

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Blizzard paralyzes much of East Coast

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Millions of people awoke Saturday to heavy snow outside their doorsteps, strong winds that threatened to increase through the weekend, and largely empty roads as residents from the South to the Northeast heeded warnings to hunker down.

Snow had started falling Friday, and Kentucky felt quite a brunt from that, with 18 inches in some areas. Drivers who opted to take to the roads were stranded on a long stretch of Interstate 75 south of Lexington because of a string of crashes and blowing snow, state police and witnesses said. The road was closed overnight, but re-

opened early Saturday morning, with traffic moving slowly, said

Motorists also were reported stranded along pockets of the Pennsylvania Turnpike near the Allegheny Mountain Tunnel in Somerset County.

In the Washington, D.C., metro area, nearly 2 feet of snow was measured on the ground Saturday morning. In Silver Spring, Md., about 20 inches of snow was outside by daybreak. Lightning flashed, and thunder-snow rumbled. Plows cleared a heavily traveled road; ambulances and trucks were able to get through, but few other vehicles were moving.

According to the National Weather Service's website early

Saturday, 18 inches of snow already had fallen on Ulysses in eastern Kentucky, while 16 inches fell in Beattyville. Between 14 inches to 15.5 inches had fallen across Kentucky.

Other states that recorded snowfall amounts greater than 6 inches included Delaware, Georgia, North Carolina, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia. Various locations in Georgia and Alabama received between 1 and 3.5 inches of snow.

In New Jersey, 40,000 people were without power early Saturday, most of them along the coast.

The ice and snow made travel treacherous, with thousands of accidents and at least

nine deaths reported along the region's roadways. By late Friday, Virginia State Police had reported 989 car crashes statewide since the storm began, and had assisted nearly 800 disabled vehicles, said Ken Schrad, spokesman for the Virginia State Police Joint Information Center.

About 7,600 flights were canceled Friday and Saturday — about 15 percent of the airlines' schedules, according to the flight tracking service FlightAware. They hope to be fully back in business by Sunday afternoon.

Forecasters said as much as 2 feet or more of snowfall was forecast for Baltimore and Washington, and nearly as much for Philadelphia.

Report: Errors by airmen damaged nuclear missile

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Officials say errors by three airmen troubleshooting a nuclear missile in its launch silo in 2014 triggered a "mishap" that damaged the missile, prompting the Air Force to strip the airmen of their nuclear certification and launch an investigation.

In a statement released Friday to The Associated Press, the Air Force declined to provide key additional details or a copy of the report produced last November by the Accident Investigation Board, saying the information was classified and too sensitive to be made public.

Under Air Force regulations, Accident Investigation Board reports are supposed to be made public. The Air Force did release a brief summary that said the full report was classified on Nov. 9, 2015, by Gen. Robin Rand, who took over as

commander of Air Force Global Strike Command in July 2015.

The Air Force said the accident caused no injuries and posed no risk to public safety.

The damaged missile was removed from its underground silo, which is designated Juliet-07 and situated among wheat fields and wind turbines about nine miles west of Peetz, Colo. The silo, one of 10 in a cluster, or flight, that straddles the Colorado-Nebraska border, is controlled by launch officers of the 320th Missile Squadron and is administered by the 90th Missile Wing at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming.

The Air Force's brief summary of the Juliet-07 mishap said the Minuteman 3 missile "became non-operational" during a diagnostic test on the evening of May 16, 2014. The next morning, a "mishap crew" chief, who was not identified, "did not correctly adhere to technical guid-

ance" during troubleshooting efforts, "subsequently damaging the missile."

The investigation report summary said there were four contributing factors to the accident, of which it identified two. One was the mishap chief's failure to follow technical guidance. The other was that the mishap chief "lacked the necessary proficiency level" to anticipate the consequences of his actions during the troubleshooting.

To prevent a recurrence of their mistake and the accident it caused, the Air Force said it has "strengthened" technical guidance, modified training curriculum and shared information about the conditions that led to the mishap with other units that operate Minuteman 3 missiles.

When the AP inquired about the accident in December 2014, Sheets said no details could be released until after the accident

investigation board had completed its work and presented its findings to the commander of Global Strike Command. He assured the AP that the investigation report would be made public, although when the AP filed a request for it in March 2015 under the Freedom of Information Act, the Air Force denied the request, saying the information was "exempt from mandatory disclosure" and would be withheld from release because it consisted of "advice, opinions, evaluations or recommendations."

The most recent previous Air Force investigation of an accident at an ICBM launch silo was in 2008. That investigation found that a fire in a launcher equipment room went undetected for five days. It uncovered the remarkable fact that the Air Force was using duct tape on cables linked to the missile.

Navy littoral ship sidelined in Singapore

Bloomberg News

A U.S. Navy littoral combat ship is sidelined in port in Singapore because of damage to gears that propel the vessel, according to a memo from the service, which blamed failure to use enough lubricating oil.

The USS Fort Worth, built by Lockheed Martin Corp., had damage to combining gears that let the ship run on a mix of diesel and gas turbine engines, according to the memo obtained by Bloomberg News. "There is no estimated date of completion" to the repairs, it said.

The incident is the second in little more than a month involving the vessels, which cost on average about \$440 million each, according to the Congressional Research Service. The Navy towed the USS Milwaukee more than 40 nautical miles to port in Virginia last month in the Atlantic after its gears failed on Dec. 11, according to the Navy Times. The Navy memo said the two incidents weren't related.

Initial indications are that the gear damage in Singapore "appears to be caused by a failure to follow established procedures during maintenance," according to the memo. "During startup of the main propulsion diesel engines, lube oil was not supplied to the ship's combining gears."

The lack of oil "resulted in high-temperature alarms on the port and starboard combining gears," it said. It said a maintenance crew of representatives from the company that made the gears and Navy personnel based in Yokosuka, Japan, is "on board to evaluate the gears and make the necessary repairs."

Lt. Cmdr. Matt Knight, a spokesman for the Navy's Pacific Fleet, said the ship will remain in Singapore while it undergoes "a series of inspections to determine the extent of necessary repairs." He said the ship's crew was responsible for the failure to properly lubricate the gears.

The Fort Worth is on a 16-month deployment to Asia — a high-profile example of

the Obama administration's promised rebalance to Asia. The Navy wants to permanently base four littoral ships in Singapore. The service is also testing a new crew-rotation approach intended to allow for long deployments without exhausting sailors.

The latest incident is a setback for a vessel whose critics say is unreliable and not survivable in combat. The past two defense secretaries have cited shortcomings of the ship, built in separate versions by Lockheed and Austal Ltd., and both truncated plans for it. The latest effort came last month when Defense Secretary Ash Carter directed the Navy to reduce the program to 40 vessels from the program's original 52.

In a memo to Navy leaders, Carter wrote that the service "has overemphasized resources used to incrementally increase total ship numbers at the expense of critically needed investments in areas where our adversaries are not standing still, such as strike, ship survivability, electronic warfare and other capabilities."

Navy seeks sailors for cyberoperations program

Stars and Stripes

The Navy is searching for sailors to take part in a 12-month graduate program designed to meet the Defense Department's growing need for trained cyber professionals.

Sailors E-6 and above who have information systems technician and cryptologic technician networks ratings can apply for a chance to earn Master of Science degrees in applied cyberoperations, a Navy statement said. Applicants must hold Bachelor of Science degrees in technical fields such as computer science, electrical engineering or information and engineering technology.

A conditional letter of acceptance must be applied for and received by March 14. Selected students will begin classes either this September or in March 2017 at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., the statement said.

"[The curriculum] covers

a focused set of cyber topics suited for the technical enlisted workforce by providing graduates with a rigorous foundation in cyber security necessary for defensive and offensive cyber operations," NPS says in a program description on its website.

Classroom instruction is complemented with laboratory exercises, workshops, site visits, guest speakers and seminars. Students must also complete a capstone project and a cyber exercise.

"The opportunity to come here and get some advanced training is a big deal for us," Thomas Skoff, a member of the program's inaugural class, said in a Navy statement before graduating in 2013. "We are an integral part of the development of the Navy's cyber warfare capability. ... We will be leading junior sailors in the Navy's cyberwar efforts."

Visit www.npc.navy.mil and read message 013/16 for more information.

Naval Academy alumni, others voice opposition to midshipman title change

The (Annapolis, Md.) Capital

Should the Navy change the title of "midshipman?"

Thousands of people say no. Naval Academy alumni, Annapolis residents and others voiced opposition this week to the Navy's review of job titles in the pursuit of gender-integration — particularly the removal of the word "man" from ranks like midshipman.

Several readers reached out to The Capital to echo the sentiment of Anthony Papandrea, 76, a graduate of the Class of 1961 who called the initiative "political correctness run amok."

"Every time I think the PC Police has run out of ridiculous causes, they find something else to complain about," said Vince Zamaria, an Annapolis resident and midshipman sponsor for more than

a decade. "They will not be happy until they have ruined our country."

A Navy official said "it is likely that because of the history and legacy associated with the rank of midshipmen, there will not be a change" — but that the title is up for review nonetheless. A report of recommendations from the Chief of Naval Operations is due to the Secretary of the Navy April 1.

Jobs like construction man, corpsman and torpedoman "will likely be updated to better explain what the rating actually does and make them gender neutral," said the official, who spoke on a condition of anonymity.

Some readers suggested new titles of their own: midshipmate, middie, subensign and the title used by other military academies, cadet.

Battle of QB blue bloods

Associated Press

DENVER — The final chapter of the NFL's greatest quarterback rivalry will play out in all likelihood Sunday with the 17th meeting between Tom Brady and Peyton Manning.

New England and Denver play next season, but Manning is expected to have received his gold watch — and maybe another silver trophy — by then.

In that case, Sunday's showdown in the AFC championship between the Patriots and Broncos would mark the crest and the culmination of a clash that defines the two quarterback greats who transformed the game and transcended the sport.

"This is Jesse James and Wyatt Earp standing out in the street at high noon for the last showdown," Joe Theismann said. "You've got arguably the two greatest players that ever played the position. Peyton revolutionized the game and Tom, through his championships, has proven he's the best that's ever played the game."

Their respectful rivalry — they're neither best buddies nor mortal enemies — began on a cloudy afternoon in Foxboro Stadium on Sept. 30, 2001, and grew into something on par with Arnold Palmer vs. Jack Nicklaus or Wilt Chamberlain vs. Bill Russell.

"Our sports society is built around stars, and stars draw people to the game, those are the players they want to watch. You want to watch Ali and Frazier, Bird and Magic, Brady and Manning," said Tony Dungy, the coach of the Colts for Manning's only Super Bowl win. "We are seeing two just top-tier guys and everyone will root for one and against the other and pick sides and argue who is the best. It draws people, and it especially draws the casual people to the game."

This generation of football fans might never see anything like it again.

"Every football fan should watch this game because very seldom in life do you get to see two competitors as great as they are with this much at stake," Theismann said. "It's what's at stake that makes this one more interesting."

At stake: a shot at history and sweet revenge.

With a seventh trip to the Super Bowl, Brady, still on top of his considerable game at age 38, would get a crack at a fifth Super Bowl ring, something no starting QB has accomplished. He'd also put himself one victory away from the satisfaction of seeing Roger Goodell hand him another Lombardi Trophy. This, less than a year after the commissioner suspended him in the scandal over deflated footballs, a ban that was overturned in federal court.

With a fourth trip to the Super Bowl, Manning, two months shy of 40 and a shadow of his five-time MVP self, could become the first starting quarterback to deliver a Lombardi Trophy to the headquarters of two franchises. He'd also have a shot at recouping every penny of the \$4 million pay cut he took last winter and get the chance to ride off as a champion into that orange sunset — like his boss, John Elway, did nearly two decades ago.

Brady has won 11 of the 16 previous meetings, but they're 2-2 in the playoffs, including Denver's 26-16 victory in the

Other historic individual rivalries:

ALI-FRAZIER

Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier fought three times, including two of the most famous matches ever. Frazier defended his heavyweight championship with a unanimous decision over Ali in 1971 at Madison Square Garden in the "Fight of the Century." Ali won the rematch by decision in 1974. Then came "The Thrilla in Manila" in 1975. Ali won on a TKO after 14 rounds. **Honorable mentions:** Sugar Ray Leonard vs. Roberto Duran, Ray Robinson vs. Jake LaMotta.

CHAMBERLAIN-RUSSELL

Wilt Chamberlain and Bill Russell went head-to-head 142 times from 1959-69. Russell's Boston Celtics beat Chamberlain's teams 85 games. Chamberlain shattered records. Russell collected championship banners, winning nine to Chamberlain's one. **Honorable mention:** Larry Bird vs. Magic Johnson.

NICKLAUS-PALMER

Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer turned golf into a popular spectator sport on television. Nicklaus holds the record with 18 majors while Palmer captured seven. They finished 1-2 four times in majors. **Honorable mention:** Tiger Woods vs. Phil Mickelson.

FEDERER-NADAL

Roger Federer has a 17-14 edge over Rafael Nadal in career Grand Slam victories, but the head-to-head rivalry is one-sided. Nadal leads the series 23-11, including a 9-2 record in Grand Slams. Nadal's victory in the 2008 Wimbledon final is considered one of the best tennis matches in history. Both men also have long rivalries with Novak Djokovic. **Honorable mentions:** Chris Evert vs. Martina Navratilova; John McEnroe vs. Bjorn Borg.

GRETZKY-LEMIEUX

The Great One vs. Super Mario. Wayne Gretzky and Mario Lemieux dominated the NHL for two decades with one of the two players winning the scoring title every year between 1980 and 1997 except for one season. They never faced each other in the playoffs, however. **Honorable mention:** Sidney Crosby vs. Alex Ovechkin.

DIMAGGIO-WILLIAMS

Joltin' Joe vs. The Splendid Splinter. Yankees-Red Sox had to make the baseball list. Ted Williams remains the last player to hit over .400 (.406), but his tremendous 1941 season was overshadowed by Joe DiMaggio's 56-game hitting streak. Williams won two AL MVP awards and two triple crowns, but no World Series titles. DiMaggio was a three-time MVP who won nine World Series championships with New York. **Honorable mention:** Willie Mays vs. Mickey Mantle.

MESSI-RONALDO

The two best soccer players in the world play in the same league for two powerhouse teams. Since the Ballon d'Or was first awarded to the world's top player in 2010, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo are the only men to win it (Messi, 2010-12, 2015; Ronaldo 2013-14). In 2008, Ronaldo won the FIFA player of the year award, and Messi won in 2009. Messi's Barcelona team club won the UEFA championship last season, and Ronaldo's Real Madrid has not won the Spanish league since 2012, giving Messi some recent bragging rights. Internationally, Messi and Argentina lost to Germany in the finals of the World Cup, while Portugal and Ronaldo failed to get out of the group stage.

— Rob Maaddi, Associated Press

Mets sign Cespedes to \$75M, 3-year deal

NEW YORK — Slugging outfielder Yoenis Cespedes is returning to the New York Mets. How long he stays, he'll decide.

A person familiar with the deal says the star free agent and the National League champions agreed Friday night to a three-year contract for \$75 million.

The 30-year-old Cespedes can opt out of the contract after just one season and make it worth \$27.5 million. Cespedes also got a full no-trade clause.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal was still pending a physical. Other media outlets reported the terms earlier.

Cespedes was traded from Detroit to New York last July 31 and became an instant hit in his new home. He launched 17 home runs in 57 games, powering the Mets to their first World Series appearance since 2000. Kansas City won in five games.

LeBron drops another coach as Cavs fire Blatt

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio — There's no debating LeBron James' greatness. That's a slam dunk.

He's won two NBA titles, a pair of Olympic gold medals, four NBA MVP awards, universal respect of his peers, and the adulation of millions of basketball fans worldwide. At 31, and at the peak of his career, James has earned it all.

And, something else — a reputation as a coach killer.

James' calculating image wasn't helped when the Cleveland Cavaliers stunningly fired David Blatt on Friday, despite Blatt leading the team to the NBA Finals last season and an Eastern Conference-best 30-11 record this season.

James has played for three coaches during his two stints in Cleveland, with Tyronn Lue, the team's top assistant promoted by general manager David Griffin to take over his talented squad, the fourth Cavaliers coach to work with him.

Unlike his predecessors, Lue is already on solid footing with James, who respects the 38-year-old former point guard.

Blatt, on the other hand, seemed doomed from the start.

Mclroy, Fowler in 5-way tie for lead

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — Rory Mclroy and Rickie Fowler were part of a five-way tie for the lead at the Abu Dhabi Championship after Andy Sullivan made a triple-bogey in fading light to relinquish a two-shot advantage late in a fog-affected third round on Saturday.

Sullivan drove into a bush, couldn't find his ball, returned to the tee and eventually made a 7 at No. 9 in a dramatic finish to the day's play, which ended with most of the field yet to finish their third rounds.

Sullivan dropped to 9 under and was a shot behind Mclroy, Fowler, Branden Grace, Ian Poulter, and Joost Luiten, who all have holes to play early Sunday before starting the final round.

There are 21 players within three shots of the lead — and Jordan Spieth is among them.

From The Associated Press



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Warriors win in Kerr's return

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Steve Kerr has spoken of Stephen Curry taking it to another level this season — and Kerr watched it from the bench for the first time Friday night.

The reigning MVP banked in a shot from midcourt with a hand in his face at the halftime buzzer after his three-quarter court swish at the end of the first was just late and he finished with 39 points and a triple-double, helping Kerr win his season debut in the Golden State Warriors' 122-110 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Friday night.

"Great coaching," Kerr quipped. "Steph hits half-court shots all the time in practice."

Kerr returned from a leave of absence dating to Oct. 1 for complications following two back surgeries, and defending champion Golden State delivered for him by winning its 38th straight home game at Oracle Arena to match the 1985-86 Celtics for third-longest home winning streak all-time. The Warriors are 20-0 at home this season.

Curry added 12 assists and 10 rebounds for his second triple-double of the season and seventh of his career. He shimmied after his half-court shot and pounded his chest following his 201st three-pointer at the 6:26 mark of the third quarter.

"Two fun shots," Curry said of his long heaves. "I hadn't hit one in a while in a game from that far since Memphis last year. Funny that the first one went in and didn't count and then felt pretty confident in the second one just because I'd already done it once. Needed a little glass to help but it went in."

Golden State has 10 triple-doubles this season — Draymond Green has the other eight — to match the franchise record also done in 1959-60. Curry has 30 or more points in six of his last eight games, and Green added 22 points and 11 rebounds.

Curry also became the first player in NBA history to make 200 three-pointers in four straight seasons. The only player with more than four seasons of at least 200 threes is Ray Allen with five.

An emotional Kerr waved and said, "Thank you" when he received a rousing ovation during pregame introductions.

He led the Warriors to a franchise-best 67 wins and their first championship in 40 years last season as a first-year coach. Interim coach Luke Walton guided Golden State to an NBA-record 24-0 start and 39-4 record, and now goes back to his job as top assistant.

"It was a special night to have Coach Kerr back on the bench with all he's been through over the last seven months, to see him doing what he loves once again, it's amazing," Green said.

Monta Ellis led the Pacers with 18 points in his return to Oracle to face his former team. Myles Turner, who had averaged 20 points, 5.5 rebounds and 3.0 blocks over his previous two games, scored a career-high 31 points and grabbed eight rebounds.

Golden State made 10 of its first 14 shots, four of those by Green and two three-pointers by Curry to go ahead 25-8 on the way to a season sweep of the Pacers. The Warriors put up a 79-point first half — most in a first half in the NBA this season — on the way to a 131-123 road win at Indiana on Dec. 8.

Spurs 108, Lakers 95: Manu Ginobili scored a season-high 20 points, Kawhi Leonard added 18 and visiting San Antonio beat Los Angeles for its 13th consecutive victory.

Kobe Bryant scored five points on the 10th anniversary of his 81-point game against Toronto, still the second-highest scoring performance in NBA history.

Raptors 101, Heat 81: Newly elected All-Star Kyle Lowry kissed a fan on the forehead after accidentally falling on her, then gave host Toronto a boost in a victory over Miami.

Lowry was trying to save a loose ball early in the first quarter and toppled out of bounds. He landed on top of the woman, who was sitting in the first row and didn't appear to be hurt.

Hornets 120, Magic 116 (OT): Kemba Walker had 40 points and nine assists, and Spencer Hawes made a go-ahead three-pointer with 17 seconds left in overtime to rally visiting Charlotte past Orlando.

Victor Oladipo scored 29 points for the Magic, who have lost five straight and nine of 10. Tobias Harris added 22 points, and Nik Vucevic had 15 points and 12

rebounds.

Jazz 108, Nets 86: Gordon Hayward had 21 points, nine assists and four rebounds, Rodney Hood scored 16 points, and visiting Utah cruised past Brooklyn.

Trevor Booker added 13 points and 10 rebounds for the Jazz, who pulled away in the third quarter by shooting 16-for-22 from the field and outscoring Brooklyn 37-17.

Celtics 110, Bulls 101: Isaiah Thomas scored 22 points and host Boston held off a furious rally in the fourth quarter to beat Chicago.

Avery Bradley added 21 points, and Jared Sullinger finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds as the Celtics ended a two-game losing skid. The victory also gives Boston a 2-1 win in the season series with the Bulls.

Clippers 116, Knicks 88: DeAndre Jordan scored 20 points on 7-for-7 shooting, Chris Paul had 16 points, 13 assists and six rebounds, and visiting Los Angeles routed New York.

The duo hooked up on a few alley-oops during the game as Jordan didn't have to work hard to improve his NBA-leading field-goal percentage to 72.1 percent.

Rockets 102, Bucks 98: James Harden scored 30 points and host Houston ended a two-game skid with a victory over Milwaukee.

The Rockets closed the third quarter with a 14-2 run to turn a one-point game into a double-digit lead entering the fourth. They were up by 12 when the Bucks went on a 14-4 run, that started with consecutive dunks by Giannis Antetokounmpo and Michael Carter-Williams and ended with a three-pointer by Khris Middleton, to cut the lead to 100-98 with 6.9 seconds left.

Thunder 109, Mavericks 106: Kevin Durant scored 24 points in the former Texas star's first game in Dallas in almost two years, and Oklahoma City extended its winning streak to a season-best seven games.

Russell Westbrook had 16 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for the Thunder, who almost blew a 17-point lead in the fourth quarter before improving to 13-2 since a Christmas Day loss to Chicago.

Ivanovic bounced by Keys

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — A medical emergency overshadowed matches on adjoining courts at the Australian Open when Nigel Sears, who is Ana Ivanovic's coach and Andy Murray's father-in-law, was rushed to a hospital while both of their third-round matches were in progress.

Four-time finalist Murray beat No. 32 Joao Sousa 6-2, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 and signed some autographs but skipped the customary on-court interview before leaving Margaret Court Arena on Saturday night to check on the welfare of Sears, the father of his pregnant wife.

Ivanovic was leading Madison Keys 6-4, 1-0 when her match was stopped. She could be seen saying "That's my coach," before both players left the court. It was the second time in three days that Ivanovic's progress was interrupted for a spectator needing medical aid — her second-round match was delayed.

This time, the 2008 finalist didn't come back to win. Despite having breaks in the second and third sets, Ivanovic lost six of the last seven games to lose 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 to No. 15-seeded Keys.

Australian Open organizers didn't provide any confirmation on Sears or his condition, although stadium announcer Craig Willis told the Rod Laver Arena crowd: "Nigel Sears had a turn, as we all saw. He's in the hospital cracking terrible jokes he cracks all the time, and a TV was wheeled into his room so he could watch the match. He's OK."

Murray's match wasn't stopped, but word filtered through as he finished. His brother, Jamie Murray, was keeping track of Sears' health, British media reported.

Earlier, two-time champion Victoria Azarenka dropped her opening service game without winning a point, but recovered quickly to beat Japanese qualifier Naomi Osaka 6-1, 6-1. Azarenka is emerging as a favorite in the bottom half of the draw after No. 2 Simona Halep went out in the first round and No. 3 Garbine Muguruza lost in the third.

Azarenka will next play No. 48-ranked Barbora Strycova, who upset 2015 Wimbledon finalist Muguruza 6-3, 6-2.

Sydney-born Johanna Konta became the first British woman to reach the fourth round at the Australian Open since 1987 when she beat Denisa Allertova 6-2, 6-2. Her next match is against 2015 semifinalist Ekaterina Makarova, who ousted No. 9 Karolina Pliskova.

Muguruza's loss left No. 7 Angelique Kerber as the highest-ranked player in the bottom half of the women's draw. Kerber beat Madison Brengle 6-1, 6-3 to move into a fourth-round match against fellow German Annika Beck, and a potential quarterfinal with Azarenka.

Milos Raonic dedicated his third-round victory, a 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 win over Viktor Troicki, to victims of a shooting in a remote community in Saskatchewan, Canada, which left four people dead and at least two injured.

Raonic faces a tough fourth-round match against Stan Wawrinka, the 2014 Australian and 2015 French Open champion, who advanced past Lukas Rosol 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 (3).

No. 8-seeded David Ferrer overwhelmed Steve Johnson 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 and set up a meeting with another American in the next round, No. 10-seeded John Isner, who fired 44 aces against Feliciano Lopez in winning 6-7 (8), 7-6 (5), 6-2, 6-4.

Luongo, Panthers shut out Blackhawks

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Aaron Ekblad came back, and the Florida Panthers made an emphatic return to their winning ways.

Against the reigning Stanley Cup champions, no less.

Roberto Luongo stopped 27 shots for his fourth shutout of the season, Ekblad scored in his first game back after recovering from a concussion and the Panthers easily handled the Chicago Blackhawks 4-0 on Friday night to snap a four-game slide.

"You talk about playing the Stanley Cup champs and we haven't played our best games lately," Panthers coach Gerard Gallant said. "I thought tonight we came out and played a sound game, good defensively, really skated, really moved the puck. We have to play our best game and that brought the best out of us tonight, playing that team."

Florida had lost its past eight meetings with Chicago, last beating the Blackhawks on March 8, 2011. Chicago outscored Florida 25-11 in those games.

"We didn't start well, let a couple goals

go in and we were down 4-0 before you know it," said Blackhawks coach Joel Quenneville, whose team was playing its third road game in four nights. "There was no push and there was not a lot of energy tonight. It was one of those games where they started well and they were the better team."

Reilly Smith, Quinton Howden and former Chicago defenseman Brian Campbell also scored for Florida, which took a 3-0 lead after one period and started a big weekend in a big way.

"Put this one behind us and obviously play a very good team tomorrow," Ekblad said.

Scott Darling stopped 28 shots for Chicago, which lost on consecutive nights in the state of Florida yet remains comfortably atop the Western Conference standings. The Blackhawks lost in Tampa on Thursday, after winning 12 straight to match the Panthers for the longest winning streak in the league this season.

Avalanche 2, Blues 1 (OT): Semyon Varlamov made 33 saves and then stopped all three attempts in the shoot-out as host Colorado beat St. Louis.

Nathan MacKinnon scored in the final minute of regulation to rally the Avalanche, and then Gabriel Landeskog scored the only goal in the shootout.

Rangers 4, Hurricanes 1: J.T. Miller scored twice in the second period and Henrik Lundqvist made 30 saves to lead visiting New York past Carolina.

Ryan McDonagh scored to stretch his scoring streak to four games, and Keith Yandle also had a goal for New York.

Red Wings 3, Sabres 0: All-Star rookie Dylan Larkin had a goal and an assist and Petr Mrazek stopped 19 shots to lead visiting Detroit to a shutout of Buffalo.

Henrik Zetterberg and Luke Glendening also scored for the Red Wings, who ended a two-game losing streak.

Islanders 5, Senators 2: Travis Hamonic and John Tavares each had a goal and an assist in the third period as visiting New York beat Ottawa.

Hamonic beat Andrew Hammond with a slap shot at 2:58 of the third to give New York a 3-2 lead and Tavares slipped a backhand past Hammond at 7:03 for some insurance.