

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Iraq: 3 Americans in Baghdad abducted

*The Washington Post*

BAGHDAD — Three Americans reported missing from a Baghdad neighborhood were kidnapped by militiamen from an apartment in the capital on Saturday, a senior police official and resident of the building said.

A statement from Baghdad Operations Command on Monday confirmed that “three people with American citizenship” were kidnapped in the capital.

A Baghdad police colonel, speaking on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the media, said that the Americans are employed as contractors at the Baghdad International Airport. He did not say which company employed the individuals.

Another police official in

Baghdad, a major general also speaking on condition of anonymity, gave the names of the abducted individuals as Amro Mohamed, Wael al-Mahdawi and Rusul Farad, a woman. The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad did not respond to a request to verify the names. Two senior security officials said the missing Americans are of Iraqi origin.

The three Americans appear to have been seized by Shiite militiamen in the Dora neighborhood in southern Baghdad, the police colonel said. The area from which they were taken is controlled by Shiite militias, including the Iran-backed Asai'b Ahl al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, he said.

The colonel said the group had been invited to the home of their Iraqi interpreter. But a resident of the apartment building

where the Americans reportedly were seized said that they were taken from a second-story apartment that he described as being well-known as a brothel. A police major general also said the apartment was a brothel, in a building of eight residents.

The resident said the apartment is subject to frequent raids by Asa'ib al-Haq, although typically the men found inside are simply told to leave. He said he witnessed part of the raid, but that it happened late at night and was over quickly.

The Baghdad Operations Command in its statement described the apartment as “suspicious.” An intelligence officer assigned to Dora said they had raided the apartment in the wake of the kidnapping and found whiskey bottles, but that the residence had been

abandoned.

The owner of the apartment was a man locals referred to as “Abu Maria,” the intelligence officer and other residents in the area said. Abu Maria was known for throwing illicit parties, they said.

“They went to an inappropriate place,” Iraqi lawmaker Iskander Witwit said of the Americans, referring to the alleged brothel. “Iraqi security forces are working very hard now to locate them.”

Dora was a dangerous Sunni insurgent hub, and site of some of the worst sectarian cleansing in the capital in 2006-07. Some areas of Dora are now ruled by militias, residents and officials said. Iraq's Shiite militias for years have carried out raids on bars, brothels and liquor stores, which they say are un-Islamic.

## Gaps apparent in account of US sailors' detention

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — In its first official account of Iran's seizure and subsequent release of 10 U.S. sailors in the Persian Gulf, the U.S. military said Monday that the only items found missing from their two recovered boats were SIM cards for two satellite phones.

But key questions — such as why the sailors had deviated from their planned route to enter Iranian territorial waters — remain unanswered in the account released by U.S. Central Command. It's calling the description a preliminary timeline of the events of Jan. 12-13.

“A Navy command investigation initiated Jan. 14 will provide a more complete accounting of events,” CENTCOM said.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter said last week while visiting

CENTCOM headquarters in Florida that the boat crews had “misnavigated.” He did not say how that mistake happened or provide other substantial details about an episode that posed a potential complication to efforts by Washington and Tehran to establish better relations.

The sailors were traveling in small armed vessels known as riverine command boats, headed from Kuwait to Bahrain, which is the location of the Navy's 5th Fleet.

“The planned transit path for the mission was down the middle of the Gulf and not through the territorial waters of any country other than Kuwait and Bahrain,” the account said. The boats were seized by Iran and escorted at gunpoint to Farsi Island, which is in the middle of the Gulf and home to an Iranian military facility.

Along the approximately 300-mile journey, they were to have refueled by linking up with a U.S. Coast Guard vessel, the Monomoy, in international waters. The timeline said that approximately 10 minutes after the scheduled refueling, CENTCOM's naval headquarters at Bahrain received a report that the boats were being questioned by Iranians. The account does not explain who sent the report or whether it included other details.

About 19 minutes later, the naval headquarters “was advised of degraded communications with” the two boats, the account added. After an additional 26 minutes, the naval headquarters was notified of a total loss of communication with the boats. It does not explain who advised the headquarters of this problem or its apparent

cause.

In the hours after the seizure of the Americans became public on Jan. 12, there were conflicting reports about what caused the sailors to stray off their intended course. Monday's official account did not explain the reason. It said only that the crews “deviated” from their planned course. It made no reference to the navigation error cited by Carter last week.

“At some point one [of the two boats] had indications of a mechanical issue in a diesel engine which caused the crews to stop and begin troubleshooting,” the account said. Because the boats were traveling together, the other boat also stopped. At this point, they were in Iranian territorial waters, “although it's not clear the crew was aware of their exact location,” it added.

# Clinton, Sanders clash on guns, health care

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders tangled in a Democratic Party presidential debate over who is tougher on gun control and Wall Street and how to steer the future of health care in America.

The debate Sunday night was the last Democratic matchup before primary voting begins next month and both sides were eager to rumble as polls showed the race tightening in the leadoff states of Iowa and New Hampshire.

Clinton rapped Sanders, the Vermont senator, for voting repeatedly with the powerful gun lobby, and then welcomed his weekend reversal of position to support legislation that would

deny gun manufacturers legal immunity.

Sanders, in turn, said Clinton's assertion that he kowtowed to the gun lobby was "very disingenuous" and pointed to his lifetime rating of a D- from the National Rifle Association.

On health care, Sanders released his plan for a government-run, single-payer plan just hours before the debate, and used his opening statement to call for health care "for every man, woman and child as a right."

Clinton, by contrast, urged less sweeping action to build on President Barack Obama's health care plan by reducing out-of-pocket costs and to control spending on prescription drugs. She suggested Sanders' health care plan would impose a heavier tax burden on the

middle class.

The two tangled over financial policy, too, with Sanders suggesting Clinton won't be tough enough on Wall Street given the big contributions and speaking fees she's accepted. Clinton, in turn, faulted Sanders' past votes to deregulate financial markets and to ease up on federal oversight.

Clinton worked aggressively to associate herself with President Barack Obama, claiming credit for her role in the run-up to the Iran nuclear deal as well as praising the health care law.

Turning to national security, both Sanders and Clinton voiced strong support for Obama's diplomatic overtures to Iran and opposition to sending U.S. ground troops into Syria. Clinton defended her outreach to Russia early in her term as

secretary of state, but hesitated when asked to describe her relationship with Vladimir Putin, whose return to the Russian presidency heralded the worsening of U.S.-Russian relations.

"My relationship with him — it's interesting," Clinton said to laughs in the debate hall. "It's one, I think, of respect." But she added it was critical to constantly stand up to Putin, describing him as a bully who "will take as much as he possibly can."

The third participant in the debate, former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, tried persistently to insert himself into the conversation. He focused on his record as Maryland's governor and accused both Clinton and Sanders of being inconsistent on gun control.

## New King Day focus in SC with flag gone

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — For the first time in 17 years, civil rights leaders gathered at the South Carolina Statehouse to pay homage to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. without the Confederate flag casting a long shadow over them.

The flag was taken down over the summer after police said a young white man shot nine black church members to death during a Bible study in Charleston. Following the massacre at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church,

Gov. Nikki Haley reversed course and made it a priority for lawmakers to pass legislation to remove the flag.

At the Statehouse, about 1,000 people assembled under chilly, sunny skies to mark the 30th anniversary of the federal holiday honoring the slain civil rights leader, who was killed in 1968.

It was one of many events across the country. In Michigan, people delivered bottled water to residents of Flint amid the city's drinking water crisis. In Atlanta, an overflow crowd listened as to the nation's hous-

ing secretary talk about the 50th anniversary of King's visit to Chicago to launch a campaign for fair housing.

In South Carolina, the state NAACP said there is still more work to do to honor King and the theme of this year's rally is "education equity," with speakers calling for South Carolina to spend more money to help students in poorer, more rural school districts, which frequently have a majority of black students. The event included appearances by all three main Democratic presidential candidates.

## Upper Midwest struck by dangerous arctic air

CHICAGO — An arctic air mass moved across the upper Midwest on Sunday, freezing water pipes in Minnesota and leading Chicago officials to ask residents to check on neighbors.

Due to El Nino, winter got off to a mild start. But the blast of dangerous cold moved east across the Northern Plains and Great Lakes over the weekend.

Authorities in Milwaukee said a 21-year-old woman probably died of exposure to the cold. She had reportedly left a house party and was found outside by a passer-by; she was pronounced dead just before noon Sunday.

Temperatures bottomed out at 36 degrees below in Fosston, Minn. More than 800 miles to the southeast, wind chills in Indianapolis were expected to plummet to 20 degrees below zero. It was so cold in western Minnesota that traffic lights went dark Sunday in Montevideo when a transformer blew. One homeowner's bid to thaw pipes in West Duluth caused a fire that led to \$37,000 in damages, WDIO-TV reported.

From The Associated Press

## Support leg breaks as SpaceX lands on barge

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — After successfully delivering a U.S.-European ocean-monitoring satellite into orbit, a SpaceX rocket made a hard landing on a floating barge in the roiling Pacific, breaking a support leg and toppling over Sunday.

SpaceX announcers said the first stage of the Falcon 9 was not upright after reaching the 300-by-170-foot landing pad in choppy seas about 200 miles west of San Diego.

The rocket launched as planned at 10:42 a.m. Saturday from Vandenberg Air Force Base, northwest of Los Angeles,

streaking through a cloud-filled sky before eventually sending its second stage and a Jason-3 satellite into orbit.

The failed landing was a setback for the Hawthorne, Calif., company's plan to reduce launch costs by reusing rockets rather than having them fall into the ocean.



# Broncos advance to AFC championship

Associated Press

DENVER — This would've been no way to send Peyton Manning into the offseason.

Seven dropped passes. A whiplash-inducing, blindside hit from an unblocked blitz.

A flurry of field goals and a defense that gave up big chunks of yards too often.

All that ugliness got set aside thanks to the sort of comeback that has defined the Denver Broncos all season.

They rallied for a 23-16 victory over the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday to move themselves and their 39-year-old quarterback one win away from the Super Bowl.

The 17th edition of Manning-Brady is set for next Sunday. But before that, Manning will savor a win in Denver's 17th game of the season — one every bit as rough, rugged and up in the air as any of the previous 16.

"This was a dog fight, a grinder and went down to the last drive," Manning said. "If you can be in a lot of those games and win those games, it certainly gives you confidence and, hey, it's playoff football."

The Broncos (13-4) improved to 10-3 on the season in games decided by seven or less.

This one turned when Broncos cornerback Bradley Roby punched the ball out of Pittsburgh running back Fitz Toussaint's hands with 9:52 left.

Until then, Denver had settled for four field goals and trailed 13-12.

After the day's only turnover, the Broncos put together their only touchdown drive — 13 plays, 65 yards over 6:52, capped by a 1-yard run by C.J. Anderson. A 2-point conversion made it 20-13.

"Bottom line, you lose the turnover battle in a hostile environment against good people and it's going to cost you," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said. "And it cost us today."

Making his first start since Nov. 15, Manning finished 21 for 37 for 222 yards, with no touchdowns or interceptions. The totals might have been better were it not for seven drops from his receivers.

Next up, the Patriots, who fell 30-24 in overtime to Denver earlier this season, when Brock Osweiler was playing in place of Manning while he nursed his injured foot.

"They're one of the best teams in the AFC," Broncos linebacker Von Miller said. "Let's go out and play and see who wants the Super Bowl."

Things we learned from Sunday's game:

**Stepping up:** With no Antonio Brown (concussion), Ben Roethlisberger found another big-play receiver in Martavis Bryant, who caught nine passes for 154 yards.

"The plan for me was to stay focused — stay focused on my job and go out and handle my business," said Bryant, who also had two carries for 40 yards.

Bryant may have been so open because Denver's defense was in zone a lot, with Pro Bowl cornerback Chris Harris Jr. dealing with a sore shoulder.

"We were able to move the ball, and then we just ... we kind of get down there and hurt ourselves," Roethlisberger said. "Part of that was because they're the No. 1 defense in the world."

**Can't-miss McManus:** Broncos kicker Brandon McManus went from missing kicks in five consecutive games down the stretch to making history Sunday: His 5-for-5 performance in tricky crosswinds helped Denver come away with points when the offense kept stalling.

"During warmups, we went out there and it was a pretty calm day — a nice, tempered day. We come out 7 minutes before kickoff and I see a 30 mph crosswind come in over the Rockies," McManus said. "So, I wasn't nervous at the time, but I knew it would make for an exciting day."

McManus is the seventh kicker to make all five of his field goal tries in a playoff game.

Butterfinger Broncos: Denver's biggest bugaboo this season has been dropped passes, and that trend continued, with Demaryius Thomas, C.J. Anderson and Ronnie Hillman all letting passes bounce off their hands.

Emmanuel Sanders and Bennie Fowler each had two drops. Fowler made up for it with his 31-yard catch on third-and-12 to set up Denver's only touchdown.

"A couple of those were the wind, but as a receiver we should have still made those plays," Thomas said.

## Toussaint fumble costly for Steelers

Associated Press

DENVER — Ben Roethlisberger folded himself into the chair next to running back Fitz Toussaint in the locker room, leaned in for a 60-second conversation, and when it was over Big Ben gave the backup to the backup two reassuring slaps on the shoulder.

Roethlisberger told the runner it wasn't his fault the Steelers lost Sunday.

But not even Big Ben could convince Toussaint it was true.

"I have to protect the ball. There's no excuse for that," he said.

His fumble, with 9:52 left in the fourth quarter, was the only turnover of the day and it led to Denver's only touchdown of the day — the go-ahead score with 3 minutes left that sparked the Broncos to a 23-16 victory.

The Steelers (11-7) were ahead by one and in scoring range when Broncos cornerback Bradley Roby punched the ball out of Toussaint's hand as he was going to the ground. DeMarcus Ware recovered it.

Over the next 6:52, Peyton Manning led the Broncos on a methodical, 65-yard march — their first drive of the day inside the Pittsburgh 10. It all played out like a slow-moving nightmare to the second-year player, promoted from the practice squad in November, with the injuries piling up.

"Over and over in my head, kept thinking, I could've protected the ball a little more," Toussaint said of his thoughts during Denver's go-ahead drive. "Obviously, they made a great play. You've got to give them credit, but in that situation, I put it on myself."

Toussaint is a third-stringer, who came into the game with a total of 100 yards in the regular and postseason combined.

# Panthers hold off Seahawks after fast start

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Cam Newton said it felt like the Carolina Panthers players, coaches and fans were all getting a little tight in the second half of their NFC divisional playoff win Sunday against the Seattle Seahawks.

And for good reason.

Carolina jumped out to a 31-point half-time lead, then had to hold off a furious Seahawks rally to win 31-24 to advance to next Sunday's NFC championship game against the Arizona Cardinals.

"We have been known to take our foot off the throttle and we have to find that killer instinct," Newton said. "Yeah, we won the football game, but there are some things we have to go back and fix and do better with."

The Panthers surrendered a 28-point lead to the New York Giants, a 23-point lead to Green Bay and a 17-point lead to Indianapolis earlier this season, but hung on to win all of those games.

Coach Ron Rivera said he wishes the Panthers could have skipped right to the second half on Sunday and not even gone

into the locker room for a break.

Of course it doesn't work that way.

The Seahawks adjusted some things at the half, including adding protection to Russell Wilson that helped them mount a comeback behind three Wilson touchdown passes.

"When you get a big lead like that, one of the things is you have to learn to not relax," Rivera said. "You have to learn to continue to attack. It is one of those things that we most certainly as coaches have to make sure we are putting them in the right position to do those things."

Offensively, the Panthers were out-gained 280-75 in the second half and out-scored 24-0.

Panthers tight end Greg Olsen said he knows that is a fine line for coaches to walk when they have such a big lead and are working on the clock.

"Those games are tough," Olsen said. "You are up 31-0 and you don't want to give them life or give them a spark. You want to keep your aggression but it's hard. You don't want to do anything silly either. You don't want to take a chance and give up a big play. So it's a fine line between keep-

ing aggression and tempo."

Here are some things we learned from the Seahawks-Panthers divisional playoff game:

**Stewart looked strong.** Jonathan Stewart missed three games with a foot injury to close the season, but looked rested and healthy on Sunday. He ram-bled 59 yards on the first play from scrimmage and ran for 106 yards on 19 carries and two touchdowns against the league's top-ranked rushing defense. The late-season rest might pay off for Stewart as the Panthers move deeper into the playoffs.

**Lynch a nonfactor.** Seahawks power back Marshawn Lynch returned from an eight-game absence following abdominal surgery but was never a factor. His first carry went for minus-3 yards during the Seahawks' terrible start that put them in a big hole, forcing them to go to a hurry-up tempo and throw the ball more. Lynch finished with six carries for 20 yards. "He didn't have much of an impact today because we couldn't really run our offense," center Patrick Lewis said. "We try to be a hard-nosed, running football team."

**Wilson's mobility.** While the Panthers managed to sack Wilson five times, the Seahawks quarterback kept plays alive with his mobility during Seattle's comeback bid. And that helped him throw for 255 yards and three touchdowns in the second half. "I thought he was phenomenal," Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said of Wilson's second half. "I don't know how much more you can expect of him."

**Kuechly a factor.** All-Pro linebacker Luke Kuechly played a huge role in Carolina's win, recording 11 tackles and returning an interception for a touchdown. Kuechly was quick to give credit to the defensive line, including tackle Kawann Short, who got pressure on Wilson. "They got a great push and a great pass rush and it makes my job easy," Kuechly said. "Those guys really get the credit, I was just able to get under and catch it."

**Davis does it again.** Panthers linebacker Thomas Davis — the team's longest tenured player — came up with an onside kick to seal Carolina's win. Teammates have teased Davis relentlessly about being on the "hands team," but Davis had the last laugh on Sunday.



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# Badgers edge No. 4 Spartans

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin interim coach Greg Gard likes to say experience is a great teacher.

Maybe that means the Badgers have learned something after coming up just short in games against the likes of Maryland, Indiana and Marquette.

Whereas Wisconsin fumbled away late opportunities in recent close losses, this time Ethan Happ scored underneath with 10 seconds left as the Badgers beat Michigan State 77-76 on Sunday.

Coming in, Wisconsin had lost its four Big Ten games by an average of less than four points, including a painful loss to the Terrapins Jan. 9, as Melo Trimble hit a last-second three-pointer.

"We were just a little bit better in each possession," said Gard, who won his first game against a ranked team since taking over last month. "Did we play any differently? No. We were still trying to do the same things. But we were a little bit better in how we executed at certain times."

The Badgers (10-9, 2-4 Big Ten) looked on the verge of letting another one slip away after Denzel Valentine hit a runner to put the Spartans (16-3, 3-3) up 76-72. The Badgers may have faltered in the clutch before, but this time they delivered.

Bronson Koenig, who scored 27 points, hit a three-pointer with Valentine in his face that pulled Wisconsin within 76-75 with 27 seconds left.

The Badgers then went to a full-court press for the first time in the game, forcing a turnover as Eron Harris stepped out of bounds while double-teamed.

Koenig then found Happ underneath the basket. The 6-foot-9 forward briefly bobbled the ball in heavy traffic, spun out from underneath the hoop and hit the winning shot.

The Spartans had a final chance to win,

## OSU's Reid tossed for tripping ref

SALT LAKE CITY — Jarmal Reid's split-second decision to trip a referee sent Oregon State to a loss — and could cost the Beavers' forward a whole lot more.

Reid sent referee Tommy Nunez tumbling to the court and was ejected with 2:56 remaining, starting Utah's rally that led to a 59-53 victory Sunday night.

"I don't know what he thought on that play," Utah's Jacob Poeltl said. "It's unusual, to say the least."

After stealing the ball from Poeltl, who was driving to the basket, Reid tried dribbling upcourt. But a lunging Poeltl seemed to bump Reid and the Oregon State forward slipped and fell to the floor.

Reid complained that there was no

foul call and while getting up it appeared that he made eye contact with Nunez and stuck his right leg out. Nunez went right down.

"It was obviously a fortuitous deal for us," Utah coach Larry Krystkowiak said. "Not a great break for them. It's unfortunate that was part of the game."

Reid was assessed a Flagrant 2, and Brandon Taylor made the free throw to give Utah a 53-52 lead — its first lead of the game.

The Beavers (11-5, 2-3 Pac-12) were outscored 6-1 the rest of the way.

Oregon State coach Wayne Tinkle said he didn't see the play, but Reid "swore he didn't do anything." Officials told the coach it was clearly intentional.

and did not take the lead for good until Ben Moore's running floater as he was fouled made it 33-30 with 12:41 to go.

**Florida State 69, No. 13 Virginia 62:** Dwayne Bacon scored 18 points and host Florida State broke a five-game losing streak against ranked teams.

The Seminoles (12-5, 2-3 ACC) trailed 39-36 early in the second half, but took control with a 12-3 run as Malik Beasley had five points.

**No. 16 Iowa 82, Michigan 71:** Jarrod Uthoff scored 23 points and Iowa is off to its first 5-0 start in the Big Ten in 19 years.

Peter Jok had 14 of his 16 points in the second half for the surging Hawkeyes (14-3, 5-0), who have won seven straight games.

# Westbrook's triple-double leads OKC past Miami

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Russell Westbrook had his second consecutive triple-double to help the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the Miami Heat 99-74 on Sunday.

Westbrook finished with 13 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds. It was his fifth triple-double of the season and the 24th of his career.

Kevin Durant had 24 points and 10 rebounds, Serge Ibaka scored 19 points, and Dion Waiters added 18 for the Thunder. They are the third team to reach 30 wins this season.

Dwyane Wade, who sat out Friday against Denver with shoulder soreness, led the Heat with 22 points on his 34th birthday. Hassan Whiteside added 14 points, 11 rebounds and four blocks for the Heat.

It was the fewest points scored by the Heat this season and the fewest allowed by the Thunder.

**Spurs 112, Mavericks 83:** LaMarcus Aldridge scored 23 points and host San Antonio beat the Dallas to remain undefeated at home.

The Spurs are a franchise-best 24-0 at home and have won 33 straight at the AT&T Center dating to March 2015. At 36-6, San Antonio matched its best start after 42 games, tying the mark set in 2010-11.

The Spurs loss Tony Parker late in the third quarter to right hip soreness. The injury forced Parker to miss two games at the beginning of the month.

Wesley Matthews led Dallas with 12 points.

**Rockets 112, Lakers 95:** James Harden scored 31 points and Houston pulled away to beat host Los Angeles.

Dwight Howard had 14 points and 15 rebounds for his ninth straight double-double, his longest such streak since a 14-game run three seasons ago.

Lou Williams led Los Angeles with 20 points. Kobe Bryant, trying to play through a sore right Achilles, had five points in 24 minutes and tied a season high with nine assists before sitting out the fourth quarter.

**Nuggets 129, Pacers 126:** Randy Foye hit a go-ahead three-pointer with 21 seconds left for Denver in its comeback victory over Indiana.

The Nuggets came back in the second half to get their seventh straight win at home over the Pacers. Danilo Gallinari had 23 points, and Will Barton had 21, including two free throws with 6 seconds left.

Myles Turner scored a career-high 25 points for Indiana, and Monta Ellis added 24.

**Timberwolves 117, Suns 87:** Ricky Rubio and Andrew Wiggins scored 18 points each and Minnesota beat visiting Phoenix to snap a nine-game losing streak.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 14 points and eight rebounds for the Timberwolves. They shot 56.5 percent and won for the first time since beating Utah on Dec. 30.

Brandon Knight scored 20 points on 9-for-20 shooting, and Markieff Morris had 17 points and five rebounds for free-falling Phoenix. The Suns have lost 13 of 14 games to drop to 13-29.

# Williams, Capitals knock off Rangers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Justin Williams remembered that the last time he recorded a hat trick was 2006 when he played for the Carolina Hurricanes.

"It was a long time ago," Williams said.

It has also been a while since the Washington Capitals lost back-to-back games in regulation. They kept up their impressive streak of bouncing back from losses Sunday by beating the New York Rangers 5-2 on the strength of Williams' second career hat trick.

"We're not used to losing, and we don't like it," Williams said. "You throw a stinker in there and you want to redeem yourself, and luckily for us we were able to do it the next night."

The Capitals had a rare clunker in a loss at the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday but improved to 10-0-1 after a loss this season. This one was even more meaningful because Washington did it despite losing starting goaltender Braden Holtby because of dehydration.

After giving up two goals to Chris Kreider and making 20 saves, Holtby left the game late in the second period. Philipp Grubauer stopped all 11 shots he faced in relief.

Coach Barry Trotz said Holtby's dehydration was not serious.

"He said that he was having a little trouble getting focused, and he didn't get hit or anything," Trotz said. "I think we've got it under control. He'll be good. We'll

get him a day (off) here ... so he should rebound pretty well."

Winning with Holtby out of the net showed another dimension to the NHL-leading Capitals' ability to win any way. They haven't dealt with much on-ice adversity in recent months, but when faced with it, they delivered offensively to finish off the rival Rangers.

"They're the best team in the NHL right now, and if you get down a couple goals, defensively they're so sound it's tough to come back," Rangers center Derek Stepan said. "We have to find a way to try to climb back into it."

**Blackhawks 5, Canadiens 2:** Chicago matched a franchise record with their 11th straight victory, using two goals from Jonathan Toews to beat slumping Montreal.

Marian Hossa had an empty-net goal and two assists for host Chicago, and Patrick Kane had a goal and an assist. Richard Panik scored his first goal of the season, and Corey Crawford, a Montreal native, made 27 saves while improving to 5-0-2 in seven career starts against his hometown team.

**Penguins 5, Hurricanes 0:** Sidney Crosby scored two goals, Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 22 shots for his third shut-out of the season and 41st of his career and host Pittsburgh beat Carolina.

Penguins defenseman Trevor Daley scored his third of the season in his 800th NHL game. Olli Maatta scored his fifth and Conor Sheary his second for the

Penguins, who are one of several teams in the hunt for a wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

**Kings 3, Ducks 2:** Anze Kopitar had a goal and an assist, Vincent Lecavalier added a power-play goal and Los Angeles opened the Freeway Faceoff rivalry series for the season with a victory over host Anaheim.

Tyler Toffoli scored and Jonathan Quick made 30 saves for the Kings, who beat their Southern California archrivals in regulation for the first time in 11 regular-season meetings.

**Lightning 3, Panthers 1:** Nikita Kucherov had two goals and host Tampa Bay extended a season-high winning streak to five games by beating Atlantic Division-leading Florida.

Andrej Sustr had the other Tampa Bay goal and Ben Bishop made 26 saves to help the Lightning move within five points of Florida.

**Canucks 2, Islanders 1 (SO):** Ryan Miller made 47 saves and Radim Vrbata scored in the shootout, leading visiting Vancouver to a win over New York.

Despite receiving an 25-save effort from Jaroslav Halak, the Islanders' fell to 24-15-6 as their two-game winning streak came to an end.

**Flyers 2, Red Wings 1 (SO):** Claude Giroux scored in a shootout and in regulation, lifting Philadelphia over host Detroit.

Jakub Voracek also scored in the shootout and Michal Neuvirth denied two Detroit shooters.