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

That may be one of the main reasons law enforcement hadn't taken action Monday against the group numbering close to two dozen who were upset about the imprisonment of father-and-son ranchers who set fire to federal land.

Schools were closed for the week in Burns, about 30 miles north of the refuge, out of an abundance of caution, but no one had been hurt and no one was being held hostage Monday.

From The Associated Press

Giants coach Coughlin resigns

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — After 12 years as coach of the New York Giants, Tom Coughlin walked away gracefully from one of the NFL's flagship organizations.

Coughlin delivered two Super Bowls and restored the franchise to the league's elite. But after four straight years of failing to take the team to the playoffs, the 69-year-old Coughlin resigned on Monday rather than force co-owners John Mara and Steve Tisch to fire him.

The Giants announced the decision one day after the team (6-10) capped its third straight losing season with a 35-30 loss to Philadelphia. It was the Giants' third defeat in a row and sixth in seven games.

"I met with John Mara and Steve Tisch this afternoon, and I informed them that it is in the best interest of the organization that I step down as head coach," Coughlin said in a statement. "I strongly believe the time is right for me and my family, and ... the Giants organization."

The move may signal the end of a 20-year NFL head coaching career for Coughlin, one of 13 coaches to win multiple Super Bowls.

"It is difficult to come up with words adequate to describe the appreciation we have for everything Tom Coughlin has

done for our franchise," Mara said.

"In addition to delivering two Super Bowl titles, Tom represented us with class and dignity, and restored the pride to our entire organization. He has all the qualities you could ever ask for in a head coach, and set very high standards for whoever will succeed him."

The league's oldest active coach and third-longest tenured among the 32 who finished the season, Coughlin came into 2015 knowing he had to get the Giants back to the playoffs to keep his job. It didn't happen because the Giants lost six games either in the final 1:14 of regulation or in overtime.

"Obviously, the past three years have not been what any of us expect, and as head coach, I accept the responsibility for those seasons," he said.

Where the Giants go from here is uncertain. They have traditionally hired from within or gotten someone with NFL coaching experience.

Offensive coordinator Ben McAdoo, whom the Giants and quarterback Eli Manning like, might need more seasoning. Defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo's unit was last in the league rankings, although he had very little talent on the roster. Coughlin's future was the main topic as players cleaned out

their lockers Monday. The coach had spoken to the team earlier in the morning and many were saddened by the thought he might not be back.

"It has been one of the greatest honors of my life and career to be led by Tom Coughlin; my life will forever be changed," placekicker Josh Brown tweeted after the resignation.

Coughlin posted a 110-93 record in 12 seasons with the Giants, winning three division titles in addition to his two league crowns. He was 72-64 in eight seasons with the then-expansion Jacksonville Jaguars, winning two division titles and taking them to two conference championship games in their first five seasons.

Ernie Accorsi and Mara hired Coughlin in 2004 after Jim Fassel was fired.

"Tom Coughlin is a great coach and an even better man," Accorsi said. "He has left his mark on this great franchise, and his legacy of excellence is secure."

A no-nonsense coach, Coughlin vowed to restore Giants pride and it didn't take long. They won the division the following season and shocked the football world by knocking off the then-undefeated Patriots in the Super Bowl in February 2008. The second came after the 2011 season, also against the Patriots.

Seahawks picking up speed

Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Perhaps Pete Carroll and the rest of the Seattle Seahawks were correct when they said their loss in Week 16 was a one-time aberration on their way to the playoffs.

The Seahawks' resounding 36-6 rout of Arizona to close out the regular season on Sunday backed what Carroll and his team had been saying all week in the lead-up to the finale: that they could recapture what had led them from a 4-5 mark to a fourth straight postseason berth.

And as they get ready to face Minnesota in the NFC wild-card game on Sunday, the Seahawks are also getting a familiar face back for the first time in nearly two months: Marshawn Lynch.

"This was about momentum," Carroll said. "You guys ask about it. Do you need it? You want it if you can get it. We feel good about where we're going. It was just fun to finish football playing like that."

Seattle closed the season with six wins in seven games, and the blowout of the Cardinals answered the questions raised when the Seahawks stumbled in a home loss against St. Louis a week prior.

Making Seattle's performance even more impressive was the number of key contributors that were spectators. Starting offensive linemen Russell Okung and J.R. Sweezy, starting tight end Luke Willson and standout strong safety Kam Chancellor all missed the game with injuries.

And yet, the Seahawks built a 30-6 half-time lead and were able to pull most of their starters for the fourth quarter.

Just in time for the postseason, the Seahawks will add Lynch back to an offense that averaged 32 points and 413 total yards per game over the final seven weeks of the regular season, including a 38-7 blowout at Minnesota in early December. Normally adding Lynch to the offense would be an instant boost but Seattle is still unsure exactly what it will be able to get from the bruising back.

Lynch has not played since Week 9 against Arizona because of an abdominal injury that required surgery on Nov. 25. He was rehabbing with his personal trainer in the Bay Area before rejoining the Seahawks on Monday. Lynch has played in just seven games this season and his 3.8 yards per carry is the second-lowest average of his career.

But that was before Seattle's offense took off, ignited by the passing of Russell Wilson that complemented the running of Thomas Rawls, Christine Michael and Bryce Brown, all of whom have taken turns filling in with Lynch sidelined.

Seattle has an idea of what it's getting with Lynch healthy and back in the lineup. Carroll on Monday equated Lynch returning at this point to the start of the regular season after Lynch has gotten very little playing time in the preseason. But they won't know for sure until Lynch is out on the field practicing Wednesday for the first time since early November.

Three NFL teams file for relocation to LA

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego Chargers, Oakland Raiders and St. Louis Rams filed for relocation to the Los Angeles area on Monday night, trying not to be left out in the race to return the NFL to the nation's second-largest market after a 21-year absence.

The Chargers want to partner with the AFC West rival Raiders on a stadium in Carson.

Chargers chairman Dean Spanos has had the right to leave San Diego since 2008, but the team's long, contentious efforts to replace aging Qualcomm Stadium became more aggressive after Rams owner Stan Kroenke announced plans to build a stadium in Inglewood.

The NFL confirmed it received the applications to move for the 2016 season. They will be reviewed by league staff and three committees of owners that will meet in New York on Wednesday and Thursday. All owners will meet in Houston next week and are expected to vote on whether to allow any of the teams to move. A team wanting to move needs 24 of 32 votes.

Los Angeles has been without the NFL since after the 1994 season, when the Raiders moved back to Oakland and the Rams moved to St. Louis. The Rams had been in the L.A. area since 1946.

The Chargers and City Hall have been at odds since 2000, when team owner Alex Spanos said the team needed a new stadium. That was just three years after the stadium was expanded to accommodate the Chargers and Super Bowls.

The stadium saga turned nasty this year as Mark Fabiani, an attorney for Dean

Spanos, attacked Mayor Kevin Faulconer and his proposals to keep the team.

In a video posted on the team's website, Dean Spanos blamed "the inability of the city at the political level to get any kind of public funding or any kind of vote to help subsidize a stadium."

The Chargers' filing came hours after Spanos' son, John, the team's president of football operations, thanked fans for "your unwavering support and passion" in a statement in which he expressed support for beleaguered coach Mike McCoy and general manager Tom Telesco. McCoy will return despite the Chargers going 4-12, their worst record in 12 seasons. Telesco had his contract secretly renewed last summer.

The Raiders and Rams were both 7-9. The Chargers walked away from negotiations with the city and county in mid-June.

In the three brief negotiating sessions between the Chargers and city and county officials, the team mostly focused on what it called a flawed environmental impact report for a new stadium. The team did not negotiate finances, but it has said in the past that it expects a public contribution of at least 60 percent.

Under the city and county's proposal, public funding would be capped at 32 percent, with the team being responsible for overruns.

The Chargers claim 25 percent of their fan base comes from north of San Diego County, although they've declined to offer proof.

Oakland has expressed interest in building a new stadium for the Raiders at the Coliseum site but has no funding plan

as of yet.

The Rams currently have a year-to-year lease with the Edward Jones Dome.

Kroenke has ignored efforts by a St. Louis task force that is proposing a \$1.1 billion stadium along the Mississippi River, not far from the Rams' current stadium built in 1995.

The Rams have had 12 consecutive non-winning seasons, including a 15-65 record from 2007-11 that is the worst five-year stretch in NFL history. Out of 21 seasons in St. Louis, they've fielded four winners, including the 1999 Super Bowl title team and 2001 team that lost to the Patriots in the Super Bowl.

The St. Louis stadium task force said in a statement it had anticipated the filing "for more than a year" and was "extremely confident" its proposal would be "well received as the league weighs its options in the weeks ahead."

Rams coach Jeff Fisher was head coach of the Houston Oilers when they relocated to Tennessee in 1996, and that could happen again.

"I shared with the team today, I've been through this experience before," Fisher said earlier Monday. "We have to take the approach and with the assumption that everything's taking place here in St. Louis until we're told otherwise."

Middle linebacker James Laurinaitis said the demands of the season kept it from being too big of a distraction.

"Really, it'll become a big distraction now as you sit with nothing to do and you realize it's what, two weeks or not even [that] away from the decision," Laurinaitis said. "Everyone's just kind of fatigued about it, to be honest."



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No. 1 Kansas outlasts No. 2 Oklahoma

Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Perry Ellis is a man of few words, and nobody would have blamed him if Monday night's instant classic between top-ranked Kansas and No. 2 Oklahoma had rendered the senior forward speechless. Instead, Ellis perfectly described how the Jayhawks pulled it out: "Just heart."

"All of us together," Ellis said after his team's 109-106, triple-overtime victory in a matchup of national title contenders. "There were so many plays going both ways. We just kept fighting."

Ellis had 27 points and 13 rebounds for the Jayhawks (13-1, 2-0 Big 12), who had chances to win in regulation and the first two overtimes. Wayne Selden Jr. added 21 points and Devonte Graham had 20, including the go-ahead free throw in the final extra session.

Buddy Hield had a career-high 46 points for Oklahoma (12-1, 1-1), but he made two crucial turnovers in the final extra session, then missed a potential tying three at the buzzer.

"Craziest game I've ever been a part of," said Frank Mason, who forced Hield's final turnover and made two free throws for the final margin. "Just proud of my teammates never giving up."

Jordan Woodard hit six three-pointers and had 27 points for the Sooners, who were trying to extend their best start in 28 years. Ryan Spangler finished with 14 points and 18 rebounds.

It was a fitting conclusion for the first 1 vs. 2 matchup in two years, and the first pitting teams from the same conference since Ohio State and Michigan State of the Big Ten met on Feb. 25, 2007.

Woodard's final three-pointer gave the Sooners a 106-104 lead, and they still led 106-105 when Hield was stripped by Mason with 17 seconds left. Graham took a pass in transition and was fouled at the other end, converting both free throws to give Kansas the lead.

After the Sooners called a timeout, Hield threw the ball

away on the ensuing inbounds pass, and Mason added two more free throws with 8.6 seconds left for the final margin.

"I wish I had one more overtime," said Hield, who hit eight threes and finished 13-for-23 from the field. His 46 points matched Wayman Tisdale for the sixth-highest scoring game in school history.

The Jayhawks looked like they would end it in regulation after Hield made two free throws with 21.3 seconds left to tie the game 77-all. But after Mason charged the lane with 6 seconds left and missed the shot, Kansas forward Landen Lucas was called for a foul on the rebound.

Khadeem Lattin went to the line at the other end with 2 seconds left, but the 52-percent foul shooter clanked the front end of a 1-and-1 off the iron to force overtime.

The teams traded baskets in the extra session, and Ellis hit a three-pointer from the wing to tie the game 86-all with 1:15 left. Both teams squandered chances to take the lead, and Selden's open three-pointer from the right wing at the buzzer came up short to force a second overtime.

Kansas had the final shot in the second overtime after Isaiah Cousins missed at the rim and Spangler couldn't get his tip to go. Mason again drove the left side of the lane, but this time he pulled up for a short jumper that was never close, and the game was headed to a third OT.

The game shaped up as one between the brilliance of Hield and balance of Kansas.

The Jayhawks controlled most of the first half, hitting seven three-pointers and twice taking an 11-point lead. But every time things got comfortable, Hield put everyone back on edge.

The senior answered with two foul shots when Kansas took a 24-16 lead, then provided a long jumper a couple of minutes later. But it was his three-pointer when the Jayhawks had established a 32-21 lead late in the first half that once more changed the complexion of the game.

After trading baskets, the Sooners closed the half with

an 18-3 charge.

Woodard hit consecutive threes and scored nine points during the run, but it was Hield who scored the final three from the foul line. The first two came after coach Bill Self bolted off the Kansas bench to protest a foul and was hit with a technical foul with 3.9 seconds remaining.

The Sooners slowly stretched their 44-40 halftime lead to 10 early in the second half, only for the Jayhawks to storm back before a frenzied, sold-out crowd packed inside the old fieldhouse.

It turned out both teams were only getting started.

"Given what's at stake and the stage and all, I don't know that I've been in one better," Sooners coach Lon Kruger said. "It was terrific, a grind both ways."

Virginia Tech 70, No. 4 Virginia 68: Zach LeDay of Virginia Tech scored 18 of his 22 points in the second half and blocked London Perrantes' attempt to tie the game in the final seconds.

The Hokies (10-5, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) got 16 points from Justin Bibbs and 13 from Seth Allen in ending a seven-game losing streak against their in-state rivals.

Perrantes hit six three-pointers in the second half and led visiting Virginia (12-2, 1-1) with 22 points, but LeDay swatted his driving layup in the final seconds, preserving Virginia Tech's slim margin.

No. 6 North Carolina 106, Florida St. 90: Brice Johnson had career-highs of 39 points and 23 rebounds to lead visiting North Carolina. It was the first 20-20 game for a Tar Heel since Tyler Zeller had 20 points and 22 rebounds against Ohio in the 2012 NCAA Tournament.

No. 17 West Virginia 95, TCU 87: Jaysean Paige scored seven of his 20 points in the late game-clinching run for foul-plagued West Virginia, which won its sixth straight. Paige led six players in double figures for the visiting Mountaineers (13-1, 2-0 Big 12). They had two players foul out and Paige was among four others who finished the game with four fouls.

Iginla scores 600th as Avs snap Kings' streak

Associated Press

DENVER — Jarome Iginla sent a wrist shot in the vicinity of the goal, maybe even more a pass than scoring chance.

Then a strange thing happened: The puck clanged off a skate and caromed into the net for his 600th NHL goal.

Sure, it was a little bit of luck. But he certainly won't quibble because, as he said through a broad smile, "I'm not picky."

Iginla became the 19th member of the 600-goal club, scoring on a power play in the third period, and the Colorado Avalanche beat Los Angeles 4-1 on Monday night, snapping the Kings' five-game winning streak.

"It was a 'natural' goal," Avalanche coach Patrick Roy joked. "Hey, you put it toward the net and good things happen. I'm very happy for him. It was quite something."

Iginla's shot hit off the skate of Kings defenseman Jake Muzzin and bounced past goalie Jhonas Enroth. Iginla was mobbed by teammates near the glass. He then carried the celebration over to the bench as he high-fived more teammates. As he took a seat on the bench, Iginla stood up in a salute to the crowd during an extended standing ovation.

This was as good as he could've imagined.

"It's a little bit surreal," said the 38-year-old Iginla, who's in his 19th season.

"Six hundred goals, I can't wrap my head around it, really," defenseman Tyson Barrie said. "It's very

impressive."

Overshadowed by Iginla's milestone evening was the play of Barrie, who had two goals and two assists.

Matt Duchene also scored for the Avalanche, who improved to 1-1-1 on a five-game homestand.

Tyler Toffoli scored the lone goal for the Kings.

Red Wings 1, Devils 0: Dylan Larkin scored on a breakaway and Petr Mrazek made 22 saves to lead visiting Detroit past New Jersey.

Mrazek, appearing in an eighth straight game, earned his second shutout of the season and seventh of his career.

Senators 3, Blues 2 (OT): Bobby Ryan scored twice, including the game-winner at 2:33 of overtime, to lift Ottawa past host St. Louis.

Mike Hoffman also scored and Andrew Hammond made 36 saves for the Senators.

Troy Brouwer and Kevin Shattenkirk scored for St. Louis.

Oilers 1, Hurricanes 0 (OT): Andrej Sekera scored 2:47 into overtime, Cam Talbot made 29 saves for his first shutout of the season, and host Edmonton beat Carolina.

On the goal, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins got the puck to Sekera, who was sent a one-handed slash of his own rebound through Ward's legs.

Coyotes 3, Canucks 2: Shane Doan scored twice to lead visiting Arizona past division-rival Vancouver.

Louis Domingue, taking over for the injured Mike Smith, made 35 saves in his third straight start for Arizona.

Green gets rare third triple-double in a row

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — For five straight trips down the court, Draymond Green knew he needed just one more assist for a triple-double.

When he got the ball to Stephen Curry behind the three-point line, Curry scored and Green made history.

Green became the second Warriors player ever to post three straight triple-doubles and Golden State rolled to its 35th straight regular-season home win, 111-101 over the Charlotte Hornets on Monday night.

"Oh man, it was hard to come by," Green said. "When you start looking for it, it's impossible to get."

But Green managed to do it again.

He had 13 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists to join Tom Gola in 1959-60 as the only Warriors players ever to get triple-doubles in three straight games. The last player in the NBA to do it was Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook, who had a four-game streak last season.

"He's playing at a very, very high level," Curry said. "His consistency is just off the charts. ... It's amazing how he can impact the game."

Curry and Klay Thompson scored 30 points apiece and Marreese Speights had a season-high 15 off the bench to help the Warriors sweep the season series from Charlotte.

Kemba Walker and Jeremy Lamb each scored 22 points for the Hornets.

Spurs 123, Bucks 98: Kawhi Leonard scored 10 of his 24 points in the decisive third quarter and San Antonio beat host Milwaukee for its fifth straight victory.

76ers 109, Timberwolves 99: Ish Smith had 21 points and 11 assists, and Richaun Holmes scored 17 to lead host Philadelphia over Minnesota. Still the worst team in the NBA at 4-33, the 76ers have won three of six games.

Cavaliers 122, Raptors 100: Kyrie Irving scored a season-high 25 points, J.R. Smith had 24 on eight three-pointers and host Cleveland defeated Toronto.

Celtics 103, Nets 94: Jae Crowder scored a career-high 25 points with a strong start and a clutch finish, and visiting Boston beat Brooklyn to split a home-and-home series.

Pistons 115, Magic 89: Andre Drummond had 17 points and 12 rebounds, and host Detroit rolled to its most lopsided victory of the season.

Heat 103, Pacers 100 (OT): Chris Bosh scored 31 points, Dwyane Wade had 27 including a layup that beat the buzzer and forced overtime, and host Miami erased an 18-point third-quarter deficit.

Kings 116, Thunder 104: DeMarcus Cousins had 33 points and a season-high 19 rebounds, and Sacramento took advantage of Kevin Durant's absence to beat host Oklahoma City. Durant sat out with a sprained right big toe.

Rockets 93, Jazz 91: James Harden scored 30 points and visiting Houston rallied in the second half to beat Utah, ending its longest losing streak of the season at four games.

Grizzlies 91, Trail Blazers 78: Zach Randolph had 26 points and 18 rebounds off the bench against his former team, and visiting Memphis spoiled Damian Lillard's return to the Portland lineup.