

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Iran releases former US Marine, 3 others

Associated Press

VIENNA — Iran released four detained Americans in exchange for seven Iranians held or charged in the United States, U.S. and Iranian officials said Saturday in a major diplomatic breakthrough announced as implementation of a landmark nuclear deal appeared imminent. A fifth American detained in Iran, a student, was released in a move unrelated to the swap, U.S. officials said.

Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, former U.S. Marine Amir Hekmati, pastor Saeed Abedini and Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari, whose name had not been previously made public, were to be flown from Iran to Switzerland aboard a Swiss aircraft and then taken to a U.S. military hospital in Landstuhl, Germany, for medical treatment, U.S. officials

said.

Rezaian's wife and mother were expected to be on the plane.

The student, identified as Matthew Trevithick, was released independently of the exchange on Saturday and already was on his way home, said U.S. officials. They spoke about the prisoner exchange on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

In return, the U.S. will pardon or drop charges against seven Iranians — six of whom are dual U.S.-Iranian citizens — accused or convicted of violating U.S. sanctions.

Three were serving prison terms and now have received a commutation or pardon.

Three others were awaiting trial; the last one made a plea agreement.

The person in Iran said the

four were freed Saturday in exchange for the release of seven Iranians held in U.S. prisons.

The release of the prisoners, along with the expected implementation of the nuclear deal and sanctions relief, capped a week of intense U.S.-Iran diplomacy that took an unexpected turn on Tuesday with the detention by Iran of 10 U.S. Navy sailors and their two boats in the Persian Gulf.

They were released in less than 24 hours after Kerry intervened with Zarif in multiple telephone calls that administration officials hailed as a channel of communication opened because of the nuclear negotiations.

Certification by the International Atomic Energy Agency would allow Iran to immediately recoup some \$100 billion in assets frozen overseas.

The benefits of new oil, trade and financial opportunities

from suspended sanctions could prove far more valuable for Tehran in the long run.

Rezaian was born in California and holds both U.S. and Iranian citizenship.

He was convicted in closed proceedings last year after being charged with espionage and related allegations.

The Post and the U.S. government have denied the accusations, as has Rezaian, who was the Post's Tehran correspondent.

Hekmati, of Flint, Mich., was detained in August 2011 on espionage charges.

Hekmati went to Iran to visit family and spend time with his ailing grandmother.

Abedini, of Boise, Idaho, was detained for compromising national security in September 2012.

He was sentenced in 2013 to eight years in prison.

Search for 12 missing Marines off Hawaii continues

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII — The Hawaii Coast Guard established a 7-mile safety zone out into the sea spanning the entire North Shore of Oahu as the search for 12 missing Marines from two helicopters continued Friday afternoon.

"That is a huge area," said Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Scott Carr during a news conference.

He said searchers had found debris "consistent with a military aircraft" across that entire area.

The Marines were crewmembers and instructor-trainers aboard two CH-53E Super

Stallion helicopters on routine nighttime training, said Capt. Timothy Irish, a Marine spokesman at the same news conference.

They were assigned to the Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Airlift Wing, and were permanently assigned to Marine Corps Base Hawaii. They were returning to the base when they were lost, Irish said.

"This is still an active search-and-rescue operation," Irish said. "We're still looking for survivors."

Irish said it was unknown why the aircraft went down. It isn't known whether they collided, he said.

The Coast Guard is searching the area with two cutters, a

helicopter and a C-130 plane.

Joining them are two Navy destroyers, an MH-60 helicopter crew from the 37th Helicopter Squadron out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii and other vessels from the Honolulu Fire Department.

"Everyone's putting every available resource they have to try and find the survivors from this accident," Carr said.

Although the rain and high winds are likely dissuading casual beachgoers from taking a swim from the beaches of the North Shore, those conditions are a magnet for many surfers. Carr said the establishment of the safety zone was intended to encourage everyone to stay out of the water.

"There is debris out there that could cause potential harm

to you," he said. "We certainly don't need more search-and-rescue cases because of that."

The search is severely hampered by the high winds, making it "probably one of the most difficult we've had in the year and a half I've been here," Carr said.

Searchers are dealing with 25-mph winds, swells up to 16 feet and breaking surf up to 30 feet high. Forecasts have been calling for breaking surfs of up to 40 feet.

"That is moving that debris all over the place," he said. "It's very difficult to find things right now." The Coast Guard has not yet recovered any of the debris, which Carr described as "from small to good-sized pieces."

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Militants seize luxury hotel in W. Africa

Associated Press

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — The overnight seizure of a luxury hotel in Burkina Faso's capital by al-Qaida-linked extremists ended Saturday when Burkina Faso and French security forces killed four jihadi attackers and freed more than 126 people, the West African nation's president said.

At least 23 other people from up to 18 different countries were killed in the attack at the Splendid Hotel and nearby Cappuccino Cafe, establishments popular with westerners in Ouagadougou, he said.

According to CNN, U.S. forces provided logistical support during the rescue. The United States has about 75 military personnel in Burkina Faso, in-

cluding 15 assigned to the U.S. Embassy, CNN said, citing a U.S. defense official. An additional 60 help train and advise the French military in the nation.

Three attackers were killed at the hotel and a fourth was killed when security forces cleared out a second hotel nearby.

Two of the three attackers at the Splendid Hotel were identified as female, President Roch Marc Christian Kabore said on national radio.

The president said the country was grateful for the military cooperation from French and Americans. They helped free at least 126 hostages, and the number of those freed may be as high as 153, he said.

In a separate development, Burkina Faso's Minister of Security and Internal Affairs Simon

Compaore said a doctor and his wife kidnapped in Burkina Faso's north are Australian, correcting earlier reports by the ministry's spokeswoman that they were Austrian. The two were kidnapped from Djibo, the capital of the northern Soum province in the Sahel near the border with Mali, he said. The couple had been doing volunteer work in the area for years, said a local reporter.

The Islamic extremists stormed the hotel and cafe Friday night. A young black woman with dreadlocks and young Arabs entered the cafe shouting Allahu akbar (Arabic for "God is great"), said Issouf Ouattara, who was at the cafe where 10 people were killed in the gunfire.

"There was general panic.

After about 20 minutes, the situation calmed down and then the firing started again, and I think this time it was the police," said another witness, Inoussa Diarra.

Gunfire ramped up early Saturday as gendarme and military forces fought to take back the building, which had been blackened by a fire during the assault. Onlookers were kept far away from the fighting, which continued into daylight.

After the morning call to prayer signaled a new day, security forces took control of the Splendid Hotel and searched nearby hotels for other extremists in hiding. The search continued after security forces found and killed a fourth extremist at the Hotel Yibi, the president said.

Drone strike kills 3 suspected militants

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — A U.S. drone strike killed three suspected al-Qaida militants in southern Yemen on Saturday, according to local tribesmen.

Believed to be the first drone strike this year in Yemen, it targeted the militants' vehicle while they were traveling in Shabwa province, the tribesmen said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because of security concerns. It was not immediately possible to verify their account. U.S. officials

rarely comment on the covert drone program.

The latest strike comes amid reports of divisions and defections among al-Qaida's rival group, the Islamic State group's affiliate in Yemen, as a defected group leader gave online testimony claiming that the Islamic State group fabricated videos in order to exaggerate their strength and presence.

In testimony posted online by al-Qaida supporters, a man calling himself Antar al-Kanadi said he defected from the Is-

lamic State group because its leadership had become too extreme. Al-Kanadi's allegations seem to match reports elsewhere of dissension within the ranks of the Yemeni Islamic State group affiliate. According to The Long War Journal, which monitors the activity of militant groups, more than a dozen Islamic State leaders and scores of the group's fighters have rebelled against the top leader, Abu Bilal al-Harbi, for alleged violations of Islamic Shariah law.

Drug trial in France leaves man brain dead

PARIS — One man was brain dead and three others faced possible permanent brain damage after volunteering to take part in a drug trial for a painkiller based on a natural brain compound similar to the active ingredient in marijuana, French authorities said Friday.

The Paris prosecutor's office opened an investigation into what French Health Minister Marisol Touraine called "an accident of exceptional gravity" at a clinical trial lab in the western French city of Rennes.

The trial involved 90 healthy volunteers who were given the experimental drug in varying doses at different times, she told reporters at a news conference in Rennes.

Six male volunteers between 28 and 49 years old have since been hospitalized, including one man now classified as brain dead, Touraine said, adding that the other 83 volunteers were being contacted.

The drug trial for the six hospitalized men began on Jan. 7 and was halted Monday, a day after the first volunteer fell ill.

From The Associated Press

Army tables decision on Bergdahl medals

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Army will not decide whether suspected deserter Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl will receive two significant medals that could be associated with his five years of captivity until after he is court-martialed for deliberately walking away from his infantry

platoon's base in 2009, an Army official said.

The awards are the Prisoner of War Medal and the Purple Heart. The POW Medal goes to servicemembers who are granted "creditable U.S. military service" and who were held captive while involved in a conflict with an opposing force. The Purple Heart goes to

troops who are killed or wounded by an enemy force.

Bergdahl, who had been deployed to Afghanistan, was held hostage by the Haqqani network, a group affiliated with the Taliban, and was tortured while held captive, according to Army officials who have testified in the soldier's criminal case.

Broncos feature dynamic duo

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — There was a time when Ronnie Hillman and C.J. Anderson didn't even speak to each other.

Now, they're fast friends who have given the Denver Broncos a terrific tandem in the backfield heading into the playoffs.

The Broncos are one of two NFL teams with two 700-yard rushers. The other is Cincinnati.

Hillman led the team with a career-high 863 yards and seven touchdowns. Anderson ran for 720 yards and five TDs.

Both maneuvered their way through a spate of injuries this season along with the growing pains that came with a new offensive line and Gary Kubiak's zone blocking scheme.

Doling out tips to each other between series, they hit their stride this month.

Denver's double dose of trouble for defenses combined for 212 yards and two touchdowns against the Chargers in Week 17. That helped the Broncos (12-4) secure the AFC's No. 1 seed. They'll host the Pittsburgh Steelers (11-6) Sunday.

"Both of them have played hard all season. Both of them have played through injuries," Peyton Manning said.

"I do think kind of like a quarterback develops timing with receivers, that both of those backs are running behind five new offensive linemen for the most part. That chemistry between those seven, eight guys has taken time. I think that's certainly a lot better than it was in Week 1 or 2."

Denver's O-line features three first-time starters in Max Garcia, Matt Paradis and Michael Schofield.

"I think that's been a big difference in those guys seeing the holes based off of how Max is going to block or Matt is going to block, and the linemen feel more comfortable with those guys behind them," Manning said.

The running backs also feel more comfortable with each other.

"My first year here, me and Ronnie barely talked," Anderson said. "Part of it was because he's from L.A. and I'm from the Bay, we didn't get along. No, to be honest, that's real. We just, we didn't see eye to eye."

Hillman laughed off the geographical differences and said their personalities just clashed.

While Anderson loves to talk, Hillman doesn't.

Asked for his thoughts last week on which team he'd like to face in the divisional round of the playoffs, Hillman replied, "No. Who has thoughts?"

Anderson, for one, and he loves to share them.

"Yeah, he still talks too damn much," Hillman said. "You've just got to get used to him."

Hillman said he still can't get a word in. "You have to wait until he's done talking," Hillman said. "You've got to hit him with the 'Yeah, yeah, OK, yeah' — and then you get your two cents in."

That took more than two years of working together, too.

"I'm not a talkative person," Hillman said. "He likes to talk. I don't."

What Hillman and Anderson do well is compliment — and complement — each other.

Asked what impresses him most about

Hillman, Anderson said: "The growth. Since I've been here, the football IQ he has now is just tremendous."

"And then you know him making those runs between the tackles that people said he can't do, him breaking tackles that people said he can't do. I mean, Ronnie's a dog. Ouch. You play with a dog, it just makes you want to go out there and be that same dog."

Asked what impresses him most about Anderson, Hillman said: "He just bounces off tackles. All of a sudden you just find guys bouncing off of him or you know you see something, there's nothing there and all of a sudden somebody falls off of him and he runs for 15 or 20."

Hillman is the speedster, Anderson the power driver.

They both see the game the same thanks to all their sideline conversations they have between series.

Anderson has learned to listen; Hillman has learned to speak up.

"I just think when it comes to football, me saying some things that he can look at on tape and say, 'Damn, C.J.'s making sense' probably built confidence on what I'm saying," Anderson said. "And vice versa: he said some things and I'm going, 'Man, Ronnie's making some sense on that. I have never thought of it that way.'"

The 24-year-old running backs can still clash at times.

Anderson is seven months older than Hillman, but Hillman entered the NFL a year earlier.

"I'm Big Bro," insisted Anderson.

"I'm still the Daddy in the room," retorted Hillman.

Federer: Djokovic best of 4

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Roger Federer says the so-called Big Four in men's tennis — he, Novak Djokovic, Andy Murray and Rafael Nadal — still exists, with one possible notation and an addition.

"Novak deserves like a little star next to his name right now because he's been doing extremely well," Federer said Saturday.

The Australian Open begins Monday with Djokovic set to defend his 2015 crown and aim for title No. 6 at Melbourne Park. Last year, Djokovic won 27 of his 28 matches in Grand Slam tournaments, capturing three majors and finishing runner-up to Stan Wawrinka at the French Open.

That run left Djokovic unquestionably as No. 1, with Murray second, Federer No. 3, Wawrinka ranked fourth and Nadal, after a series of injuries, back to a spot in the top five.

Order restored, says Federer.

"Who's had the most success? The top five guys really, with Stan, you know, Murray, myself, Novak and Rafa," Federer, who plays his first-round match Monday. "Now the rankings are back to more normal again after Rafa's worked his way back up."

Djokovic, in the same half of the draw as Federer, will open his defense against Chung Hyeon of South Korea and, if results go with rankings, could meet No. 7 Kei Nishikori in the quarterfinals and Federer in the semis.

Federer, who has won four Australian titles among his 17 majors, opens against Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia, and possibly Alexandr Dolgoplov in the second and No. 27 Grigor Dimitrov in the third.

No 2-ranked Murray will open against Alexander Zverev of Germany and, in the same half of the draw, 2014 champion Wawrinka takes on Dmitry Tursonov.

Nadal, who could meet Wawrinka in the quarterfinals, opens with a tough encounter against fellow Spaniard and 2009 Australian Open semifinalist Fernando Verdasco. Nadal beat Verdasco in an epic five-setter that year and went on to win the title.

"Not a lucky first round, I think, for me. For him, either," Nadal said Saturday. "Will be a tough match."

Asked to reflect on the 2009 result, Nadal said: "Obvious that that match gave me the chance to win the only Australian Open that I won. That was an unforgettable memory for me."

Nadal won three titles last year but it was the first year since 2004 that he didn't win a major. He was beaten by Djokovic in the Qatar Open final two weeks ago and lavished praise on the Serbian, saying he was virtually unbeatable in that match.

He continued the sentiment on Saturday.

"Novak is playing at (a) better level than the rest of the players now, that's obvious," Nadal said. "The way he's playing, it's difficult to see him losing matches. Just can congratulate him for making that happen."

Steelers embrace challenge of no Brown

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Antonio Brown leaned back in his locker recently and allowed himself a brief moment of introspection.

Fresh off the most productive three-season stretch by a wide receiver in NFL history, a run that has garnered the Pittsburgh Steelers star a pair of first-team All-Pro selections while feeding social media a steady stream of GIF-worthy, open-field moves and touchdown celebrations, Brown listened as someone rattled off the list of Hall of Famers whose numbers he has somehow topped.

"I am the best though, right?" Brown said in a way best described as a humblebrag. "Guys haven't done what I've done. But we don't want to talk about that. We always want to grow. Growing is never-ending."

Even when it hurts.

Brown will miss the first playoff game of his career on Sunday when the Steelers travel to Denver in the divisional round. The four-time Pro Bowler and one of the league's most electric players is out with a concussion sustained in the final minute of last week's wild-card win over Cincinnati. The injury deprives the Steelers of their MVP against the league's

best defense, one he lit up for 189 yards and two touchdowns in a comeback victory a month ago.

Yet the Steelers insist they can get by without him. Having an apparently healthy-ish Ben Roethlisberger helps. The quarterback is officially questionable with a sprained right shoulder but threw the ball well in practice on Friday, according to teammates. It also helps to have a group of receivers who have spent their time in Pittsburgh absorbing what they can from one of the most meticulous preparers in the league.

"We've all leaned on him in the past, but it creates an opportunity for us," Markus Wheaton said Friday.

One Pittsburgh hasn't had to face since a sprained ankle forced Brown to skip three games in 2012. Back then he was an overachieving sixth-round draft pick. Now he's arguably one of the NFL's most unguardable threats, his combination of speed — Brown runs with the intensity of a 6-year-old chasing down an ice-cream truck — hands and body control makes any one-on-one matchup with him borderline unfair. Look for no further than 355 receptions since the start of the 2013 season as proof.

Heading to Denver without him is less

than ideal, yet it's a challenge Wheaton, Martavis Bryant, Darrius Heyward-Bey and Sammie Coates believe they're ready to embrace. None of them have played a game in Pittsburgh without Brown. Not having his familiar No. 84 in the huddle will be weird. It won't be the end of the world.

"To not see him be there with us, we've got to do some bigger things that we haven't done before to show him that we've got his back," said Coates, a rookie who caught all of one pass in limited playing time.

In that sense, Brown's own development has hastened the maturity of the rest of the group. Offensive coordinator Todd Haley requires each of Pittsburgh's receivers to learn every route from every position so they're prepared when he finds something he wants to exploit. Sometimes that means putting Brown in the slot. Sometimes it means putting him in the backfield or in motion at the snap. The Steelers expect that constant tinkering to help minimize the inevitable drop-off.

"Everybody knows where to be and how to do everything," Heyward-Bey said. "When somebody goes down, it's not like, 'Oh no, what do we do?'"



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Cavs wrap up road trip with win

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Kyrie Irving scored 23 points, LeBron James added 19 and the Cleveland Cavaliers wrapped up their longest trip of the season with a 91-77 victory over the Houston Rockets on Friday night.

The Cavaliers capped six games away from home and were playing for the second straight night, but it was the Rockets who looked tired and listless as Cleveland built a double-digit lead by halftime and pushed it to 20 in the third.

Cleveland got back on track after a loss to San Antonio on Thursday night that snapped an eight-game winning streak before the team's showdown with Golden State on Monday.

Dwight Howard had 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Rockets. James Harden had 11 points on 2-for-10 shooting and missed all five of his three-point attempts.

Thunder 113, Timberwolves 93: Russell Westbrook had his 23rd career triple-double, leading Oklahoma City to a victory over visiting Minnesota.

Westbrook finished with 12 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his fourth triple-double of the season.

Andrew Wiggins had 25 points for the Timberwolves. They have lost nine straight.

Heat 98, Nuggets 95: Hassan Whiteside had a triple-double with 19 points, 17 rebounds and 11 blocks and injury-depleted Miami rallied to beat host Denver.

Chris Bosh made the tiebreaking jumper with 55 seconds left and scored 24 points. Tyler Johnson had 15 off the bench for

Miami, which was without Dwyane Wade because of injuries to both shoulders.

It was the first game Wade missed this season due to injury. It left the Heat without their starting backcourt, with Goran Dragic sidelined by a strained left calf.

Darrell Arthur led Denver with 18 points.

Mavericks 83, Bulls 77: Dirk Nowitzki scored 21 points to lead visiting Dallas past Chicago.

Nowitzki hit a three-pointer with 2:15 to play to put the Mavericks up 79-72. Jimmy Butler missed two three-pointers in the final 12 seconds as the Bulls tried to rally. Deron Williams added 18 points for the Mavericks.

Derrick Rose, back in the lineup after missing a game with knee pain, led Chicago with 18 points, and Pau Gasol had 17. Joakim Noah left after separating his left shoulder in the second quarter.

Bucks 108, Hawks 101 (OT): Giannis Antetokounmpo had 28 points and 16 rebounds, Khris Middleton scored 26 points and host Milwaukee beat Atlanta in overtime.

Greg Monroe and Michael Carter-Williams added 15 points apiece for the Bucks. Carter-Williams also blocked Jeff Teague's shot at the horn, sending the game into overtime.

Paul Millsap had 23 points for Atlanta.

Carter-Williams made a three-pointer with 3:04 remaining in overtime to put the Bucks ahead 100-99. Antetokounmpo hit a free throw and then scored on a dunk to extend Milwaukee's lead to 103-99 with 1:35 left. After an Atlanta turnover, Antetokounmpo hit a three to put Milwaukee up by seven.

Trail Blazers 116, Nets 104: Damian Lillard had 33 points and 10 assists, reserve Allen Crabbe added 19 points and visiting Portland beat Brooklyn for its third straight victory.

Brook Lopez scored 25 points for Brooklyn, and Donald Sloan came up just short of his first career triple-double, finishing with 15 points, nine rebounds and nine assists. The Nets have lost 11 of their last 12 games at Barclays Center.

Pelicans 109, Hornets 107: Ryan Anderson hit six three-pointers and had a season-high 32 points, and Anthony Davis dunked Jrue Holiday's alley-oop lob with 2 seconds left to lift New Orleans past visiting Charlotte.

Davis finished with 22 points to help New Orleans win its second straight.

Wizards 118, Pacers 104: John Wall had 28 points, seven rebounds and eight assists to lead Washington past host Indiana for its fourth straight victory.

Bradley Beal added 22 points for Washington.

Paul George had 21 points, seven rebounds and five assists for Indiana.

Celtics 117, Suns 103: Isaiah Thomas scored 19 points against his former team, Marcus Smart had his first career triple-double and host Boston beat Phoenix.

Thomas was acquired from the Suns in a trade last Feb. 19. Four days later in his only other game against Phoenix since the deal, he had 21 points and seven assists.

Smart had 10 points, 11 assists and 11 rebounds, and Kelly Olynyk added 21 points and nine rebounds.

Orioles reach deal with slugging 1B Davis

BALTIMORE — Chris Davis and the Orioles are together again.

Multiple people with knowledge of the situation say Davis has agreed to a seven-year, \$161 million contract with Baltimore, pending a physical.

The people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Saturday because the Orioles have not announced the transaction.

The 29-year-old Davis has been with Baltimore since 2011. He hit a major league-leading 47 home runs and amassed 117 RBIs last year.

The Orioles were his most aggressive suitor, offering a seven-year deal last month. Since coming to the Orioles in a July 2011 trade with Texas, Davis has been a sensational run producer and a positive force in the clubhouse.

"I've said all along, Chris is a body-of-work guy," manager Buck Showalter said. "When you get through and step back, he can do a lot of things that not many people can do."

In other MLB news:

■ A person familiar with the situation says the Kansas City Royals and pitcher Ian Kennedy have agreed to a \$70 million, five-year contract that includes an opt-out after the first two years.

\$83,665 in fines for Steelers, Bengals

The NFL fined four players and two coaches a total of \$83,665 for their actions in the Pittsburgh-Cincinnati wild-card game.

Bengals cornerback Adam "Pacman" Jones was fined \$28,940 for contact with an official, a foul that moved the Steelers closer for their game-winning field goal in the final seconds Saturday night.

His teammates Wallace Gilberry and Domata Peko were each fined \$8,681. Gilberry's fine was for unsportsmanlike conduct and Peko's for unnecessary roughness.

Steelers guard Ramon Foster was fined \$17,363 for unnecessary roughness.

Earlier this week, the league suspended Bengals linebacker Vontaze Burfict three games without pay for his conduct in the game, which Pittsburgh won 18-16 to advance to Sunday's AFC divisional round game in Denver. Burfict was flagged for a hit that knocked out Steelers star receiver Antonio Brown, who was ruled out of Sunday's game against the Broncos.

Although Burfict wasn't issued any additional fines this week, he'll miss out on \$502,941 of his \$2.85 million salary in 2016 if his suspension is upheld.

Jones apologized Friday for claiming Brown was faking a concussion at the end of the game, posting a video on Instagram in which he said "I apologize sincerely. Get well." Jones said in the aftermath of the loss that Brown winked at him before being helped off the field after taking a shot to the head from Burfict.

Also, Pittsburgh assistant coaches Mike Munchak and Joey Porter were each fined \$10,000.

Former RB Phillips' death ruled suicide

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A California coroner says imprisoned former NFL running back Lawrence Phillips committed suicide while he was awaiting a trial that could have brought him the death penalty.

The 40-year-old Phillips was found unresponsive alone in his segregation cell at Kern Valley State Prison early Wednesday and died at a hospital.

— Associated Press

Kane nets hat trick in Blackhawks win

Associated Press

TORONTO — Patrick Kane appreciated getting his first career regular-season hat trick, though it paled in importance to his first two — which both came in the playoffs.

Kane scored three goals and the Chicago Blackhawks beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 4-1 Friday night for their 10th straight win.

"I think I've had a few two-goal games but I guess it just never really happened," Kane said. "I wouldn't trade the two in the playoffs for anything in the regular season but it's nice to get the first one."

Kane's first playoff hat trick came on May 11, 2009, against Vancouver in a 7-5 win in the clinching Game 6 of the Western Conference semifinals. His second was on June 8, 2013, against Los Angeles in Game 5 of the West finals, with his game-winner in the second overtime sending the Blackhawks to the Stanley Cup Final.

Artemi Panarin also scored and assisted on two of Kane's goals for the Blackhawks. Scott Darling made 28 saves to earn the win in net for Chicago while Corey Crawford took the night off after a 2-1 win in Montreal the night before.

Kane, who added an assist for a four-point night, now has an NHL-leading 28 goals on the season.

The win puts Chicago in first in the Central Division, a point ahead of the Dallas Stars, who lost to Anaheim.

"We're happy with the way we're trending but we're not satisfied with where we're at," Kane said. "We still feel like we can improve, our coaches feel like we can improve so there's plenty of things we can do better."

Morgan Rielly scored for Toronto, which has lost four in a row. James Reimer stopped 25 shots.

The Maple Leafs were whistled for six penalties — including four in the second period — with Chicago earning two power-play goals.

"I think that's one of their skills — the power play," Rielly said. "I think they're really good at it. They use each other well. They really make the ice big and create opportunities."

"Their D got pucks to the net and created scoring chances and that's one of their strengths."

Lightning 5, Penguins 4 (OT): Vladislav Namestnikov completed a hat trick in overtime and host Tampa Bay beat Pittsburgh to extend its season-high four-game winning streak.

Valtteri Filppula and Anton Stralman also scored for Tampa Bay and Steven Stamkos had two assists. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 36 saves.

Pittsburgh got goals from Kris Letang, Patric Hornqvist, Trevor Daley and Chris Kunitz. Evgeni Malkin had two assists, giving him 23 assists and 42 points in 31 games against Tampa Bay.

Namestnikov scored the winner from in close 2:11 into the extra session.

Ducks 4, Stars 2: At Anaheim, Calif., Jakob Silfverberg had a goal and an assist and the NHL's lowest-scoring team blasted the highest-scoring team for four goals in the first period.

After Silfverberg and Sami Vatanen scored 31 seconds apart in the opening minutes, Hampus Lindholm and Corey Perry scored 33 seconds apart later in the first period while the Ducks shredded the Stars' defense and goalie Kari Lehtonen in a 12:32 stretch.

Frederik Andersen made 22 saves for the Ducks, who have won seven of 10.

Canucks 3, Hurricanes 2 (OT): Bo Horvat scored his second goal with 1:35 left in overtime and visiting Vancouver beat Carolina.

Horvat also had two goals against Carolina in a 3-2 win nine days earlier and has scored four of his eight goals this season against the Eastern Conference foe.

Linden Vey also scored and Jacob Markstrom made 38 saves for Vancouver.

Jets 1, Wild 0: Rookie Connor Hellebuyck became the first goalie to shut out Minnesota this season, and visiting Winnipeg used an early goal by Blake Wheeler win the game.

Hellebuyck won his NHL debut at Minnesota on Nov. 27 with a 3-1 decision and made 24 saves in this one. Detroit is now the only remaining NHL team that hasn't gone scoreless in a game this season.

Bruins 4, Sabres 1: Zdeno Chara floated in the go-ahead goal from the left point 29 seconds into the third period and visiting Boston beat Buffalo.

Ryan Spooner scored an insurance goal with 9:07 left and added two assists, and Brett Connolly scored into an empty net with 1:09 remaining. Matt Beleskey had a goal and an assist, and Boston snapped a 0-2-1 skid and improved to 2-4-1 in its past seven.

The Bruins beat Buffalo by overcoming a 1-0 first-period deficit and after squandering third-period leads in losing each of their past two: A 3-2 loss at Philadelphia on Wednesday night and a 2-1 loss at the New York Rangers on Monday night.