

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Scores dead in Yemen mosque attacks

The Associated Press

ADEN, Yemen — Quadruple suicide bombers on Friday hit a pair of mosques controlled by Shiite rebels in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, unleashing blasts through crowds of worshippers that killed at least 137 people and wounded about 350 others in the deadliest violence to hit the fragile war-torn nation in decades.

A group claiming to be a Yemeni branch of the Islamic State group said it carried out the attack and warned of an “upcoming flood” of attacks against the rebels, known as Houthis, who have taken over the capital and much of Yemen. The claim, posted online, could not immediately be independently confirmed and offered no proof of an Islamic State group role.

The Houthis have controlled the capital since September and have been locked in battle with Sunni al-Qaida fighters in various parts of the country. An official with al-Qaida in Yemen said his group was not behind Friday’s attack.

The four bombers attacked the Badr and al-Hashoosh mosques, located across town from each other, during midday Friday prayers, traditionally the most crowded time of the week, according to the state news agency. Both mosques are controlled by the Shiite Houthis, but they also are frequented by Sunni worshippers.

The rebel-owned al-Masirah TV channel said the casualty figures had reached 137 dead and 345 injured, and reported that hospitals were urging citizens to donate blood. It also reported that a fifth suicide bomb attack on another mosque was foiled in the northern city of Saada — a Houthi stronghold.

Scenes from the two mosque showed devastation, with a number of children visible among the dead. Footage from the al-Hashoosh mosque showed screaming volunteers using bloodied blankets to carry away victims, with a small child among the dead lined up on the mosque floor. A prominent Shiite cleric, al-Murtada al-Mansouri, and two senior Houthi leaders were

among the dead, the TV channel reported.

Two suicide bombers attacked the Badr mosque. The first bomber was caught by militia guards searching worshippers at the mosque entrance and detonated his device at the outside gates. Amid the ensuing panic, a second bomber was able to enter the mosque and blew himself up amid the crowds, according to the official news agency SABA.

Survivors compared the explosions to an earthquake and said some of those who survived the original blasts were then injured by shattered glass falling from the mosque’s large hanging chandeliers.

Another pair of suicide bombers attacked the al-Hashoosh mosque. One witness said he was thrown more than 6 feet by one of the blasts.

“The heads, legs and arms of the dead people were scattered on the floor of the mosque,” Mohammed al-Ansi told The Associated Press, adding, “blood was running like a river.”

Report examines fallout of Navy’s shrinking budget

Daily Press (Newport News, Va.)

A new report examines how the Navy, 30 years into the future, could maintain its global presence with a smaller fleet.

Sailors could spend more time at sea.

The Navy might move more ships overseas.

Shipyards could close as Navy contracts become fewer.

The Congressional Budget Office in December issued a report that examined the Navy’s 2015 30-year shipbuilding plan. It concluded the plan would cost about \$21 billion per year, on average. The Navy pegged the annual cost at \$19 billion.

It’s expensive either way. In real dollars, the Navy’s shipbuilding account has been about \$16 billion per year for decades.

The new report, released this month, notes that “such a large shipbuilding budget over a span of three decades

has no historical precedent.”

Given that, it examines how the Navy could still keep its sailors and ships in far-flung locations around the world if the budget wasn’t \$19 billion to \$21 billion. It looked at three smaller scenarios: \$16 billion, the average over the last 30 years; \$14 billion, the average over past decade; and \$12 billion, the average during the 1990s.

The fallout of smaller budgets could slow the economy of Navy-centric towns such as Hampton Roads, Va., and alter the lives of thousands of sailors and shipyard workers who call the region home.

Simply put, the Navy could continue its forward presence with fewer ships by employing the following strategies: deploy ships for longer periods of time; base more ships and crews overseas; and assign more than one crew per ship

to permit longer deployments.

Longer deployments are more expensive than shorter ones, the report points out. At-sea pay is greater for sailors and ships undergo more wear and tear. However, longer deployments are less expensive than buying new ships.

On the downside, longer deployments mean more stress on Navy families and could hurt the Navy’s ability to retain sailors, the report says.

CBO combined the next two approaches — basing ships overseas and rotating crews — into one strategy. It would mean basing another 14 to 18 ships overseas, including aircraft carriers. It would also increase the number of ships that use rotating crews, anywhere from 12 to 22.

The advantages: Ships might be closer to global hot spots, and crews wouldn’t be as weary because they could spend more

time at home. But rotating crews “might identify less with a particular ship — possibly resulting in lower-quality work or diminished attention to maintaining equipment in the best possible condition,” the report states.

Under each budget scenario — \$16 billion, \$14 billion or \$12 billion — the Navy’s purchasing power would drop due to the rising average cost per ship, the report says. The Navy has built, on average, 7.7 ships annually during the last decade. Under the three scenarios, the annual number would drop anywhere from 6.5 ships to 5.

With a \$16 billion budget, “by the mid 2020s one or two large shipyards and one small shipyard would stop receiving Navy orders,” the report says. With a \$12 billion budget, two or three large shipyards and one small shipyard would no longer see Navy business.

GAO to DOD: Attend to male sex assault cases

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

While the Department of Defense has taken numerous steps to address sexual assaults of servicemembers in general, it still doesn't have a clear plan for responding specifically to attacks on men, the Government Accountability Office said in a report released Thursday.

"DOD has taken steps to provide and improve the availability of medical and mental health care for all sexual assault victims, but DOD's Health Affairs office has not systematically identified whether male victims have any gender-specific needs," the report concluded.

Although the problem of sexual assault of female ser-

vicemembers has been in the spotlight for several years, sexual assault of their male counterparts has received less publicity — even though the incidents are quite common.

About 3,200 male servicemembers reported sexual assault during fiscal years 2008 through 2014, the GAO said.

But that's regarded as a highly underreported number. A Rand Corp. survey last year estimated 9,000 to 13,000 active-duty men were sexually assaulted during the year prior to the survey. About 2,500 to 5,500 of those were described as "penetrative" sexual assaults.

The GAO estimated that, at most, 13 percent of males reported assaults, compared with at least 40 percent of female servicemembers.

"DOD has reported data on the gender of military sexual assault victims since 2008, but it has not used all these data to inform program decision making or established a plan to do so," the report said. "Thus, without a plan for how it will use data in making decisions about program development, DOD risks leaving important issues, such as those related to male victims, unaddressed."

Men make up about 85 percent of the active-duty force.

The DOD has implemented a "gender-neutral" program for preventing and responding to the problem of sexual assault, an approach that does not take into consideration the significantly lower rates of reporting assault by men compared with

women.

The difference in reporting "suggest that male victims of sexual assault may not have a similar level of confidence as do female victims in the process of reporting a sexual assault within the department," the GAO said.

The DOD has taken some steps in the past year to address male sexual assault. In May, it directed the services to implement methods that encourage male victims to report assault and to seek care.

The DOD, however, has not systematically evaluated whether male servicemembers who've been sexually assaulted have any gender-specific needs, the report said.

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Obama tells Israel US to reassess peace approach

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Amid new tensions between two allies, President Barack Obama on Thursday told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that the U.S. is reassessing its approach to Israeli-Palestinian peace in light of Netanyahu's pre-election comments rejecting the establishment of a Palestinian state.

In the telephone call, Obama extended congratulations to Netanyahu for his election victory two days ago. But a White House official said Obama also raised

Netanyahu's critical comments about Israeli Arabs ahead of the election, which the White House has denounced as a "cynical" effort to mobilize voters.

The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the private call, because it touched on various delicate subjects between the two leaders.

In a separate statement, the White House said Obama stressed the United States' close security cooperation with Israel, but also emphasized the U.S. commitment to the creation of a Palestinian state existing alongside Israel.

Navy identifies SEAL killed while training

CORONADO, Calif. — Navy officials said a SEAL killed when his parachute malfunctioned during training in Southern California was a Colorado man who completed basic training to become a SEAL last year.

Naval Special Warfare Group One said Thursday that Jason

Kortz, 29, of Highlands Ranch, died from injuries sustained during the accident in Perris on Wednesday. The Navy is investigating why the parachute malfunctioned.

Kortz enlisted in 2012 and completed basic training for the SEALs last year in Coronado. He was assigned to Naval Special Warfare Group One.

From wire reports

Official: Drone lost in Syria entered new area

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — An American surveillance drone that U.S. officials believe was shot down in Syria this week was flying in an area where U.S. aircraft had not previously operated, over a region known as a power base for President Bashar Assad, U.S. officials said Thursday.

The Pentagon reported it lost contact with the aircraft, an unarmed MQ-1 Predator drone, on Tuesday over northern Latakia, a province along Syria's northern Mediterranean coast that is home to many Alawites, the minority Shiite Muslim sect to which Assad belongs.

After the incident, Syrian television aired video showing a mass of charred metal, including a plate bearing the name of an American aeronautics company and what appeared to be an aircraft wing.

Several U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation, said the U.S. military thinks the plane had been

shot down.

One official said the aircraft was flying in an area where U.S. planes had not previously ventured, a notable development as the Obama administration juggles its efforts to weaken the Islamic State in Syria without being pulled into a military conflict with the country's embattled leader.

The strikes, which began after Islamic State militants spilled into neighboring Iraq last summer, reflect the odd detente between the United States and Syria. While the United States has declared that Assad must step down, President Barack Obama has stopped short of military action as he grapples with other challenges across the Middle East.

From Assad's base in Damascus, he has tolerated U.S. and allied strikes against the Islamic State. The strikes have mostly taken place in areas of eastern or northern Syria far from Damascus and other areas firmly under Syrian government control.

South Regional

UAB stuns No. 3 seed Iowa St.

The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The UAB Blazers may not have a football program anymore. They do have the first big upset of the NCAA tournament and hope they can give their university something to rally around.

William Lee scored the last four points for 14th-seeded UAB, and the Blazers knocked off third-seeded Iowa State 60-59 on Thursday in their opening game in the NCAA tournament. It's the third straight year a 14 seed has upset a No. 3 seed, and Georgia State followed up by joining the list within an hour with a 57-56 win over Baylor.

The Blazers (20-15) came in with the youngest team in the NCAA tournament and with nobody having played in this tournament before. They wound up winning the program's first NCAA game since 2005 and ran over to celebrate in front of the fans of a school that shut its football program down in December.

The Cyclones (25-9) came into the South Regional looking for a much longer run than a year ago when they reached the Sweet 16 without top scorer Georges Niang due to injury. But they just couldn't match the scrappy Blazers on the boards in a second half where the Cyclones couldn't hold onto a 55-51 lead with 3:13 left.

For Iowa State coach Fred Hoiberg, it's as tough a loss as he's had. His Cyclones came in having won five straight, rallying from double-digit deficits in each on their way to the Big 12 tournament title.

"I'm not going to make any excuses," Hoiberg said. "You've got to come out and play 40 minutes. ... I don't know. Maybe we should have let them get up double digits. That's kind of how we play our best."

The Blazers will play 11th-seeded UCLA on Saturday.

No. 4 Georgetown 84, No. 13 Eastern Washington 74: At Portland, Ore., D'Vauntes Smith-Rivera scored 25 points, Mikael Hopkins had 10 points and nine rebounds, and Georgetown avoided another NCAA tournament upset by beating Eastern Washington.

The Hoyas (22-10) fell behind by seven in the first half to the three-point happy Eagles. But Georgetown got its groove back with its own long-range touch, going ahead by 23 early in the second half and holding off Eastern Washington's late rally.

The Hoyas will face fifth-seeded Utah on Saturday in the round of 32.

No. 5 Utah 57, No. 12 Stephen F. Austin 50: At Portland,

Ore., Jakob Poeltl had 18 points and eight rebounds, and Utah opened its first NCAA tournament appearance in five years by holding off Stephen F. Austin.

The Utes' stout defense thwarted the usually high-scoring Lumberjacks, who were held well under their season average of 79.5 points.

No. 11 UCLA 60, No. 6 SMU 59: At Louisville, Ky., Bryce Alford's final jumper appeared offline when he let it fly from behind the three-point arc, and all the UCLA guard could do was helplessly watch the battle for the rebound.

SMU center Yanick Moreira was in position and seemed to time his leap as he went up to touch it. The officials, however, thought he was a bit too quick and called goaltending and awarded Alford the game-winning basket with 13 seconds left — one that's sure to be this NCAA tournament's most debated.

Officials went to the monitor to determine it was a three and were resolute in their call, telling a pool reporter that it wasn't reviewable.

SMU (27-7) still had two shots to win in the final seconds, but Nic Moore, who scored 24 points, missed a three-pointer and then a two-point attempt that sent the Bruins (21-13) into a wild celebration.

East Regional

NC State tops LSU at buzzer

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — BeeJay Anya watched his teammates put up all the shots they wanted for more than 39 minutes. Then the burly forward made the only two that mattered in the final 45 seconds.

Anya's tip-in got North Carolina State within a point of LSU and his left-handed hook just before the buzzer lifted the eight-seeded Wolfpack to a 66-65 victory in the NCAA tournament Thursday night.

The final play was designed for teammate Trevor Lacey, but LSU bottled up the senior guard, and the ball ended up in Anya's willing hands.

"I was like know what, it's time for me to shoot the ball," Anya said. "Trevor called for it back. He had a chance. It was my turn to shoot it."

Just as importantly, it was his time to make it. Next up for the Wolfpack (21-13) is top-seeded Villanova on Saturday thanks to Anya's deft touch and a maddening collapse by the Tigers.

LSU (22-11) led by 16 early in the second half but missed its last 12 field goals and six crucial free throws in the final minutes.

Cat Barber led N.C. State with 17 points and Abdul-Malik Abu added 13 as the Wolfpack provided another jolt during a typically frantic opening day of the tournament. N.C. State's win was the fifth one-point game of the day, a record.

Tim Quarterman led LSU with 17 points. Martin had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Jordan Mickey had 12 points and 14 boards for the Tigers, who appeared to be in firm control before the latest and most painful collapse during an otherwise promising season.

No. 1 Villanova 93, No. 16 Lafayette 52: At Pittsburgh, Villanova flexed its top-seeded muscle and showed why President Barack Obama picked the Wildcats to reach the NCAA tournament title game, thumping Lafayette.

Thirty years after stunning the basketball world with an improbable national championship, the Wildcats (33-2) are going to try it this time around as a prohibitive favorite to reach the Final Four.

Dylan Ennis scored 16 points and helped the Wildcats win their 16th straight game. Up next on Saturday, N.C. State, which got past LSU on a buzzer-beating shot.

Villanova won its first Big East Tournament championship in 20 years and would like to mark another milestone with a championship — 30 years since it upset Georgetown to win the 1985 national championship.

Obama picked the Wildcats to reach the national championship game and lose to Kentucky.

West Regional

Baylor upset by 14th-seeded Georgia St.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — R.J. Hunter kept firing away, eventually lifting 14th-seeded Georgia State over third-seeded Baylor and knocking his father right off his seat with the biggest shot of his life.

Hunter's three-pointer with 2.7 seconds remaining capped a comeback from a 12-point deficit and lifted the Panthers to a 57-56 opening-game victory over the Bears in the NCAA tournament on Thursday.

With Ron Hunter working the sideline on a rolling chair less than a week after tearing his left Achilles tendon celebrating Georgia State winning the Sun Belt Conference championship, R.J. shrugged off a poor shooting performance to come through when his team needed him most.

"It was a great game, but I'm not going to coach, I'm going to be Dad right now," said Hunter, who fell off his seat and had to be helped up after R.J. made the second of two long three-pointers that helped the Panthers advance. "This is my son. Proud of him."

Baylor (24-10), which got 18 points and 15 rebounds from reserve Taurean Prince, did not score after going up 56-44 on two free throws with 2:54 remaining.

No. 4 North Carolina 67, No. 13 Harvard 65: Justin Jackson hit a tying jumper in the final minute, and then

had a fast-break dunk to help fourth-seeded North Carolina edge out Harvard in Jacksonville, Fla.

The Tar Heels (25-11) wasted a 16-point second-half lead and briefly trailed before Jackson came to the rescue.

Siyani Chambers' four-point play put 13th-seeded Harvard ahead 65-63 with 1:15 remaining. It was the only lead of the game for the Ivy League champions.

Chambers misfired on a pair of three-pointers in the closing seconds, and the Crimson's final chance for victory — Wesley Saunders' shot from beyond the arc — bounced off the back of the rim.

No. 5 Arkansas 56, No. 12 Wofford 53: At Jacksonville, Fla., Michael Qualls scored 20 points, Southeastern Conference player of the year Bobby Portis added 15 points and 13 rebounds, and fifth-seeded Arkansas held off No. 12 seed Wofford.

The Razorbacks (27-8) escaped a back-and-forth game in the West Region that featured 18 lead changes, 10 ties and neither team ahead by more than five points.

No. 6 Xavier 76, No. 11 Mississippi 57: At Jacksonville, Fla., Matt Stainbrook scored 20 points, Dee Davis added 17 and sixth-seeded Xavier

beat No. 11 seed Mississippi.

Stainbrook took advantage of his size in the post, making 8 of 10 shots in the paint and adding nine rebounds and five assists. Davis was nearly as good from the outside, hitting 4 of 9 shots from three-point range.

No. 2 Arizona 93, No. 15 Texas Southern 72: At Portland, Ore., Rondae Hollis-Jefferson had 23 points, 16 in the first half, along with 10 rebounds and the second-seeded Arizona Wildcats overwhelmed No. 15 seed Texas Southern.

Pac-12 freshman of the year Stanley Johnson added 22 points for the balanced Wildcats (32-3), who led by as many as 27 points at Portland's Moda Center.

No. 10 Ohio State 75, No. 7 VCU 72 (OT): At Portland, Ore., D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points and rallied 10th-seeded Ohio State from an early 12-point deficit for the overtime win.

Russell regrouped from a blow that sent blood streaming down the left side of his face near the end of regulation, showing just why many believe he will be a top pick in this summer's NBA draft. He made 10 of 20 shots, including 4 of 7 from three-point range, and added six rebounds, two steals and two blocks to bring the Buckeyes (24-10) back in both halves and overtime.



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Midwest region No. 1 Ky. rolls past Hampton

The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Karl-Anthony Towns bounced back from a mini-slump with 21 points and 11 rebounds, Andrew Harrison added 14 points and No. 1 Kentucky rolled past 16th-seeded Hampton 79-56.

Limited by foul trouble the past two games, the 6-foot-11 Towns was forceful all night in helping the unbeaten Wildcats (35-0) to the site's most lopsided outcome of the day after three one-point finishes at the KFC Yum! Center.

Hampton's Quinton Chievous shook off an ankle injury sustained in Tuesday's First Four upset of Manhattan to score 22 points with 10 rebounds, but the Pirates (17-18) were no match for Kentucky, trailing by as many as 35 with 12:43 left.

No. 3 Notre Dame 69, No. 14 Northeastern 65: At Pittsburgh, Zach Auguste scored 25 points, Jerian Grant added 17 and Notre Dame dodged a scare trying to erase its futile NCAA Tournament history.

The third-seeded Fighting Irish (30-5) returned to the tournament after a one-year absence. They have traditionally struggled in the tournament under coach Mike Brey. They made only one Sweet 16 since 2001.

Scott Eatherton had 18 points and David Walker had 15 for 14th-seeded Northeastern (23-12) which gave the Irish fits and threatened to keep Notre Dame's March malaise going.

With a chance to tie it at 67-all with less than 10 seconds left, Quincy Ford lost control of the ball — and the Huskies lost their chance at pulling off the shocker.

No. 6 Butler 56, No. 11 Texas 48: Kellen Dunham scored 20 points, including a pivotal three-pointer with 1:18 to play, to lift sixth-seeded Butler (23-10) in Pittsburgh.

The Longhorns (20-14) added to a miserable day for the vaunted Big 12. Texas joined Baylor and Iowa State, both No. 3 seeds, as early tournament exits.

No. 8 Cincinnati 66, No. 9 Purdue 65 (OT): Troy Caupain got Cincinnati to overtime with his buzzer-beating layup, then Coreontae DeBerry helped the eighth-seeded Bearcats beat No. 9 seed Purdue.

The Bearcats trailed by seven with 48.5 seconds left in regulation and forced overtime with a 10-3 run.

Caupain's driving layup banked off the glass, rolled around and hit the glass again — staying on the back rim for a moment — before falling through. That sent the Bearcats celebrating while officials reviewed the play to make sure Caupain did beat the buzzer.

The Bearcats (23-10) will play No. 1 Kentucky on Saturday in the Midwest Region.

Harden's career-high 50 paves way for Rockets

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Even the biggest stars of the Houston Rockets' past couldn't outshine James Harden on Thursday night.

Harden scored a career-high 50 points with 10 rebounds to lead the Rockets to a 118-108 win over the Denver Nuggets on a night when the team celebrated the 20th anniversary of the franchise's back-to-back NBA titles in 1994 and 1995.

Harden got a boost by knowing players such as Hakeem Olajuwon and Clyde Drexler were watching from the front row.

"That's a special group right there," Harden said. "We're trying to build something special like they did (and) to play a game in front of them was definitely an honor."

It was the ninth time a Rocket has reached 50 points and the first time since Olajuwon had 51 against the Celtics on Jan. 18, 1996.

Harden eclipsed his previous career-best of 46, set in 2013, on a free throw with about a minute remaining. On Houston's next possession, Trevor Ariza found him in the corner and he swished a three under heavy pressure, to make it 50.

"It just looked so easy," Ariza said. "It was like he just woke up and walked out there and had 50. That's how easily he scored the basketball."

It was the 29th game with at least 30 points and seventh with 40 this season for Harden, who is second in NBA scoring. He bounced back from a tough shooting game on Tuesday, when he had 17 points, by scoring 22 before halftime on Thursday night.

"It's really hard to get 50 points in a game and is not something many people can do," coach Kevin McHale said. "It was just one of those nights where he had good energy and he was driving hard."

Suns 74, Pelicans 72: Brandan Wright scored 16 points and matched his career high with seven blocked shots, helping host Phoenix to a sluggish, cold-shooting victory over a New Orleans team playing without star Anthony Davis.

Davis rolled his left ankle in the team's shootaround and his availability for the game at Golden State Friday was uncertain.

The loss dropped New Orleans a game behind Oklahoma City for the eighth play-off spot in the West. Phoenix is 2½ behind Oklahoma City and 1½ behind the Pelicans. Eric Gordon scored 14 for the Pelicans.

Timberwolves 95, Knicks 92

(OT): Zach LaVine made the tying and go-ahead free throws with 10.7 seconds left and scored six of his 20 points in overtime as visiting Minnesota outlasted New York in a matchup of the NBA's biggest losers.

Minnesota (15-53) ended a six-game losing streak and snapped a tie with the Knicks (14-54) for the NBA's worst record. New York can still win for losing, and now has pole position in the race for the No. 1 draft pick.

Kevin Martin scored 22 points and Andrew Wiggins had 20 for Minnesota despite shooting 4-for-17 from the field. Gorgui Dieng finished with 19 points and 11 rebounds, and his blocked shot triggered the fast break that set up LaVine's free throws.

Jazz 80, Lakers 73: Gordon Hayward scored 22 points, Trey Burke added 17 off the bench, and host Utah sent Los Angeles to its 50th loss of the season.

The Jazz, coming off an 88-84 loss against that Washington that ended a season-best six-game winning streak, are 12-2 since the All-Star break.

The loss was the fourth in a row for the lottery-bound Lakers, who have dropped 25 of their last 30.

Price, Canadiens shut down 'Canes

The Associated Press

MONTREAL — Four goals and points from eight players. It was a full-team effort on Thursday night for the Eastern Conference-leading Montreal Canadiens.

Carey Price made 31 saves for his league-leading and career-best 39th win of the season, lifting the Canadiens past the Carolina Hurricanes 4-0. Montreal won back-to-back games for the first time in March.

"All four lines played well tonight, which I can't say we've had for a while," said fourth-liner Dale Weise, who had a goal and an assist for his first multi-point game in more than a month. "It was nice to have a complete effort from the team. And our goaltender made the saves, as always."

Price earned his eighth shutout for the Canadiens, who also got goals from Brendan Gallagher, David Desharnais and Max Pacioretty.

Senators 6, Bruins 4: Bobby Ryan's third-period goal snapped a tie and lifted host Ottawa over Boston in a back-and-forth game.

The surging Senators moved within two points of the Bruins in the race for the second wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference. Ottawa has a game in hand.

Panthers 3, Red Wings 1: Jaromir Jagr scored his 718th NHL goal, moving into fifth place on the career list, and added an assist in Florida's win over visiting Detroit.

Jagr, who gave the Panthers a 1-0 lead, passed Phil Esposito for sole possession

of fifth place with his first goal since March 1.

Sharks 4, Maple Leafs 1: Logan Couture had a goal and an assist, helping San Jose defeat host Toronto.

Capitals 3, Wild 2: Alex Ovechkin scored two goals, helping lift visiting Washington past Minnesota.

Jets 2, Blues 1 (SO): Andrew Ladd scored the decisive shootout goal to give Winnipeg a victory over visiting St. Louis.

Stars 2, Penguins 1: Brett Ritchie and Jamie Benn scored 1:23 apart in the second period, and host Dallas held on to beat Pittsburgh.

Flames 4, Flyers 1: Johnny Gaudreau scored his 20th goal and added two assists to lead Calgary over visiting Philadelphia.

Blue Jackets 6, Canucks 2: Rookie Marko Dano recorded his first two-goal game in the NHL and Sergei Bobrovsky made 38 saves as Columbus routed host Vancouver.

Avalanche 5, Coyotes 2: Ryan O'Reilly and Jarome Iginla scored 29 seconds apart in the first period, Semyon Varlamov made 27 saves, and Colorado beat host Arizona for its third straight win.

Freddie Hamilton added his first NHL goal, and Matt Duchene and Gabriel Landeskog also scored for the Avalanche, who won for the 11th time in 15 games to remain seven points behind Calgary for the final Western Conference playoff spot.

Mets' Wheeler to have elbow surgery

The Associated Press

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. — New York Mets pitcher Zack Wheeler will have Tommy John surgery early next week and is expecting a 14-month rehabilitation, a schedule that would put him back in the major leagues in June 2016.

"I think the rehab is 12-18 months," Wheeler said Friday. "I've talked to plenty of guys who had it, and I've talked to plenty of doctors by now — three elbow specialists — and they said about 14 months is about where you want to be."

The 24-year-old right-hander has a complete tear in his ulnar collateral ligament, a partial tendon tear and a calcium deposit on the bone. He has been pitching with elbow pain, which was caused by tendinitis, since he was selected by San Francisco in the 2009 amateur draft.

He said the pain intensified after he threw 120 pitches, his big league career high, in a 3-2 win over the Chicago Cubs on Aug. 15.

Wheeler was 11-11 with a 3.54 ERA and 187 strikeouts last year. He had two MRIs in the offseason and received two platelet-rich plasma injections to deal with the tendinitis. He had another MRI last week in Port St. Lucie, which revealed the ligament tear.

Wheeler was prepared to pitch through pain again this season, but he realized something was wrong during a bullpen session and felt he wasn't able to recover as he did in the past.

Wheeler will join a growing list of Mets pitchers to have Tommy John surgery, including Matt Harvey, Jacob deGrom, Bobby Parnell, Jenry Mejia and prospect Steven Matz. Reliever Josh Edgin had the elbow-ligament replacement surgery Tuesday.