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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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SEAL killed in fight against Islamic State

By TARA COPP

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Navy SEAL was killed in combat Tuesday during an attack by Islamic State group fighters in northern Iraq, Pentagon officials said.

The servicemember was killed near the city of Irbil, said Defense Secretary Ash Carter, who announced the death in Stuttgart, Germany, where he presided over a change of command at U.S. European Command headquarters.

A defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the U.S. servicemember killed was a Navy SEAL. He was the third American servicemember killed in combat since the U.S.-led coalition entered the war against the Islamic State group in 2014.

Pentagon press secretary Peter Cook said the incident

occurred north of Mosul during an Islamic State attack on a peshmerga fighting position. Mosul, which was captured by Islamic State fighters in 2014, is used by the terrorist group as its capital in Iraq. The city is about 50 miles west of Irbil, which is Iraqi-controlled and used by U.S. forces to train Iraqi forces.

Cook said the servicemember worked as an adviser to the peshmerga, a Kurdish fighting group that has been a close U.S. ally and is considered the most effective fighting force in northern Iraq. He was working at a position a few miles behind the peshmerga's front lines, Cook said.

Another defense official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told Stars and Stripes that the incident occurred about 9:30 a.m. Tuesday after Islamic State group fighters at-

tacked. Two defense officials said Islamic State fighters used vehicle-borne explosives to breach the peshmerga's front line and then were able to reach the SEAL's position, where he was killed by small-arms fire.

At the time, U.S. and coalition jets provided air support to help peshmerga fighters counter the offensive. Using F-15 fighter jets and drones, they conducted 23 airstrikes during the fight.

The official said he did not know how many peshmerga fighters were hurt or killed in the attack. He also said no other U.S. casualties had been reported.

U.S. forces are moving closer to the front lines as they assist the peshmerga and the Iraq army's 15th Division in preparing to retake Mosul, which has raised questions about whether U.S. forces are back in ground

combat in Iraq.

On Tuesday, Carter was direct in his assessment of the loss. "It is a combat death, of course," he said.

The death comes after a recent announcement that the United States would send an additional 217 troops to assist in the fight to retake Mosul, most of whom are expected to be Army Special Forces, Green Berets.

Capt. Jeff Davis, a Pentagon spokesman, said Monday that the 217 troops are not in Iraq yet.

In October, Master Sgt. Joshua Wheeler, a member of the Army's Delta Force, was killed during a rescue operation to save hostages held by the Islamic State group. In March, Marine Staff Sgt. Louis Cardin was killed in a rocket attack at Fire Base Bell in northern Iraq.

Thornberry defies Carter, seeks to redirect war funds

By TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the powerful House Armed Services Committee said Monday he is willing to defy Defense Secretary Ash Carter if it means passing his version of the 2017 defense budget.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, shot back at the Pentagon's top civilian after Carter strongly objected to the House committee's plan to pull \$18 billion out of Islamic State war funding to instead pay for more troops, equipment and training.

The budget maneuver means war money will run out midway through 2017 and the next president and Congress will be left to strike a new multibillion-dollar funding deal or risk the ongoing

operations in Iraq and Syria as well as Afghanistan.

"What's objectionable is cutting the military well below levels anyone thinks is wise, denying our troops their pay raise for three years in a row, forcing them to live in crumbling barracks or work in hangars that have literally been condemned," Thornberry said in a released statement. "I am determined to turn our readiness crisis around, even if I have to do it over the secretary's objections."

Thornberry and other defense hawks have settled on using the war funds as a way to bolster the military and get around caps on defense and other federal spending that were negotiated in the fall by Republicans and Democrats. He has said it could cause President Barack Obama

to threaten a veto on the annual defense budget again this year.

The defense funding allowed under the caps is not enough and will result in the military "deploying troops who aren't fully trained, whose equipment is worn out, and who didn't get the resources they needed back home to be ready to face our enemies overseas," Thornberry said.

On Monday, Carter lobbed new criticism at the plan, which was passed by the Armed Services Committee last week as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.

"The proposal is to take money out of the wartime funding account in wartime and that's objectionable on the face of it," he told reporters during a trip to Stuttgart, Germany.

Carter said the move also undermines the deal on spending passed by Congress, which the Pentagon hopes will keep the defense budget stable for the next two years by eliminating political fights on Capitol Hill. The deal was reached only after Obama vetoed the defense budget in October because it used a similar tactic to fund daily military operations with money from the war fund.

"One of the reasons I object to what's going on, and I do object to it, is that it undermines precisely that bipartisan stability," he said, according to a transcript provided by the Defense Department.

The NDAA bill and Thornberry's plan haven't passed the full House but could come up for a vote in the coming weeks.

Pentagon to test unmanned sea vessel

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — It's not only drones and driverless cars that may become the norm someday — ocean-faring ships might also run without captains or crews.

The Pentagon on Monday showed off the world's largest unmanned surface vessel, a self-driving 132-foot ship able to travel up to 10,000 nautical miles on its own to hunt for stealthy submarines and underwater mines.

The military's research arm, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, in conjunction with the Navy will be testing the ship off the San Diego coast over the next two years to observe how it interacts with other vessels and avoids collisions.

Unlike smaller, remote-controlled craft launched from ships, the so-called "Sea Hunter" is built to operate on its own.

"It's not a joy-stick ship," said DARPA spokesman Jared B. Adams, standing in front of the sleek, futuristic-looking steel-gray vessel docked at a maritime terminal in the heart of San Diego's shipbuilding district, where TV crews filmed the robotic craft.

"Sea Hunter" relies on radar, sonar, cameras and a global positioning system.

Unmanned ships will supplement missions to help keep servicemembers out of harm's way, Adams said.

Besides military leaders, the commercial shipping industry will be watching the ship's performance during the trial

period. Maritime companies from Europe to Asia have been looking into developing fleets of unmanned ships to cut down on operating costs and get through areas plagued by pirates.

During the testing phase, the ship will have human operators as a safety net. Once it proves to be reliable, it will maneuver itself — able to go out at sea for months at a time.

With its twin diesel engines, it could go as far as Guam from San Diego on a mission, developers say. There are no plans at this point to arm it.

"There are a lot of advantages that we're still trying to learn about," program manager Scott Littlefield said.

The idea in the commercial sector has sparked debate over whether it's possible to make robotic boats safe enough. The

International Transport Workers' Federation, the union representing more than half of the world's more than 1 million seafarers, has said it does not believe technology will ever be able to replace the ability of humans to foresee and react to the various dangers at sea.

Others have expressed concern about hackers taking control. Military officials have been working on hacker-proof protections and say it's possible to make ships cyber secure.

The "Sea Hunter" was built off the Oregon coast, and it moved on a barge to San Diego's coastline.

The prototype can travel at a speed of up to about 30 mph and is equipped with a variety of sensors and an advanced optical system to detect other ships.

Ex-Marine killed as he intervenes in dispute

The Washington Post

The concealed carry permit holder was trying to intervene in a domestic dispute, trying to disarm the fleeing shooter, trying to do the job ordinarily reserved for police.

Instead, he was killed.

Just before noon on Monday, T.J. Antell, 35, who had served in the Marines, watched the unfolding of a domestic dispute between a man and a woman outside a Walgreens in Arlington, Texas, authorities said. The man, a soldier stationed at Fort Hood, allegedly fired a gun twice, one bullet burying into the ground and another striking the woman. He then climbed into his truck in the parking lot and attempted to leave when Antell tried to stop him.

Antell, a father of three and CrossFit gym owner, retreated to his vehicle, grabbed his own gun, and approached the shooter, Arlington police said.

Instead of abiding by Antell's commands to stop, police said the shooter climbed out of his

truck and fired his gun again.

The shot hit Antell in the head, reported The Dallas Morning News. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

His wife, Crystal Antell, saw it all, according to reports.

Within hours, the shooter had turned himself in to authorities.

Ricci Bradden, 22, faces a murder charge and is being held on \$500,000 bond, Arlington police said. According to his arrest affidavit, Bradden was driving away from the scene when he called and confessed to several Army supervisors at Fort Hood that he had slapped the gun out of Antell's hand and shot him, reported TV station Fox 4 News.

Then Bradden called his father, who advised his son to pull over and wait for him, Fox reported. Police said the two then drove to a Texas Department of Public Safety station in Hill County where the 22-year-old turned himself in.

The initial altercation that turned the morning bloody

began as a spat between Bradden and his wife, Quinisha Johnson, an employee at the Walgreens, reported the Dallas Morning News. The couple was arguing outside the store when Bradden pulled out his gun and fired it twice at his wife's feet, striking her once in the ankle, according to reports.

Johnson told police she fled inside, shouting for help, reported The Dallas Morning News.

She was recovering at a local hospital Monday with injuries not considered to be life-threatening, police said.

As word of the altercation spread throughout Arlington, family and friends gathered at CrossFit Abattoir, the gym T.J. Antell owned with his wife, Crystal.

"He went into protective mode. He's a father, he's protective by nature," Antell's pastor, Marc Lowrance, told reporters Monday. "And he thought he could help everyone involved, and tragically it went a different way."

Veteran admits to lying for benefits

An Army veteran who received more than \$121,000 in benefits intended for low-income, disabled veterans admitted in federal court Monday that he lied in his application for benefits about his income and ability to work.

Antonio Estrada, 65, of Toledo pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Jack Zouhary to theft of government money and property of more than \$1,000.

The charge carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Noah Hood, an assistant U.S. attorney, said Estrada's sentence is expected to be between 10 and 16 months.

Estrada, who served in the Army from November 1969 to June 1971, collected \$121,156 in monthly pension payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs between April 1, 2006, and Feb. 28, 2014, after reporting he had zero income and zero assets.

From The (Toledo, Ohio) Blade

OKC evens series with Spurs

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — The Oklahoma City Thunder nearly gave the game away in a wild final sequence that referees acknowledge should have been blown dead before it started.

All that matters to the Thunder is that they're all even with the San Antonio Spurs.

Russell Westbrook had 29 points and 10 assists, and the Thunder held on to beat San Antonio 98-97 on Monday night, evening the series at one game apiece when the Spurs failed to score in the final seconds.

Kevin Durant added 28 points as the Thunder handed the Spurs just their second home loss of the season, rebounding from a 32-point beating in Game 1.

With San Antonio trailing 98-97 with 13.5 seconds remaining and Oklahoma City out of timeouts, Thunder guard Dion Waiters elbowed Manu Ginobili to get the space needed to inbound the ball.

"On the floor, we did not see a foul on the play," referee Ken Mauer told a pool reporter. "However, upon review we realize and we agree that we should have had an offensive foul on the play. It's a play that we have never seen before, ever, but

we feel we should have had an offensive foul on Waiters."

Waiters claimed he was unaware of any contact.

"No, I'm in the game, man, I don't really know what's really going on," Waiters said. "My whole mindset is get the ball in-bounds and hopefully we get a foul once the ball the ball gets inbounds, but it was a crazy sequence the last 13 seconds. So we pulled it out, that's all I care about."

Waiters inbounded to Durant, who was immediately stripped by Danny Green. Patty Mills missed an open three-point-er, LaMarcus Aldridge lost the ball after grabbing the airball and Kawhi Leonard was unable to gather the ball before the buzzer sounded.

"I don't know what it is, to tell you the truth, what type of violation it is," Ginobili said of Waiters' elbow. "It's got to be something. But again, it's not that play that decided anything. We got the steal, we got the shot, we got an offensive rebound."

Aldridge had 41 points, but the Spurs shot 43 percent as a team after shooting 61 percent in the series opener.

"It feels horrible," Aldridge said. "Feels like it was wasted. I've never been about trying to get points and not win, I always

try to do things to win. If you win it's totally a different feeling, but losing like that hurts."

Leonard was held to 14 points on 7-for-18 shooting. Ginobili was the only other San Antonio player in double figures, scoring 11 points on 5-for-8 shooting.

San Antonio missed 12 of its first 13 shots, struggling to even hit the rim after seemingly making every shot it took in the opening quarter of Game 1. The Spurs missed six layups and Green awkwardly tossed a hard runner that ricocheted off the backboard.

"I thought we did a good job from the beginning making it tough," Durant said. "That first (Spurs) basket didn't go in and that was a step in the right direction for us after what happened last game. We just try to make every basket tough."

Game 3 is Friday at Oklahoma City.

Aldridge had 13 points in the final quarter, including a pair of three-point plays. The All-Star forward drained his second three-pointer of the season to pull San Antonio within 96-94 and then made three free throws after being fouled by Serge Ibaka to pull the Spurs within 98-97 with 13.5 seconds to set up the final play.

The series of missteps almost wiped away a strong outing by the Thunder.

Ky. Derby entrants work out

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A day after storms drenched Churchill Downs, Kentucky Derby horses Mor Spirit, Gun Runner and stablemate Creator enjoyed sunny skies and solid footing in their final workouts for racing's marquee event.

All three came through Monday's workouts in good order as a result, with newly elected Hall of Fame trainer Steve Asmussen particularly encouraged by the showings of Gun Runner and Creator entering Saturday's 142nd Run for the Roses. Said Asmussen, "they're cooling out extremely well and we're very excited for the Derby."

Fellow Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert was just as confident about Mor Spirit, his lone Derby pupil this year after guiding eventual Triple Crown champion American Pharoah and Dortmund here last May. The colt covered five furlongs in 59.80 with jockey Gary Stevens aboard.

"It went just as planned," Baffert said. "Gary was happy with him. He loves the surface. He goes over it much better than Santa Anita. That's half the battle, if they like it."

Baffert has tempered expectations of Mor Spirit following American Pharoah as a Triple Crown champion and noted that it took 37 years before that stellar colt finally succeeded last spring.

Stevens was just as cautious and pointed out that Saturday's challenge will be trying to knock off unbeaten Nyquist, the likely favorite in the 1¼ mile Derby featuring 20 entrants. But he suggested anything was possible with the colt's impressive record — three wins and four seconds in seven starts — and his progress toward the Derby after a runner-up finish to Exaggerator in the Santa Anita Derby.

"Like Bob has said, he's no American Pharoah, but we don't know that yet," said the Hall of Fame jockey, who was second in last year's Derby aboard Firing Line.

Most important on Monday was the absence of lightning and any threatening weather on a mostly sunny morning. The track was in surprisingly great shape and gave the trio of Derby hopefuls something to work with.

Derby points leader Gun Runner, who has four wins with a fourth in the Grade 2 Kentucky Club Stakes at Churchill, ran four furlongs in 50.40. Creator, who enters sixth with 110 points after his Arkansas Derby victory nearly three weeks ago, covered the same distance in 50.60.

The performances were just what Asmussen wanted with five days remaining before the Derby, and he was thankful for the dry surface that made them possible.

"I've been very happy with how they've done here at Churchill," Asmussen said. "The best news of the morning was the condition of the track. To come out this morning and see how good a shape it was in was very pleasant. It definitely made the morning go well."

Cavaliers continue dominance of Hawks

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Rusty, rested or reeling, LeBron James and the Cavaliers find a way to beat the Hawks in the playoffs every time.

James scored 25 points, Kyrie Irving added 21 and Cleveland withstood a strong second-half surge by Atlanta to maintain its chokehold on the Hawks with a 104-93 victory Monday night in the opening game of their second-round Eastern Conference series.

James converted a critical three-point play with 2:09 left for the Cavs, who blew an 18-point lead in the second half and fell behind with 8 minutes left in the fourth quarter before making several clutch plays down the stretch.

Cleveland swept Atlanta in last year's Eastern Conference finals and has won eight straight over the Hawks, moving to 9-0 against them in the postseason.

This was by no means easy, however.

"We needed everything," said James, who gave his team just that, adding nine assists, seven rebounds and five steals. "We played an OK game. I don't think we played to our standards. The first game is always kind of a feel-out."

Dennis Schroder scored a playoff career-high 27 and rallied the Hawks before they crumbled in the closing minutes. Atlanta's offense bogged down in crunch time and the Hawks only scored two field goals in the final 4 minutes.

Paul Millsap had 17 points and 13 rebounds, and Kent Bazemore added 16 points for Atlanta, which got just eight points from Jeff Teague.

Game 2 is Wednesday night. Despite the loss, the Hawks were mostly

pleased with their effort.

"We felt good that we gave ourselves a chance," said Bazemore, who left the floor clapping his hands. "No moral victories, but you want to keep your mojo positive. We'll get another crack."

James' three-point play, which he punctuated by flexing his biceps, came after he stripped the ball from Schroder and the Cavs kept their possession alive with a pair of offensive rebounds, one by Tristan Thompson, the other by J.R. Smith.

The Cavs didn't show any rust following an eight-day break after the first round until the third quarter, when their offense slowed and the Hawks got hot. But when it mattered most, the defending conference champions came through and, as always, James led the way.

Kevin Love, who was injured when the teams met in the postseason last year, added 17 points but was just 4-for-17 from the floor and appeared to hurt his right shoulder. Thompson added 14 rebounds, including seven on the offensive end.

Thompson has been a rebounding marvel for the Cavs, comparable to what Dennis Rodman once did for Michael Jordan and the Bulls.

"What Dennis did for the Bulls on the floor," James said, pausing for dramatic effect, "Double-T does for our team, just giving us extra possessions."

The Cavs came out strong and seemed intent on knocking out the Hawks. Love, who missed six of his first seven three-pointers, knocked down a pair from long range and James finished a 2-on-1 break with a thunderous dunk to give Cleveland a 72-54 lead with 4 minutes left in the third.

With Cleveland's sell-out crowd roaring,

the Hawks looked to be in big trouble.

Atlanta, though, responded with its own deep barrage, draining four three-pointers in a 16-3 spurt to close the quarter and pull within 75-70 entering the fourth.

But with a chance to steal Game 1 and end their futility against Cleveland, the Hawks came up short.

"We'll be tossing and turning tonight, going over things we could have done better," said Kyle Korver, who missed his only three-pointer.

In other NBA news:

■ Stephen Curry was expected back on the court for more light shooting Monday to test his sprained right knee, still with the hope he could be ready to return for Golden State's Game 3 of the Western Conference semifinals Saturday at Portland.

Coach Steve Kerr said Monday that the reigning MVP wouldn't be available for Tuesday night's Game 2 with the Warriors up 1-0 in the best-of-seven series after a 118-106 win Sunday in the opener.

"I'll just say he's doubtful just so we give everybody something to chew on," Kerr joked. "He's not playing (Tuesday), but he's doubtful."

Curry only briefly showed his face during the team's shooting time Monday. Golden State didn't hold a formal practice but instead watched film and shot around. He didn't take any shots during the portion the media could watch.

"We have a huge break between 2 and 3. Hopefully we can get our MVP back," center Andrew Bogut said.

In the first seven quarters without him since the knee injury, the Warriors outscored their opponents by 80 points.



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Hammel, Cubs rough up Pirates

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Bad blood from October carried over into May.

Jason Hammel raised his record to 4-0 and Anthony Rizzo hit two doubles as the Chicago Cubs beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 7-2 on Monday night.

Home plate umpire Laz Diaz warned both benches after Pirates reliever Kyle Lobstein hit Ben Zobrist with a pitch to lead off the seventh. That came after Hammel hit the last batter he faced, Starling Marte, with a pitch to start the bottom of the sixth.

The teams had a benches-clearing incident in last year's NL wild card game when Pirates reliever Tony Watson plunked Jake Arrieta, who went on to pitch a five-hit shutout. Pittsburgh utility infielder Sean Rodriguez was ejected from that game.

Cubs manager Joe Maddon yelled at Lobstein from the dugout then got into a shouting match with Pirates catcher Francisco Cervelli. Maddon and Cervelli became friends in the offseason when Cervelli worked out at a gym owned by Maddon's wife, Jaye, in Tampa, Fla.

"I like him. I really do," Maddon said. "It's always fun to vent. We've all been there. You have to vent on occasion. The worst thing for your health in the long term is to hold that stuff in."

Cervelli said he was standing up for Lobstein.

"He's my one of my guys," Cervelli said. "I've got to protect my guys if someone starts yelling at them."

Hammel's ERA rose to 1.24 after entering the game with a National League-leading 0.75 mark. He gave up two runs and five hits in five-plus innings with three strikeouts and one walk. His streak of five straight starts of allowing one run or fewer ended.

"With the way things kind of played out, I didn't have my best command," Hammel said. "They extended some at-bats and had some pitches to hit and just missed them. I'd like to be able to throw more than 90 pitches but the ultimate goal is to

win. That's all that really matters."

Rizzo hit an RBI double and scored in the third inning as the Cubs went ahead 2-1, then doubled again during a four-run fifth that pushed the lead to 6-1.

The Cubs improved to 18-6, tops in the major leagues, and avoided losing consecutive games for the first time this season while winning for the fifth time in six games.

Dexter Fowler had two hits for the Cubs, including a double, and two stolen bases and Javier Baez had two of Chicago's 11 hits. David Ross hit a two-run single in the fifth, Zobrist had two RBIs and Kris Bryant extended his hitting streak to eight games.

"The running theme for us this season has been having good at-bats and we had a lot of them," Ross said.

Gerrit Cole (2-3) was roughed up for six runs — five earned — and six hits in 4²/₃ innings after winning his previous two starts. He struck out six but walked four in losing to the Cubs for just the second time in nine regular-season decisions.

Jordy Mercer went 3-for-3 with a walk for Pittsburgh and has reached base in 14 straight games but Josh Harrison's 10-game hitting streak ended as he went 0-for-4. Andrew McCutchen drove in both Pirates' runs with a first-inning homer, his sixth, and a ground out in the fifth.

In addition to Ross' single, Zobrist hit a sacrifice fly in the fifth and Matt Szczur scored on a throwing error by Harrison, the second baseman, on the back end of a delayed double steal attempt.

Zobrist scored on a wild pitch by Lobstein in the seventh after getting hit to increase the Cubs' lead to 7-2.

"It was an earned run for them, so I guess they're happy and it was a run for us so that made me happy," Zobrist said.

Cardinals 10, Phillies 3: Adam Wainwright pitched six innings and hit a three-run home run — the first of five for St. Louis — as the Cardinals snapped a four-game losing streak with a win over visiting Philadelphia.

Matt Adams, rookie Aledmys Diaz and Randal Grichuk added solo homers and

Kolten Wong hit a two-run homer to help St. Louis overcome a 3-0 deficit and avoid its first five-game slide since losing seven straight from July 26-31, 2013.

Wainwright, who has struggled since missing most of last season with an Achilles tendon injury, has won two straight. He (2-3) was the last Cardinals pitcher to get a win after yielding four runs over 5¹/₃ innings in an 11-4 rout at Arizona on April 27.

In this victory, Wainwright pitched six innings, allowing three runs and five hits. He improved to 6-2 in 11 career starts against the Phillies.

Nationals 2, Royals 0: Gio Gonzalez and the Washington bullpen combined on a five-hitter, Ryan Zimmerman and Daniel Murphy drove in first-inning runs and the Nationals beat host Kansas City.

Gonzalez (2-1) scattered four hits and a pair of walks over six innings in his latest smooth start. He's only allowed four earned runs combined in his first five outings.

Mets 4, Braves 1: David Wright, Yoenis Cespedes and Lucas Duda hit home runs in the first inning as host New York teed off, sending Bartolo Colon and the Mets over Atlanta for their ninth win in 10 games.

The Mets' homer barrage came in a span of 16 pitches. The Braves have hit just five homers all season, by far the fewest in the majors for the team with the worst record in the big leagues.

A few weeks shy of his 43rd birthday, Colon (2-1) pitched eight scoreless innings. He coasted to his 220th career victory, breaking a tie with Pedro Martinez for the second-most among Dominican-born pitchers and trailing only the 243 by Hall of Famer Juan Marichal.

Twins 6, Astros 2: Brian Dozier broke out of a slump with three hits and visiting Minnesota snapped Dallas Keuchel's 17-game home winning streak with a victory over Houston.

Keuchel (2-4) allowed five runs on five hits with three strikeouts in 4 1/3 innings and struggled with his command for the

third time this season, walking five. The Cy Young winner hadn't lost at home since Aug. 10, 2014, against Texas.

Giants 9, Reds 6: Cincinnati roughed up Johnny Cueto in his return to Great American Ball Park, but visiting San Francisco rallied against the Reds' historically bad bullpen, riding Brandon Crawford's three-run homer to a victory.

Rangers 2, Blue Jays 1: Nomar Mazara hit a tiebreaking home run in the eighth inning and Texas beat host Toronto for its fifth win in six games.

In the bottom of the eighth, Mazara preserved the one-run lead by throwing out Michael Saunders at home plate to end the inning.

Tony Barnette (1-1) worked one inning for the win and Shawn Tolleson finished for his ninth save as the Rangers handed the Blue Jays their fourth consecutive home loss. It's Toronto's longest slump at Rogers Centre since a four-game skid from April 23-26, 2014.

Brewers 8, Angels 5: Jimmy Nelson pitched seven strong innings and drove in the go-ahead run to lead host Milwaukee past Los Angeles.

Nelson (4-2) retired 15 of 16 batters before giving up a solo home run to Mike Trout in the sixth. He allowed two runs and four hits over seven innings.

Mariners 4, Athletics 3: Robinson Cano had three hits and scored twice and Kyle Seager hit a tiebreaking double in the sixth inning for visiting Seattle.

Nelson Cruz added three hits, and Chris Iannetta and Adam Lind drove in runs for the Mariners, who have won five straight at the Oakland Coliseum.

Padres 2, Rockies 1: Matt Kemp hit a two-run double in the first inning to help James Shields earn his first victory of the season as host San Diego overcame 11 strikeouts by Jon Gray.

Shields (1-4) allowed one run while scattering nine hits over six innings. He struck out five and walked two.

Murray, Pens hold off Caps in Game 3

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Outhit, outshot and largely outplayed, Pittsburgh grabbed control of its Eastern Conference semifinal against Washington anyway.

Credit a 21-year-old rookie goaltender who hardly seems intimidated by the stakes, the prospect of his mentor watching from the bench or the avalanche of shots from the NHL's best team.

Matt Murray made 47 stops and the Penguins did just enough counterpunching to edge the Capitals 3-2 on Monday night for a 2-1 lead in an increasingly fractious best-of-seven series living up to its billing.

Patric Hornqvist and Tom Kuhnhackl scored a minute apart in the first period, Carl Hagelin added his third of the playoffs in the second and the Penguins held on despite relentless pressure from the Capitals. Alexander Ovechkin and Justin Williams scored in the third, but the Capitals find themselves in a deficit against a franchise they have beaten just once in eight previous playoff series.

"They throw a lot of pucks at the net and without Murray, there's no way we

win this game," Hornqvist said. "That's what good teams team do. They find a way to win games when they don't play their best and that's exactly what we did tonight. We have to be better the next game."

The Penguins might have to play without Kris Letang. The star defenseman earned a two-minute minor for interference in the first period after launching himself at Washington's Marcus Johansson in a sequence that had some of the same hallmarks of the hit that earned Washington's Brooks Orpik a three-game suspension for drilling Olli Maatta in Game 2.

Johansson was skating into the offensive zone late in the first period when he was headed off by four Penguins. The puck was steered away and long gone by the time Letang turned toward Johansson and nailed him.

"I saw him coming full speed I tried to step up in the middle," Letang said. "Things happen fast."

Unlike Maatta, Johansson was able to return, though Johansson doesn't believe that should absolve Letang. Asked if he felt Letang should be suspended, Johansson responded "yeah, I'd say so,"

adding he was cleared of a potential concussion but is dealing with the aftereffects of whiplash.

"He obviously leaves his feet and hits me in the head," Johansson said. "That's the kinds of plays you want out of the league. Yeah, it doesn't look good."

Neither does the way the series looks at the moment for Washington, which had a 49-23 advantage in shots and collected 33 more hits than the Penguins (58-25).

The NHL's best team during the regular season has just three goals in the past six periods against Murray.

Wearing the same Pittsburgh gold uniforms that team owner Mario Lemieux wore during the club's consecutive Stanley Cup runs in 1991 and 1992 — runs that included victories over Washington — it seemed like old times for the Penguins, who counterattacked brilliantly.

Sidney Crosby keyed a rush that ended with Conor Sheary chasing down a blocked shot in the corner and feeding it to Trevor Daley at the point. Hornqvist reached out and expertly smacked the puck off the ice, allowing it to skid right by Holtby to give Pittsburgh a lead perhaps it didn't deserve just 6:37 into the

game.

A minute later Washington's deficit doubled when Nicklas Backstrom whiffed while trying to intercept Letang's long stretch pass to Cullen. The ensuing 2-on-1 ended with the puck smacking off Kuhnhackl's back and into the net.

Ovechkin's fourth of the postseason, a blur that whizzed by Murray's mask 8:02 into the third, gave Washington momentum, but there wasn't enough time to catch up. Williams scored with 56 seconds remaining and the Capitals managed a couple more chances in the waning moments but couldn't sneak anything by Murray.

"I thought he was the reason they had success," Washington coach Barry Trotz said.

And the reason Washington finds itself in a precarious position. Again. Yet the Penguins also understand they can't rely on Murray so heavily going forward, no matter how steady he looks.

"I think we have to forget about that one," Letang said. "We're happy about the win but we have to play better."