

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## US envoy hurt in S. Korea knife attack

Ambassador Mark Lippert in stable condition; slashing suspect is held

BY ERIK SLAVIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

A man suspected of North Korean sympathies slashed the face and wrist of the U.S. ambassador to South Korea on Thursday, according to South Korean police and media reports.

Ambassador Mark Lippert was reported to be in stable condition. He had been ready to give a speech to the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation in downtown Seoul when the assailant attacked with a 10-inch knife about 7:40 a.m., according to police.

South Korean police have arrested and identified the suspect as Kim Ki-jong, 55, according to a Yonhap News report.

South Korean intelligence sources said Kim had visited North Korea six times in 2006-07 and later tried to erect a memorial to late North Korean premier Kim Jong Il in Seoul, according to Yonhap.

An unidentified witness told YTN TV that as Lippert stood up for a handshake, the suspect wrestled the ambassador to the ground. YTN also reported that the suspect screamed during the attack, "South and North Korea should be reunified."

Yonhap TV showed men piling on the attacker, who was dressed in a traditional Korean hanbok garment.

Photos following the attack showed Lippert with blood spattered on his clothing and dripping from his face.

Later that morning, Lippert was filmed by Yonhap TV telling onlookers, "I'm OK, I'm OK," as he exited a car and walked into a Seoul hospital.

Lippert sustained five cuts,

### S. Korea has history of violence in protests

SEOUL, South Korea — A knife attack Thursday that injured the U.S. ambassador to South Korea is the latest act of political violence in a deeply divided country where some protesters portray their causes as matters of life and death.

The slashing of Ambassador Mark Lippert's face and arm was an extreme example, but America infuriates some leftist South Koreans because of its role in Korea's turbulent modern history.

Purported U.S. interference in Korean affairs appeared to be the main grievance of the man police

named as the assailant, Kim Ki-jong, 55, who has a long history of anti-U.S. protests.

The Japanese ambassador narrowly escaped injury in 2010 when Kim threw a piece of concrete at him, according to police.

Small to medium-sized demonstrations regularly occur across Seoul, and most are peaceful.

Scuffles with police do break out occasionally, and the burning of effigies of North Korean and Japanese leaders is also common. Some demonstrators also have previously severed their own fingers, have thrown bodily fluids at embassies and have tried to self-immolate.

From The Associated Press

including one about four inches long and an inch deep on his face, Jung Nam-shik, head of Yonsei University hospital, told reporters Thursday.

The wound could have been fatal if the knife had gone slightly deeper and nicked an artery, doctors said. Lippert received 80 stitches and will remain hospitalized for a few days, Jung said.

Kim was interrogated for three hours on a stretcher before being transported to a hospital, according to Yonhap's account of a news conference at Seoul's Jogno police station.

U.S. and South Korean officials immediately condemned the attack and expressed support for Lippert and his family.

President Barack Obama called Lippert wished him a speedy recovery, according to

The Associated Press. Lippert was a foreign policy aide to the president when Obama was a senator.

South Korea's foreign ministry vowed to "conduct a thorough investigation into the case and take stern measures based on its outcome," according to a statement.

The ministry also said it would make "more all-out effort" to ensure the safety of diplomats.

Thursday's incident marks the second time Kim stands accused of assailing a foreign ambassador.

In July 2010, Kim received a suspended two-year prison term for throwing two pieces of concrete at a Japanese ambassador to Seoul, and he published a book last year about the event according to Yonhap.

Kim's blog has long railed against Japan's territorial claims over the South Korean-administered islets of Dokdo, according to media reports. However, in recent days, Kim had been railing against the joint U.S.-South Korea annual military exercises Key Resolve and Foal Eagle.

Pyongyang has also issued threats toward the U.S. and South Korea over the exercises. North Korea launched two ballistic missiles into the ocean as the exercises began Monday. <http://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/north-korea-fires-missiles-as-us-military-exercise-begins-1.332247>

South Korea has taken a tough stance against pro-North Korean activism since the country's founding.

The National Security Act severely restricts and criminalizes pro-North Korean speech. Internet users who attempt to visit official North Korean media web sites, such as the Korean Central News Agency, are blocked and warned.

In December, South Korea's constitutional court broke up the Unified Progressive Party, a small left-wing group accused of pro-North Korea views. Five lawmakers lost their seats in the nation's legislature.

Leftist groups have arranged legal protests against the U.S.-South Korea military alliance for decades. Anti-U.S. rhetoric peaked most recently in 2002, when a U.S. Army armored vehicle ran over two 13-year-old girls on a country road, setting off national protests.

Relations have dramatically improved since the incident.

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# Officer cleared in federal Ferguson case

*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Justice Department will not prosecute a white former police officer in the fatal shooting of an unarmed black 18-year-old whose death in Ferguson, Mo., sparked weeks of protests and ignited an intense national debate over how police treat blacks. But the government released a scathing report that faulted the city for racial bias.

The decision Wednesday in the Aug. 9 shooting had been expected, in part because of the high legal standard needed for a federal civil rights prosecution. Former officer Darren Wilson, who has said Brown struck him in the face and reached for his

gun during a tussle, also had been cleared by a Missouri grand jury in November and later resigned from the department. The grand jury decision prompted street protests that turned violent.

Federal officials concluded there was no evidence to disprove testimony by Wilson that he feared for his safety, nor was there reliable evidence that Michael Brown had his hands up in surrender when he was shot.

The Brown family lawyer, Benjamin Crump, said the family was not surprised but very disappointed, and one of Brown's uncles, Charles Ewing, said he believed Wilson was "getting away with it."

A separate report issued

Wednesday said blacks in Ferguson are disproportionately subject to excessive police force, baseless traffic stops and citations for infractions as petty as walking down the middle of the street.

The Justice Department issued more than two dozen recommendations to improve the closely aligned police department and court system, including training officers to de-escalate confrontations and better oversight of its recruiting, hiring and promotion procedures.

Federal officials on Wednesday said there were already signs of improvement.

Ferguson Mayor James Knowles III said the city had

cooperated with the Justice Department and has made some changes, including a diversity training program for city employees.

Similarly broad federal civil rights investigations of troubled police departments have led to the appointment of independent monitors and mandated overhauls in the most fundamental of police practices. The Justice Department maintains the right to sue a police department if officials balk at making changes, though many investigations resolve the issue with both sides negotiating a blueprint for change known as a consent decree.

## Va. teen accused of helping Islamic State

WASHINGTON — A 17-year-old northern Virginia high school student who federal authorities believe successfully helped a man make his way to Syria to fight with the Islamic State has been taken into custody, according to the boy's neighbors and an official familiar with the case.

On Friday, FBI agents raided the Woodbridge townhouse where the teen lives with his family, leading him outside with his hands cuffed, neighbors said. The boy, a student at Osbourn Park High School, is charged as a juvenile but federal prosecutors are navigating the intensive legal process to move the case into adult court, an official said.

Officials familiar with the case, speaking on the condition of anonymity to provide details that are supposed to be kept secret, said investigators believe that the teen helped an adult not much older than himself travel to Syria. The officials said the teen helped arrange the man's travel, in part by using online contacts that led to the Islamic State overseas.

From The Washington Post

## Clinton's email habits unknown to White House

*The Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — The White House counsel's office was not aware at the time that Hillary Rodham Clinton was secretary of state that she relied solely on personal email and only found out as part of the congressional investigation into the Benghazi attack, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The person said Clinton's exclusive reliance on personal email as the nation's top dip-

lomat was inconsistent with the guidance given to agencies that official business should be conducted on official email accounts. Once the State Department turned over some of her messages in the Benghazi investigation, making it apparent she was not following the guidance, the White House counsel's office asked the State Department to ensure that her email records were properly archived, according to the person who spoke on a

condition of anonymity.

Clinton announced in a late-night tweet Wednesday that she wants her emails released. She asked the State Department to vet the 55,000-plus pages she handed over.

The email saga has developed as the first major test for how the White House and President Barack Obama's administration will deal with Clinton's likely 2016 presidential campaign.

## Last Ebola patient released, Liberia starts count

*The Associated Press*

MONROVIA, Liberia — Liberia released its last Ebola patient, a 58-year-old English teacher, from a treatment center in the capital on Thursday, beginning its countdown to being declared Ebola free.

"I am one of the happiest human beings today on Earth because it was not easy going through this situation and coming out alive," Beatrice Yardolo told The Associated Press after her release. She kept thanking God and the health workers at

the center.

Yardolo said she had been admitted to the Chinese-run Ebola treatment center in the Paynesville district of Monrovia on Feb. 18. A mother of five, she is originally from the northeastern county of Nimba near the borders with Guinea and Ivory Coast, but lives in Monrovia where she teaches at a church-run school. The St. Paul's Bridge community where she resides and teaches had become the last "hotspot" for Ebola cases in Monrovia, according

to Tolbert Nyenswah, assistant health minister and head of the country's Ebola response.

There are no other confirmed cases of Ebola in the country, and as such Liberia can begin to count up to 42 days to be declared Ebola-free in keeping with World Health Organization protocols and standards, Nyenswah said Wednesday. He challenged all Liberians to commit themselves to achieving "zero Ebola infections" by rigidly abiding by the anti-Ebola regulations.

# NFL free agency complicated by players' off-field issues

The Associated Press

BOSTON — There is a defensive end heading for free agency who had 15 sacks in his last full season. The kind of player a team can build a pass rush around, if he were spending more time on the football field and less in the courts fighting domestic abuse charges.

Greg Hardy's current team, the Carolina Panthers, isn't expected to make him an offer.

And then there's the recent NFL MVP, a running back who once topped 2,000 yards, whose team says it wants him back, but he's not so sure. If the Minnesota Vikings wouldn't support him after he was charged with beating his son, Adrian Peterson can probably find a team that will.

As NFL teams turn to free agency on March 10, there is more to consider this year than 40-yard dash times and vertical jumps. A few players who might otherwise attract a bidding war now have to convince teams they are talented enough to justify the baggage they bring along.

And that's making what was already an imperfect science even more difficult.

"It all makes it rough on the football people," said Bill Polian, a 2015 Pro Football Hall of Famer who built the Bills, Panthers and Colts into Super Bowl teams. "(Hardy) would be a marquee free agent if not for these other issues."

Peterson is still under contract with the Vikings. But he has said he is uneasy about returning to the team that distanced itself from him after he was charged with a felony for disciplining his child to the point of injury. He missed 15 games — seven with pay while on the exempt list and the last six while suspended under the enhanced personal conduct policy Commissioner Roger Goodell announced after his initial two-game punishment for Ray Rice angered almost everyone.

But U.S. District Judge David Doty ruled

last week that Goodell could not suspend Peterson under a policy that was created after the original crime. (Peterson pleaded no contest to a reduced assault misdemeanor). The case goes back to NFL-appointed arbitrator Harold Henderson, who is likely to tell Goodell to review the case under the old policy that in most cases maxed out at a two-game suspension.

"Like Tinker to Evers to Chance, this is going to go from Doty to Henderson to Goodell," said Daniel Wallach, a sports litigator in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

In the meantime, the NFL has appealed and it is likely to ask for a stay of Doty's ruling until then, said Wallach, of the firm of Becker and Poliakoff.

"That will go a long way toward clarifying Adrian Peterson's status," he said. "If Peterson loses the stay issue, NFL free agency advances without him. And what does that do to his market value? It's going to diminish it tremendously."

Peterson isn't the only one.

Hardy was placed on the exempt list and missed all but one game after he was convicted last summer on two counts of domestic violence.

He appealed and had both charges dismissed last month when his accuser couldn't be located to testify; the prosecutor said there was evidence of a financial settlement.

The NFL said Hardy was never officially disciplined and his case is still "under review." He will become an unrestricted free agent next week, but potential suitors will have to consider a potential suspension — in addition to the public relations damage that would come from signing a man who, according to court testimony, threw his girlfriend on a futon covered with rifles, ripped a necklace off her neck and threatened to kill her.

"We start with the premise that you have no idea what his availability will be. You can make some guesses but don't

know for sure," Polian said. "You would want protection for all those scenarios ... all of that makes the negotiation very difficult."

Polian said teams consider conduct every year, both in the draft and free agency and even when re-signing their own players. This year, Florida State quarterback Jameis Winston is a potential No. 1 overall pick, but has off-field issues — including rape accusations — that could make Oregon's Marcus Mariota more appealing.

Or, it could make him undraftable.

"The owner will say, 'Our sponsors and season ticket holders and our market won't like it,'" Polian said. "And so there will be owners who are not interested, no matter what the football people think."

And then there is Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice — Patient Zero in Goodell's domestic abuse crackdown — whose production diminished even before he was caught punching his wife in a casino hotel elevator. He will be joined on the free agent market by San Francisco defensive lineman Ray McDonald, who was cut by the 49ers in December for what the team called "a pattern of poor decision making."

McDonald has a limited market because he fits better in a 3-4 defensive alignment than fewer teams use. But he was never charged, Polian said, and he "apparently has no issues with the league."

"I say apparently, because we aren't sure," Polian added. "Clearly he has PR issues, and some owners are going to say 'I think we can live with it,' and others will say 'No, we can't,'" Polian said.

"There's a saying among general managers when they get ready for free agency: 'It only takes one.' Only one team has to have that interest in a player."

## Manning will return to Broncos

The Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — Peyton Manning has unfinished business.

After taking his physical and signing his revised contract Thursday at Broncos headquarters, he'll head home until the Broncos reconvene April 13 for the start of offseason workouts.

Then, it's time to adapt to new coach Gary Kubiak's West Coast offense and continue his pursuit of a second Super Bowl trophy.

Along the way, he'll almost certainly pad his thick Hall of Fame credentials by breaking Brett Favre's records for most passing career yards and most regular-season wins.

Weeks of speculation about the five-time MVP's future ended Wednesday with word that he's returning for an 18th season in the NFL and fourth in Denver.

A person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press that Manning will take a \$4 million pay cut, from \$19 million to \$15 million, but that he can make it all back through performance incentives. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because there was no official announcement of the deal.

Manning's \$19 million salary in 2016 — should he decide to play at age 40 — stays intact. That's the final season of the five-year contract he signed in 2012.

Manning mulled retirement after the Broncos' playoff loss to the Indianapolis Colts. But he determined he still had the health and hunger to keep playing at age 39, when he tries to become the oldest QB to win a Super Bowl.

"We're just excited to have him back," said running back C.J. Anderson, who came off the bench at midseason last year to earn a Pro Bowl berth. "Of course, he just wants to go out there and win that ring. And we're just trying to go out there and help him win it."

"I can't wait to get to work with him and have a full season with him. And if he said he's mentally and physically ready to play that doesn't mean it's at a sub-par level. It means it's at a high level."

## Vikings meet with Peterson about future

The Associated Press

The Minnesota Vikings have made their in-person pitch to Adrian Peterson, the latest step toward resolving the star running back's unclear status.

Whether it's keeping him or turning to a trade, the Vikings will likely make up their minds soon about whether Peterson will continue his NFL career in purple.

General manager Rick Spielman and head coach Mike Zimmer spent about four hours Wednesday afternoon at Peterson's home north of Houston.

Peterson told ESPN in a recent interview he's uneasy about returning to the orga-

nization, though he's still under contract with a \$12.75 million base salary for 2015. His agreement to the meeting Wednesday stemmed from his respect for Zimmer, for whom he's only played one game.

The Vikings have plenty of space under the salary cap to keep Peterson on his current contract. Everyone from co-owner Mark Wilf to Spielman to Zimmer has said they'll welcome Peterson back once he's fully reinstated by the NFL. Only if Peterson wants to be there, of course.

In other NFL news:

■ The New Orleans Saints have notified veteran running back Pierre Thomas that he is being released after eight seasons

with the club.

While Thomas never rushed for more than 793 yards in a season, his proficiency in the short passing game helped him approach or surpass 1,000 yards from scrimmage in several seasons, the last in 2013.

■ The Cowboys have re-signed restricted free-agent Cole Beasley after the diminutive receiver emerged as a threat in the slot last season for Tony Romo.

Beasley signed a four-year contract Wednesday reportedly worth about \$14 million, with \$7 million guaranteed.

## MLS, players agree to 5-year labor contract

Major League Soccer and its players' union agreed in principle to a five-year labor contract, establishing free agency for the first time and averting a possible strike ahead of Friday's season opener.

Under the agreement, players 28 and older could become free agents if they have eight seasons of MLS service and their contracts have expired, a person familiar with the details said on condition of anonymity because the details had not yet been announced.



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# Westbrook's triple-double lifts Thunder over 76ers in OT

The Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Russell Westbrook donned a mask and played like a superhero.

The All-Star Game MVP set career highs with 49 points and 16 rebounds, and added 10 assists for his fourth consecutive triple-double, helping the Oklahoma City Thunder defeat the Philadelphia 76ers 123-118 in overtime Wednesday night.

Westbrook wore the facial protection after having a bone in his right cheek fractured last Friday against Portland. He had surgery Saturday and missed Sunday's game against the Los Angeles Lakers.

He returned to the lineup in style. Westbrook became the first player since Michael Jordan in 1989 to have four consecutive triple-doubles, according to STATS, and the first since Jordan that year to have back-to-back triple-doubles with at least 40 points. It was the most points by any player with a triple-double since Larry Bird also scored 49 in 1992.

Jordan had seven straight triple-doubles and 10 in an 11-game span in 1989 for Chicago.

It was Westbrook's sixth triple-double of the season and 14th of his career.

"It's amazing watching him play," 76ers guard Jason Richardson said. "You've got to take your hats off to this guy. He takes no plays off. He plays hard on both ends of the court. He rebounds. It's amazing to see a guy who has that much passion about winning."

Isaiah Canaan had career highs of 31 points and eight 3-pointers, and Richardson added 29 points for the 76ers.

Westbrook clinched the triple-double on a pass to D.J. Augustin for a three-pointer that put the Thunder ahead 113-110 in overtime. Westbrook's pull-up jumper with 38.9 seconds to play put the Thunder up by three, then Westbrook made the first of two free throws with 30.3 seconds left to make it 120-116.

**Cavaliers 120, Raptors 112:** LeBron James scored 29 points and matched a season high with 14 assists, Kevin Love had 22 points and 10 rebounds and Cleveland held on to beat host Toronto.

Kyrie Irving scored 26 points, J.R. Smith

had 15 and James Jones 14 to help the Cavaliers win their second straight.

**Grizzlies 102, Rockets 100:** Marc Gasol made a jumper with 0.1 seconds left to lift visiting Memphis past Houston.

With the game tied, Gasol blocked James Harden's layup with 6.4 seconds left to give the Grizzlies the ball back for his winner. Gasol finished with 21 points.

**Pelicans 88, Pistons 85:** Anthony Davis had 39 points, 13 rebounds and eight blocks in his first game back from a right shoulder sprain, and host New Orleans won for the sixth time in seven games.

Davis hit two mid-range jumpers in the last 1:14, the second with 18 seconds left, to hold off Detroit in a frenetic game that was close throughout the second half.

**Warriors 102, Bucks 93:** Stephen Curry shook off a rough shooting night to make three straight three-pointers early in the fourth quarter that helped Golden State beat Milwaukee in their return from a season-high, six-game road trip.

**Heat 100, Lakers 94:** Dwyane Wade scored 25 points and added six assists, Hassan Whiteside grabbed 25 rebounds and Miami rallied to beat visiting Los Angeles.

Wade's last two assists set up Whiteside for crucial scores in the final moments. The Heat held on to the No. 7 spot in the Eastern Conference playoff race and posted two straight home wins for the first time in more than four months.

**Celtics 85, Jazz 84:** Tyler Zeller banked in a shot from under the basket as time expired to lift host Boston past Utah.

After Boston blew an eight-point lead in the final 2½ minutes, Marcus Smart made a long inbounds pass to Zeller under the basket. He banked it off the backboard with 0.1 seconds showing on the clock. It went through the net as the buzzer sounded and was upheld after a review.

**Spurs 112, Kings 85:** Kawhi Leonard had 21 points and San Antonio punctuated its return from its nearly monthlong rodeo road trip with its largest home victory of the season.

Tony Parker added 19 points and three assists while guiding the Spurs to 53 per-

cent shooting.

**Suns 105, Magic 100:** Brandon Knight had 28 points and seven assists in his best game for Phoenix, and the Suns overcame a 15-point deficit to beat host Orlando.

Markief Morris added 23 points and six rebounds, and P.J. Tucker scored all 19 of his points in the second half to help Phoenix snap a two-game skid and improve to 4-10 in its last 14.

**Hornets 115, Nets 91:** Al Jefferson and Gerald Henderson each scored 19 points, Marvin Williams had 18 and visiting Charlotte routed Brooklyn in a key matchup in the Eastern Conference playoff race.

Mo Williams added 14 points and a season-high 14 assists for the Hornets, who rode a blistering start to their third straight win, breaking a tie with the Nets for the eighth and final playoff spot.

**Pacers 105, Knicks 82:** George Hill scored a season-high 21 points, and Rodney Stuckey had 17 to help Indiana rout visiting New York.

With nine wins in 11 games, Indiana also moved a little closer to the final playoff spot in the East.

**Nuggets 100, Timberwolves 85:** Kenneth Faried had 18 points and 14 rebounds to help visiting Denver win its second straight since firing coach Brian Shaw.

Will Barton scored 17 points off the bench and the Nuggets outscored Minnesota 52-28 in the paint to make interim coach Melvin Hunt 2-0 since taking over for Shaw.

**Trail Blazers 98, Clippers 93 (OT):** Nicolas Batum hit a three-pointer that forced overtime, then set up three alley-oop baskets and added a clinching three in the final minute to rally Portland past host Los Angeles.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 29 points and Batum added 20 for the Northwest Division leaders, who have won four straight after a 6-11 stretch that began with a 100-94 loss to the Clippers on Jan. 14 at Portland.

# Zidlicky pays off for Wings

The Associated Press

DETROIT — Marek Zidlicky made the best possible first impression on the Detroit Red Wings.

His power-play goal 1:09 into overtime lifted his new team to a 2-1 victory over the New York Rangers on Wednesday night.

Zidlicky, making his Red Wings debut after being acquired at the NHL trade deadline from New Jersey, punched the puck past Rangers goalie Cam Talbot in a scrum to give the Red Wings their second straight win.

Justin Abdelkader also scored, Henrik Zetterberg added two assists, and Jimmy Howard made 39 saves for Detroit.

"Can't be a better feeling," Zidlicky said, "especially to score in my first game here."

Talbot made 29 saves for the Rangers, whose goal was scored by defenseman Dan Girardi.

The Red Wings played the final 46 seconds of regulation on a power play after Derek Stepan held Gustav Nyquist. The advantage carried into overtime, and Zidlicky cashed in on Detroit's third shot.

The Red Wings played their first home game since Feb. 16 after wrapping up a six-game trip with a win Saturday at Nashville — giving them nine points while away.

"It was a good hockey game. A lot of battle all over the ice by both teams," New York coach Alain Vigneault said. "I liked the way we played, especially in the second period."

"Unfortunately we got a penalty late and they were able to score in overtime."

**Ducks 3, Canadiens 1:** John Gibson made 37 saves, and host Anaheim moved back atop the overall NHL standings with a victory over Montreal in a meeting of conference leaders.

**Avalanche 3, Penguins 1:** Gabriel Landeskog had a goal and two assists, Semyon Varlamov made 28 saves, and host Colorado snapped Pittsburgh's four-game winning streak.

**Senators 3, Jets 1:** Rookie Andrew Hammond made 35 saves, and Kyle Turris had a goal and assist as visiting Ottawa beat Winnipeg.

# Allen nets 27 in No. 3 Duke's rout of Wake Forest

The Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — Freshman Grayson Allen scored a season-best 27 points, and No. 3 Duke routed Wake Forest 94-51 on Wednesday night for its 10th straight win.

Matt Jones added 17 points for the Blue Devils (27-3, 14-3), who shot 58 percent and forced 19 turnovers in locking up the No. 2 seed in next week's Atlantic Coast Conference tournament.

Duke had a double-figure lead before the Demon Deacons managed their first basket, scoring the first 12 points and rolling to their 16th straight home victory in the ACC's oldest series.

Codi Miller-McIntyre scored 20 points for Wake Forest (13-17, 5-12), which has lost four of five.

**No. 12 Notre Dame 71, No.**

**16 Louisville 59:** Demetrius Jackson scored 21 points and Notre Dame made its final seven shots to pull away for a victory over host Louisville that clinched third place in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

**No. 23 Ohio State 77, Penn State 67:** D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points and coach Thad Matta tied the school record for wins in Ohio State's victory over host Penn State.

Matta is 297-91 in 11 seasons at Ohio State, tied with Fred Taylor. Matta's next win would give him the Buckeyes mark as well as his 400th career victory overall.

**No. 24 Providence 79, Seton Hall 66:** Ben Bentil scored a career-high 21 points and added 10 rebounds and visiting Providence shot 67 percent

from the field in the second half in rallying from a big first-half deficit to defeat Seton Hall.

**UCLA 85, Southern California 74:** At Los Angeles, UCLA locked up the No. 4 seed in the Pac-12 tournament and earned itself eight days off, vital rest for a team with an eight-player rotation.

**Michigan State 72, Purdue 66:** Travis Trice equaled a career high with 27 points and Matt Costello lifted Michigan State at both ends of the court, helping the Spartans past visiting Purdue.

**Miami 67, Pittsburgh 63:** Sheldon McClellan scored 16 of his 20 points in the second half and Davon Reed tied a career-high with 19 as visiting Miami kept its slim hopes of an at-large

berth to the NCAA Tournament alive with a win over Pittsburgh.

**Colorado St 78, Nevada 62:** J.J. Avila scored 27 points and Colorado State took over sole possession of third place in the Mountain West Conference with a win over host Nevada.

**San Diego State 60, UNLV 58:** JJ O'Brien scored a career-high 22 points to help San Diego State remain atop the Mountain West Conference standings after a win over host UNLV.

**Fresno State 68, Air Force 66:** Marvella Harris made just one of two free throws with five seconds left but it was enough to secure a victory for host Fresno State over Air Force, foiling an upset bid.