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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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A look at Russia's newly effective military

The Washington Post

MOSCOW — As Russia turned the Syrian conflict into an exhibition ground for its newly robust military over the past six months, its neighbors were watching with rapt interest.

This, after all, was a sterling opportunity to assess Russia's new battlefield capabilities, in the form of ship-based cruise missiles, improved logistics and elite units. And on display, too, were Russia's weaknesses.

"It is like a game of football," said Janis Berzins, the managing director at the Center for Security and Strategic Research of the National Defense Academy of Latvia, a NATO member nation that borders Russia. "If you're playing against Germany, then you go watch Germany play, right? It's the natural thing to do."

No one expects Russia and NATO to engage in a conventional war anytime soon. But with limited, consequential interventions in two conflicts, Ukraine and Syria, in the past two years, President Vladimir Putin had shown the Russian military's growing proficiency as well as his appetite to use force to achieve his greater geopolitical goals.

"They've demonstrated that they are clever enough to get in and get out, and they know how to use these military operations in order to bolster the diplomatic objectives," said Evelyn Farkas, a fellow at the Atlantic Council who served as U.S. deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia until last year.

It was not always the case. In 2008, when Russia lost at least four planes to air defenses in Georgia during a five-day war, the brief conflict was seen in the West as a debacle and as proof that Russia's largely conscript military remained a cumber-

Death toll climbs from strikes on Raqqa

Associated Press

BEIRUT — The death toll from purported Russian airstrikes on the Islamic State-held city of Raqqa in the past 24 hours has climbed to at least 55, mostly civilians, Syrian opposition activists and the terror group said Sunday.

A Kurdish-led force supported by the U.S. and Russia has said it is planning to liberate the city in the next months.

Intensified airstrikes on

Raqqa were ongoing Sunday. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which documents the conflict through activists on the ground, said 55 people had been killed, including 13 children and a pregnant woman, in what it said were Russian airstrikes. The anti-Islamic State group activist group Raqqa Is Being Slaughtered Silently put the number of deaths at 60. The Islamic State-affiliated news agency Aamaq said 43 were killed and 60 wounded.

Marine killed in Iraq served with 26th MEU

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Marine killed in a rocket attack in Iraq on Saturday was assigned to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit, which has deployed a detachment to Iraq, defense officials said Sunday.

Staff Sgt. Louis F. Cardin, of Temecula, Calif., was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, 26th MEU out of Camp Lejeune, N.C., the Pentagon said in a statement.

The U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group announced Sunday that a detachment from the 26th MEU had been deployed to Iraq for "the support of Iraqi security force and coalition ground

operations."

The 26th MEU is currently deployed with the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group in the 5th Fleet area of operations to maintain regional security, including missions in support of the coalition campaign against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

Cardin was providing force protection fire support at a recently established coalition fire base near Makhmour, southeast of Iraq's second largest city, Mosul, when he was killed in a rocket attack, the Pentagon said. The incident is under investigation.

From staff and wire reports

some shambles.

In an interview last year, now-retired Adm. James Stavridis, who became NATO's military commander in 2009, said: "We didn't have a single op plan on the shelf to deter against Russia. We'd written that off after

the fall of the wall; that chapter is over."

Now, NATO is holding exercises and considering large troop deployments in the Baltics, Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe amid growing concern from Russia's neighbors about a

potential Russian assault using new, unconventional means.

The war in Georgia helped prompt a vast reform and modernization of the Russian military that Gustav Gressel, a defense analyst for the European Council on Foreign Relations, termed a "quiet military revolution."

The military's restructuring called for new, highly mobile and independent reconnaissance units. Those were unveiled during Russia's annexation of Crimea.

Some aspects of the systems used by the Russians in Syria caught the eye of the analysts.

Berzins noted the use of sophisticated jamming equipment. Moscow also deploys this equipment in Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave that borders Poland and Lithuania. Kaliningrad additionally serves as a base for Russian S-400 anti-aircraft missiles, such as those Putin has deployed and maintained in Syria.

Russia's unveiling of its Kalibr cruise missiles, launched from ships in the Black Sea, demonstrated another potential threat, capable of striking targets far afield in Europe and requiring some form of low-altitude, anti-air defenses as a response.

There were also signs of certain weaknesses, in particular the scant amount of precision-guided munitions used in Syria that vastly increased collateral damage.

Perhaps the most impressive revelation to come out of Russia's deployment in Syria involved evident improvements in Russian logistical planning. Supply lines, long considered a weakness of the Russian military, appeared to be in robust condition.

Russia's first overseas intervention in recent times proved that Moscow could do so again, a factor that NATO and the West would have to plan for.

Istanbul bomber tied to Islamic State group

Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Turkey's interior minister on Sunday identified the suicide bomber who killed himself and four foreign tourists in Istanbul as a militant with links to the Islamic State group.

Minister Efkan Ala said the bomber was Turkish citizen Mehmet Ozturk, who was born in 1992 in Turkey's Gaziantep province, which borders Syria.

Saturday's explosion killed five people, including Ozturk, and wounded dozens of others. Among the fatalities were two American-Israelis, an Israeli and an Iranian. The attack targeted Istanbul's pedestrian Istiklal Street, which is lined with shops and cafes in an area that also has government offices and foreign missions.

Turkey has endured six suicide bombing attacks in less than a year. The country faces a wide array of security threats, including from ultra-left radicals, Kurdish rebels and the Islamic State group. Turkey is also a partner in the U.S.-led coalition against the Islamic State group, and its bases are being used to launch bombing runs against the group in Syria.

Two of the attacks this year hit the Turkish capital, Ankara. An offshoot of the banned Kurdistan Workers' Union claimed the Feb. 17 car bombing that killed 29 people and the March 13 suicide bombing that killed 37 people. On Jan. 12, an attack that Turkish authorities blamed on the Islamic State group claimed the lives of a dozen German tourists visiting Istanbul's historic sites.

Ala said Turkey would press ahead with its fight against terrorism groups but admitted it was difficult to stop suicide attacks.

On Sunday, well-wishers placed carnations and candles at the scene of the attack, with one placard reading, "We are on the streets, we are not afraid of you."

The Israeli victims were identified as Avraham Goldman, 69, from Herzliya; Simha Damari, 60, from Dimona; and Yonata Shor, 40, from Tel Aviv.

It was not immediately clear if the Israelis were specifically targeted.

The attack came as Turkey had heightened security across the country in the run-up to the Kurdish spring festival of Newroz on March 21. Kurds in Turkey traditionally use the festival to assert their ethnic identity and to demand greater rights.

No overnight Naha stays for III MEF

Stars and Stripes

Marines and sailors will no longer be able to stay overnight in Naha, Japan, after a sailor was charged with raping a woman in Okinawa's capital city.

Servicemembers under command of the III Marine Expeditionary Force cannot stay overnight south of Marine Camp Kinser, a Marine spokesman told the Marine Corps Times on Thursday.

The order also prevents servicemembers from overnight stays near Okinawa's sole international airport. Marine Corps officials were not available for comment Friday afternoon.

The newest restriction on Okinawa servicemembers comes after Seaman Apprentice Justin Castellanos, 24, was arrested on March 13 following allegations that he raped a Japanese woman in a Naha hotel.

Lt. Gen. Lawrence Nicholson, the III Marine Expeditionary Force commander, referred to the allegation as a "great shame and dishonor of us all" in an apology to Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga.

Navy lieutenant held in Japan over attack on woman during flight

By ERIK SLAVIN
AND HANA KUSUMOTO

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A Navy lieutenant was arrested Friday following allegations that he groped and punched a female passenger aboard a Japan-bound flight, police and Navy officials said.

The lieutenant, 33, assigned to Naval Air Facility Atsugi, is suspected of touching the 19-year-old college student's clothed thigh, then punching her in the head several times during a flight from San Diego to Narita International Airport, an airport police spokesman said.

Police allege the officer assaulted the woman for about 90 minutes aboard the Japan Airlines flight, beginning at about 11 a.m. Thursday, according to police and media reports. The woman changed seats after another passenger reported the incident to a flight attendant, police said.

The officer had been drinking on the flight, although how much he had consumed is unclear, the police spokesman said.

Police arrested the lieutenant and took him into custody shortly after midnight following an investigation that began after the plane arrived Thurs-

day afternoon.

Police said they planned to forward charges to the prosecutor's office Saturday.

Although the officer remains in police custody, the military is working with Japanese authorities to determine which side has jurisdiction and will retain custody as the case moves forward, Atsugi base spokesman Sam Samuelson said.

The Navy is fully cooperating with the Japanese investigation and is conducting a "thorough and fair" investigation of its own, Samuelson said.

Cities around world mark Earth Hour

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Cities around the world turned out the lights Saturday evening to mark the 10th annual Earth Hour, a global movement dedicated to protecting the planet and highlighting the effects of climate change.

As night came on, the lights

went out in cities from South Korea to the United States in what the World Wildlife Fund describes as a moment of solidarity for climate action. The group sponsors the event and says people in 178 countries and territories had planned to participate.

Lights went out for the hour-long event — from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. local time — in Beijing, Moscow, Beirut, Cairo, Athens, Rome and Paris. The lights atop the Empire State Building in New York were dimmed, and some billboards in Times Square also went dark.

No. 11 Zags cruise past No. 3 Utah

Associated Press

The Sweet 16 has a couple of familiar schools returning to the party.

Duke, North Carolina, Kansas and Indiana each advanced to the round of 16 on Saturday. Same for Virginia and Iowa State, a pair of powers headed to the regional semifinals for the second time in three years.

Gonzaga advanced to its second straight Sweet 16 with an impressive 82-59 victory over Utah in the Midwest Region. The Zags drew a No. 11 seed after a rocky regular season, but they are looking like a contender for the program's first Final Four.

East Regional

No. 1 North Carolina 85, Providence

66: At Raleigh, N.C., Brice Johnson had 21 points and 10 rebounds, and North Carolina pulled away for the win in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

Joel Berry II added 15 points for the East Region's top seed, which found itself in a fight well into the second half against the Friars' high-scoring duo of Ben Bentil and Big East player of the year Kris Dunn. But the Tar Heels (30-6) stepped up their offensive efficiency, attacked the paint and started cashing in at the line as the fouls piled up for Providence (24-11).

Justin Jackson scored on a drive to start an 8-0 run that broke a 41-all tie, and then Johnson scored six straight points in the 10-0 burst that put the Tar Heels up 17 with 6½ minutes left.

Dunn had 29 points for the ninth-seeded Friars, though he sat much of the first half with two fouls and picked up his fourth while trying to strip Johnson in the lane with 8:44 left. Bentil fouled out on a

rebound attempt with 7:23 left, finishing with 21 points.

No. 5 Indiana 73, No. 4 Kentucky

67: At Des Moines, Iowa, Indiana is headed back to the Sweet 16 for the first time since 2013.

Freshman Thomas Bryant scored 15 of his 19 points in the final eight minutes, helping the Hoosiers earn a spot in the regional semifinals in Philadelphia. Yogi Ferrell had 18 points, and Troy Williams finished with 13.

Indiana (27-7) took control with a 17-4 run to go up 10 with four minutes left. Tyler Ulis and Alex Poythress pulled Kentucky within 69-67 on free throws, but Bryant hit two from the line with 10 seconds to go to seal the win.

Ulis scored 27 points for Kentucky (27-9), which suffered its earliest NCAA Tournament exit since 2008 — when it lost to a Marquette team then led by current Indiana coach Tom Crean. Jamal Murray had 16 points.

South Regional

No. 1 Kansas 73, No. 9 UConn 61

At Des Moines, Iowa, Wayne Selden Jr. and Perry Ellis carried Kansas on a sweet romp to the round of 16, combining for 43 points to help the Jayhawks hand Kevin Ollie his first NCAA Tournament loss as head coach of the Huskies.

Selden had 22 points and seven rebounds, Ellis scored 21 points and grabbed eight rebounds and the Jayhawks (32-4) advanced to the South Regional semifinals on Thursday in Louisville, Ky., to play the winner of the Hawaii-Maryland game on Sunday.

Selden and Ellis combined to shoot 17 for 27 from the floor, shooting away the disappointment of second-round defeats

in each of the last two years.

No. 3 Miami 65, No. 11 Wichita State

57: At Providence, R.I., Angel Rodriguez took over after Miami blew a 21-point lead midway through the second half, hitting a big three-pointer with 72 seconds remaining and scoring 28 points to lead the third-seeded Hurricanes into the round of 16.

Miami (27-7) made it that far three years ago under Jim Larrañaga, in his fifth season as head coach. Sheldon McClellan finished with 18 points and Davon Reed had 10 for the Hurricanes.

The Hurricanes will play Iowa or Villanova next weekend in Louisville in the South Regional semifinals.

Fred VanVleet and Shaquille Morris each had 12 points for 11th-seeded Wichita State (26-9).

Midwest Regional

No. 1 Virginia 77, No. 9 Butler 69

At Raleigh, N.C., Malcolm Brogdon scored 22 points and Virginia used some hot second-half shooting to advance to the next round of the NCAA Tournament.

Anthony Gill added 17 points and Marial Shayok finished with 12 for the top-seeded Cavaliers (28-7).

Virginia shot 73 percent after halftime, hitting 14 of its first 16 shots of the second half, and reached the Sweet 16 for the second time in three years. It will face Iowa State (23-11) on Friday in the Midwest Regional semifinals in Chicago.

No. 4 Iowa State 78, No. 12 Little Rock 61: At Denver, Georges Niang scored 28 points and Iowa State watched Josh Haggins closely in the second half of a win over Little Rock.

The No. 4 seed Cyclones (23-11) advanced

to their second Sweet 16 in three years.

Niang, the winningest player (97) in Cyclones history and Iowa State's only two-time All-American, was simply too much for the 12th-seeded Trojans (30-5) of the Sun Belt.

No. 11 Gonzaga 92, No. 3 Utah: At Denver, Gonzaga, looking like something much different than an 11 seed, rolled over Utah behind 22 points from Eric McClellan and a 19-point, 10-rebound effort from Domantas Sabonis.

This was a wire-to-wire effort even more impressive than their 16-point win over Seton Hall in the first round.

Next up for the Zags (28-7) is a game against Syracuse or Middle Tennessee in the Midwest Regional.

Kyle Wiltjer had 17 for Gonzaga, and went 3-for-4 from three-point range.

West Regional

No. 4 Duke 71, No. 12 Yale 64: At Providence, R.I., in a battle of brainy schools, Duke nearly got a tough lesson from Ivy League champion Yale.

Grayson Allen had 29 points, including five three-pointers, to help Duke fend off a furious rally by Yale and advance to the Sweet 16.

Brandon Ingram added 25 points and five rebounds for the defending champions, who will play the winner of top-seed Oregon and St. Joseph's.

The West Region's No. 4 seed led by as many as 27 points in the battle of the brainy schools before seeing that dwindle to just three points with less than a minute to play.

Yale came close to forcing a needed turnover, but eventually had to foul. Duke connected on four of its final five free-throws to close out the game.

Duquesne women top Seton Hall in debut

Associated Press

It was quite a debut for the Duquesne women's team in the NCAA Tournament Saturday. The No. 9 seed in the Bridgeport Regional thoroughly beat No. 8 seed Seton Hall. Their reward? UConn, which is on a 70-game winning streak and seeking its fourth straight national title.

A glance at Day 2:

Bridgeport Regional

No. 1 UConn 101, No. 16 Robert Morris 49: At Storrs, Conn., freshman Katie Lou Samuelson scored 22 points as UConn began its quest for a fourth consecutive national title with a rout of Robert Morris.

No. 9 Duquesne 97, No. 8 Seton Hall 76: At Storrs, Conn., Deva'Nyar Workman scored a career-high 25 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead Duquesne to a successful NCAA debut with a win over Seton Hall.

No. 3 UCLA 66, No. 14 Hawaii 50: At Los Angeles, Nirra Fields scored 16 points and Monique Burke added 15 as UCLA defeated a cold-shooting Hawaii.

No. 6 South Florida 48, No. 11 Colorado State 45:

At Los Angeles, Courtney Williams came off the bench and scored 31 points and South Florida held on late to defeat Colorado State.

No. 10 Missouri 78, No. 7 BYU 69:

At Austin, Texas, freshman Sophie Cunningham scored 20 points, most of it in a dominant third quarter, and Missouri upset BYU for the Tigers' first NCAA Tournament win since 2001.

No. 2 Texas 86, No. 15 Alabama State 42:

At Austin, Texas, Ariel Atkins scored 15 points and Texas used a dominant third quarter on its home court to roll to a win over Alabama State.

Dallas Regional

No. 5 Florida State 72, No. 12 Middle Tennessee State 55:

At College Station, Texas, junior guard Leticia Romero scored 17 points for Florida State to help lead the Seminoles past Middle Tennessee.

No. 4 Texas A&M 74, No. 13 Missouri State 65:

At College Station, Texas, freshman Anriel Howard set an NCAA Tournament record with 27 re-

bounds, Courtney Walker scored 29 points and Texas A&M overcame the suspension of starter Courtney Williams to beat Missouri State.

Lexington Regional

No. 1 Notre Dame 95, No. 16 North Carolina A&T 61:

At South Bend, Ind., Brianna Turner scored 16 points, Madison Cable added 14 points and seven rebounds and Notre Dame beat North Carolina A&T.

No. 9 Indiana 62, No. 8 Georgia 58:

At South Bend, Ind., Tyra Buss scored 17 of her 23 points in the second half to lead Indiana to a win over Georgia.

No. 12 South Dakota State 74, No. 5 Miami 71:

At Stanford, Calif., Macy Miller and Gabby Boever combined for three free throws over the final 35.6 seconds to bail out their teammates' poor shooting late at the line, and South Dakota State stunned Miami.

No. 4 Stanford 85, No. 13 San Francisco 58:

At Stanford, Calif., Tara VanDerveer and Jennifer Azzi held their embrace a bit longer than a typical pre-

game greeting between coaches, then the Stanford coach guided the Cardinal into the second round by beating her former star player and Azzi's San Francisco team.

No. 6 Oklahoma 61, No. 11 Purdue 45:

At Lexington, Ky., Peyton Little scored 20 points, Maddie Manning added 12 and Oklahoma blocked 13 shots to shut down Purdue for a first-round NCAA Tournament victory.

No. 3 Kentucky 85, No. 14 UNC Asheville 31:

At Lexington, Ky., Makayla Epps scored 24 points and Kentucky routed UNC Asheville for its biggest NCAA Tournament victory margin in school history.

No. 2 Maryland 74, No. 15 Iona 58:

At College Park, Md., Shatori Walker-Kimbrough scored 19 points, and Maryland ruined Iona's debut in the NCAA Tournament with a sloppy win.

No. 7 Washington 65, No. 10 Penn 53:

At College Park, Md., Kelsey Plum, the nation's third-leading scorer, produced 24 points and seven assists and Washington prevented an Ivy League surprise in the women's NCAA Tournament.



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Spurs top Warriors, now 33-0 at home

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The San Antonio Spurs continued their dominance at home, even against the NBA's most dominant team.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 26 points and 13 rebounds, and the Spurs beat the Golden State Warriors 87-79 on Saturday night to remain perfect at the AT&T Center this season and extend their home winning streak over the defending champions to 33 straight regular-season games.

The Spurs held the Warriors to a season-low point total, using a bruising defense to slow Stephen Curry in a tense showdown between the league's top two teams.

"They're a great team, they're the bar in the NBA and it just felt good to win tonight," Aldridge said.

San Antonio (59-10) moved within three games of Golden State (62-7) for the league's top seed with two meetings remaining in April.

Kawhi Leonard added 18 points and 14 rebounds for the Spurs, who have won 44 straight at home in the regular season, tied for the second-longest streak in NBA history with the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls.

San Antonio did it by having Tim Duncan come off the bench for only the third time in his career to counter Golden State's smaller lineup.

The Spurs normally make opposing teams react to what they are doing, but they have never faced a team like the Warriors. Golden State can still set the single-season record with 73 victories if it closes the season 11-2.

"No, they're just a different type of team," San Antonio guard Danny Green said. "There's a reason they were champions last year and the No. 1 team right now. They're an anomaly. They have everybody that can shoot

big baskets for them."

That made Golden State's futility Saturday that much more surprising. The Spurs held Curry to 14 points while limiting him to 1-for-12 shooting on three-pointers.

"Tonight we executed well on the defensive end, but offensively I didn't allow us to get comfortable offensively," Curry said. "I've got to play a lot better, manage the game a lot better, especially if certain shots that I normally make aren't falling. You've got to be able to adjust and find different ways to impact the way."

Curry was continually harassed by Green, who blocked two shots while holding the MVP front-runner to 4-for-18 shooting.

"I thought Steph missed a few early that he normally makes and he never really got in a rhythm and that happens," Golden State coach Steve Kerr said.

Heat 122, Cavaliers 101: Dwyane Wade scored 24 points to surpass 20,000 for his career, Josh Richardson added 19 and host Miami never trailed.

Goran Dragic had 18 points and 11 assists for Miami, Joe Johnson also scored 18 and Hassan Whiteside finished with 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Miami outrebounded Cleveland 42-26 and led by as many as 33 at one point.

Thunder 115, Pacers 111: Russell Westbrook had his second triple-double in two nights, Kevin Durant had 33 points and 13 rebounds, and visiting Oklahoma City overcame Paul George's 45 points to beat Indiana.

Westbrook finished with 14 points, 11 rebounds and 14 assists, his 14th triple-double of the season. Durant nearly had one, too, finishing with eight assists to lead Oklahoma City to its fourth straight win.

Nuggets 101, Hornets 93: D.J. Augustin scored 24 points on 8-for-11 shooting, and Denver ended a three-

game road losing streak.

Grizzlies 113, Clippers 102: Zach Randolph recorded his first career triple-double with 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists, Tony Allen added 22 points and host Memphis beat the Clippers.

Hawks 109, Rockets 97: Al Horford scored 22 points and streaking host Atlanta continued to dominate Western Conference teams by beating Michael Beasley and Houston.

The Hawks have won five straight and eight of nine. They've also won six straight against Western Conference teams.

Bulls 92, Jazz 85: Derrick Rose scored 22 points to lead short-handed host Chicago past Utah, ending the Jazz's four-game winning streak.

Taj Gibson had 15 points and 10 rebounds, and Nikola Mirotic added 15 points for Chicago.

Wizards 99, Knicks 89: John Wall had 24 points and 10 assists, and host Washington rallied from an 18-point, second-quarter deficit for its fourth straight victory.

It was the largest comeback win of the season for the Wizards, who began Saturday 10th in the Eastern Conference, but are now just 1½ games out of the eighth and final playoff spot.

Pistons 115, Nets 103: Anthony Tolliver scored all 17 of his points in the second half and Aron Baynes scored 17 of his 21 in the fourth quarter to lift host Detroit over Brooklyn.

The Pistons trailed by six in the third and were in danger of what would have been a terrible home loss, but they were eventually able to take advantage of Brook Lopez's absence. The Brooklyn big man missed the game with a virus.

Pens stifle Flyers in chase for East berth

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Pittsburgh Penguins used stifling defense and relentless forechecking Saturday to defeat Philadelphia 4-1 in a match-up between two teams chasing one of the final Eastern Conference playoff spots in the NHL.

The Penguins have won five straight and six of seven — all against Metropolitan Division opponents. Pittsburgh and Philadelphia play twice more in the final week of the season.

Pittsburgh goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury made 16 saves in his 31st victory of the season, but was hardly challenged by the Flyers.

After falling behind on a goal by Radko Gudas early in the second period, the Penguins answered quickly. Nick Bonino won a board battle with Flyers rookie defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere and fed Daley in the left circle for the tying goal.

Flyers goalie Steve Mason wasn't supposed to start but got the call after Michal Neuvirth appeared injured during warmups. The Flyers said during the game Neuvirth "didn't feel well." Mason finished with 31 stops.

Sharks 4, Rangers 1: Joel Ward scored twice, Joe Thornton broke a tie early in the third period and host San Jose overwhelmed Henrik Lundqvist and New York.

Wild 3, Hurricanes 2 (SO): Charlie Coyle and Zach Parise scored in the shootout, and host Minnesota got a big win in the race for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference.

Blue Jackets 6, Devils 3: Rookie Oliver Bjorkstrand got his first two NHL goals in the third period and Columbus beat visiting New Jersey.

Columbus also got a goal and an assist

from Boone Jenner and two assists each for Alexander Wennberg and Matt Calvert. Sergei Bobrovsky made 27 saves.

Senators 5, Canadiens 0: Andrew Hammond stopped all 30 shots for his first shutout of the season and host Ottawa scored three short-handed goals in a victory over Montreal.

Maple Leafs 4, Sabres 1: Connor Carrick scored his second goal in a week after ending a long drought and host Toronto beat Buffalo to win their fourth in six games and avoid elimination from the playoffs.

Red Wings 5, Panthers 3: Luke Glendening scored the go-ahead goal, Pavel Datsyuk had two goals and visiting Detroit rebounded from a two-goal deficit and topped Florida.

Stars 3, Islanders 0: Kari Lehtonen made 27 saves in Dallas' first shutout since December, and the Stars beat visiting New York to maintain their hold on sole possession of first place in the Western Conference.

Kings 2, Bruins 1: Tanner Pearson and Alec Martinez scored and Jonathan Quick made 27 saves, leading Los Angeles over visiting Boston.

Los Angeles' 11th victory in 14 games, coupled with the Arizona Coyotes' 2-0 loss to Tampa Bay, clinched a playoff berth for the Kings.

Blues 3, Canucks 0: Brian Elliott made 19 saves in his return from injury and visiting St. Louis handed Vancouver its second straight shutout loss.

Lightning 2, Coyotes 0: Ben Bishop stopped 31 shots for his fifth shutout of the season, Ondrej Palat scored in the first period and visiting Tampa Bay used a superior penalty kill to hold off Arizona.

Red Bulls edge Dynamo

Associated Press

Higuain came away empty handed on two early shots — the first of which was saved by Lampson in the 11th.

The Crew (0-2-1) got their first corner early in the second half and continued to apply pressure, but Tony Tchani's shot in the 54th minute was saved by Lampson and Ethan Finlay's right footer a couple minutes later sailed wide left.

FC Dallas 2, Impact 0: Mauro Diaz opened the scoring in the 79th minute, Maximiliano Urruti added a fast-break finish in the 87th and FC Dallas beat visiting Montreal.

Diaz scored on a free kick from a few yards to the right of the penalty arc, hooking it over the wall and into the upper right corner of the goal.

With the late scoring flurry, FC Dallas (2-1-0) bounced back from its 5-0 loss to the Houston Dynamo a week ago.

Timbers 2, Real Salt Lake 2: Fanendo Adi scored twice in a 4-minute span late in the second half to give Portland a tie with host Real Salt Lake.

In the 79th minute, Dairon Asprilla chipped a shot toward goal that ricocheted off the crossbar and fell to Adi six yards from the goal. Adi volleyed it in for his second score of the season.

Four minutes later, Jamison Olave was ejected for apparently elbowing Adi in the face, and Adi scored on the ensuing penalty.

Jao Plata got his third goal of the season for RSL (1-0-2) in the 16th minute, but then RSL captain Kyle Beckerman was issued a red card 15 minutes later after a sliding tackle on Adi, reducing the visitors to 10 men.

Whitecaps 2, Sounders 1: Pedro Morales scored twice on penalty kicks to give visiting Vancouver its first victory of the season, 2-1 over winless Seattle.

Vancouver (1-2-0) won after losing consecutive games to start a season for the first time in its five MLS campaigns.

It's the first time Seattle has started a season with three straight losses.