

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Hope among residents of Syrian capital

BY SLOBODAN LEKIC

*Stars and Stripes*

DAMASCUS, Syria — The currency has lost 90 percent of its value, and people avoid elevators because of frequent power outages. Long lines of cars snake their way to and from gas stations, and the city is teeming with refugees.

And yet there are signs of normalcy and a new optimism in the Syrian capital as the civil war enters its sixth year.

Russia's military intervention that began last September appears to have turned the tide in favor of President Bashar Assad.

Among government supporters and war-weary residents of this city, fears of a rebel victory — which appeared acute just a year ago — have been replaced by confidence that the regime will be able to survive.

"Assad definitely has the upper hand, and the momentum is with the regime," said a Damascus-based European diplomat who could not be identified under his country's rules. "The intervention by Russia's air force has completely upended the situation in his favor."

The situation in Damascus may not be representative of Syria as a whole, especially in northern and eastern areas, where fierce combat has continued despite a cease-fire now in its third month. In Damascus, however, a major sign of change is the near cessation of shelling of the mainly Christian neighborhoods in eastern Damascus since the truce, brokered by the U.S. and Russia, went into effect at the end of February.

Shops, cafes, hookah lounges and restaurants are able to remain open until late at night. Thousands of customers fill the streets on weekend nights, in sharp contrast to the situation a few years ago when most residents huddled behind locked

doors amid the boom of artillery fire.

The lively street life in the heart of the city contrasts with the darkness and silence of eastern Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus less than a mile away from downtown. That area is occupied by rebels of Jaish al Islam, the puritanical, Saudi-backed militia that bans partying or drinking alcohol.

### 'Getting much better'

In government-controlled central Damascus, young women in miniskirts mix easily with those wearing headscarves and long coats, chatting and listening to Syrian and Lebanese music.

"The situation was very bad in 2012 and 2013, but things are definitely getting much better now," said Ilian Set, Christian proprietor of the Asala al-Sharq restaurant in the Quas'a district. Set, a schoolteacher, said he opened the restaurant to boost his income after his salary dropped from the equivalent of \$600 a month to just \$60 due to wartime inflation. He has refused appeals from two brothers living in Britain and Switzerland to join them.

"There is no country in the Middle East where we Christians enjoy more freedom than in Syria, and I feel I have a responsibility not to abandon it," he said while helping serve customers who were sipping arak, the anise-flavored alcoholic spirit popular throughout the Middle East.

Traffic clogs many of the capital's wide boulevards. Visitors from Iraq and other Arab countries pack the city's famed Hamidiyah market — an ancient, 2,000-foot-long covered bazaar — and the city's beautiful Umayyad Mosque.

The 1,300-year-old mosque, which has a minaret where some believe Jesus Christ will

make his second coming, also contains a shrine reputedly housing the head of John the Baptist. In 2001, Pope John Paul II became the first pontiff to visit a mosque when he toured the temple and visited John the Baptist's shrine.

Nahed Mustafa, a university student strolling by the mosque with a group of friends, said her family moved to Damascus from the embattled city of Aleppo in 2012, soon after Islamist fighters infiltrated the city's eastern districts and serious fighting broke out with government troops.

"We are a secular Muslim family, and we could not risk coming under the rule of Wahhabists," she said, referring to the extreme form of Islam promoted by Saudi Arabia and some of its Persian Gulf allies.

The nearby market, a maze of alleyways that once was filled with foreign tourists, remains crowded with shoppers strolling down aisles. Vendors sell colorful spices and herbs, nuts, dried fruits, brass lamps and jewelry.

Portraits of Assad adorn almost every corner, and a huge Syrian flag covers the main entrance to the marketplace. Photos of Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as those of Shiite fighters killed in the war, also are on prominent display.

Russia's deployment of air and ground forces to Syria enabled the Syrian army to go on the offensive and regain the strategic initiative. The recapture of the ancient city of Palmyra from Islamic State militants in March has been hailed by the government as a turning point in the war.

Hanan Abdullah, a housewife visiting the market with her daughter, said she was hopeful that the current round of peace talks in Geneva — which come after a series of government victories — would lead to peace.

### 'Tired of this war'

"Everyone is very tired of this war. We are facing so many hardships," she said. "This makes me hopeful there will be a resolution this time."

Once more, travelers can reach the city's international airport without the fear of rebel snipers who used to take potshots at vehicles. Several Syrian and foreign airlines offer flights to the port city of Latakia and a few foreign destinations including Tehran, reducing the sense of isolation caused by Western sanctions.

Many of the ubiquitous security checkpoints that seemed to spring up at every street corner a few years ago are now gone or manned only at night. The soldiers, policemen and militiamen at the remaining ones are much more relaxed than in the dark days of 2013. Most of the sentries no longer even bother to wear helmets or body armor and generally just wave passers-by through without even the most perfunctory pat-downs.

"There finally seems to be light at the end of the tunnel, but we still fear that the whole peace process may collapse in the end," said Bedros Kahvejian, a retired goldsmith of Armenian descent. "We worry the West will side with the Wahhabis in the end because money talks and the Saudis have lots of it."

Many Syrians are putting their hopes on U.S. and Russian-backed U.N. peace talks underway in Geneva.

"Everybody is looking at the talks right now, so a lot of what we see on the battlefields is just positioning, strengthening of their hand in negotiations," said Ed Blanche, a Beirut-based analyst and member of London's International Institute for Strategic Studies.

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# Apparent insider attack kills 2 coalition troops in Afghanistan

BY PHILLIP WALTER  
WELLMAN

*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — Two coalition troops were killed and a third injured in an apparent insider attack at a military compound in Kandahar province Saturday. The Romanian media reported that the victims were Romanian soldiers.

"Two individuals wearing Afghan National Defense and Security Forces uniforms opened fire at an ANDSF compound

in Southern Afghanistan," NATO's Resolute Support mission said. "Resolute Support members returned fire and killed the shooters."

The number of insider attacks against foreign troops has declined sharply in the past two years with targets now mainly consisting of members of Afghan security forces.

Romania's national news agency AGERPRES said the three victims were rushed to the nearest military hospital where two succumbed to their

injuries. The third, who was said to be in stable condition, will be transferred to a hospital in Germany.

Meanwhile, on Thursday in neighboring Helmand province, Afghan special forces with NATO support freed 60 prisoners from an "illegally run Taliban prison," a NATO statement said.

In a separate development, a Taliban attempt to fire a rocket at Bagram Air Field late Friday injured two Afghan civilians outside the base.

## DC-area man charged with killing three

*Associated Press*

SILVER SPRING, Md. — The shooting spree began with a domestic slaying in an unusually public place.

According to police, Eulalio Tordil, a federal security officer, shot and killed his estranged wife as she waited to pick up her children at a suburban Washington high school on Thursday afternoon. He also shot and wounded a bystander who tried to intervene, police said.

Detectives worked through the night, trying to use cellphone technology to pinpoint Tordil's location. But they weren't able to catch him. The next day, according to police, he struck again, apparently choosing his victims at random.

On Friday morning, police said, Tordil shot three people outside a mall in Bethesda, 15 miles away from the high school. One man died and two others were wounded. Then, he drove to a supermarket 5 miles away in Silver Spring, where he fatally shot a woman who was sitting in her car, police said.

The attacks were reminiscent of the D.C. sniper shootings, which paralyzed the nation's capital and its suburbs in 2002. Unlike with the snipers, however, police had an idea about who was responsible.

Plainclothes officers spotted Tordil's car at a strip mall across the street from the supermarket, and they watched him for more than an hour as he moved from store to store, police said. Fearing that he wanted to provoke officers into shooting him, police waited until he returned to his car. Then they boxed him in and drew their guns. He emerged from the car with his hands up.

Tordil was charged Friday evening with murder in the death of his wife, Gladys, a high school chemistry teacher. Charges are pending in the other shootings, and he'll likely face his first court appearance Monday.

## Choosing between billionaire, millionaire in year of populism

*Associated Press*

ST. CLAIRSVILLE, Ohio — Pick a president: New York multimillionaire or New York multibillionaire.

The likely November rivals' portfolios don't square with the populist wave defining 2016.

Trump, a multimillionaire's son, is worth about \$4.5 billion according to Forbes. Forbes estimates Clinton to be worth about \$45 million, a fortune built entirely since she and her husband, President Bill Clinton, left the White House in 2001.

But the candidate who connects with the widest swath of "average Americans" will find the clearest path to the Oval Office.

Unlike previous wealthy nominees, Trump boasts his riches. Clinton is more likely to talk about her middle-class childhood.

Going into a general election matchup, Trump appears to have the upper hand with the most frustrated voters. Throngs roar at his calls to build a wall at the Mexican border, to close all U.S. borders to noncitizen Muslims, and to "bring back the jobs" from China and Mexico.

Clinton talks about raising minimum wages, improving education and creating jobs. Clinton also speaks of her mother's tough childhood and her small-businessman father's efforts to "provide us with a middle-class life."

## A 'lifesaving mission' that turned tragic

*Associated Press*

Andrew Kornfeld's flight to bring a prescription drug to Prince has been described by his attorney as a "lifesaving mission."

Instead, the 26-year-old Californian found Prince collapsed in an elevator at his home.

Neither Andrew Kornfeld nor his father, an addiction and pain doctor, has been ac-

cused of wrongdoing. But a law enforcement official said on Friday investigators want to interview both of them.

Kornfeld's father sent his son to Prince's Minneapolis-area home, a decision that has raised questions about whether the doctor was acting legally at the time. The elder Kornfeld was not licensed to practice medicine in Minnesota and was not registered to care for patients

there via telemedicine, as the state requires. His son was not a licensed prescriber.

Kornfeld's father was called by Prince's staff on April 20 as they sought help for the musician's addiction to painkillers, according to the Kornfelds' attorney, William Mauzy.

After finding Prince, Andrew Kornfeld called 911 because two of his staffers were shocked and screaming, Mauzy said.



# Leonard, Spurs top Thunder

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — This time, the San Antonio Spurs made the hustle play they needed to beat the Thunder.

Kawhi Leonard's critical offensive rebound of LaMarcus Aldridge's miss led to two free throws by Tony Parker with 18 seconds left that put the Spurs ahead by four, and San Antonio hung on to beat Oklahoma City 100-96 on Friday night and take a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference semifinal series.

Leonard had 31 points and 11 rebounds, but his final rebound was the most important mark on the stat sheet. In his typical understated style, the All-Star forward made it seem like no big deal.

"I just attacked the glass and jumped and grabbed it," he said.

That might seem simple enough, but it didn't work out that way in the Spurs' previous game. In Monday's loss to the Thunder at home, the Spurs couldn't come up with the ball in a scramble near their basket in the closing seconds, and the Thunder escaped with a 98-97 win. On Friday, Leonard's rebound helped seal it.

"It was a backbreaker," Thunder forward Kevin Durant said. "We played good defense and were down seven with a min-

ute to go and cut it to two. We made him (Aldridge) miss his shot, and the ball kind of fell in his (Leonard's) hands. He was in great position to get the rebound, and that sucks."

Aldridge had 24 points and eight rebounds and Parker added 19 points and eight rebounds for the Spurs, who regained the home-court advantage they had surrendered with the loss in Game 2.

Russell Westbrook scored 31 points for the Thunder, but he made just 10 of 31 shots.

"Too many shots," Westbrook said. "I've got to do a better job getting guys shots. I've got to get other guys involved, especially to beat this team. Even though I had some shots I (usually) make, I've got to read and find ways to get guys shots. I take the blame."

The Spurs said it was a collective effort to slow Westbrook.

"We know he's going to be very aggressive," Parker said. "They go down, we know he's going to be extra aggressive, so we just make sure that everybody's paying attention to weak-side defense. He's coming at us. That's who he is. He's got a lot of energy, and he's just going to keep attacking."

Westbrook also had nine rebounds and eight assists. Durant scored 26 points,

Serge Ibaka added 15 and Steven Adams had 11 rebounds for Oklahoma City.

The Thunder shot just 41.5 percent from the field.

Game 4 will be Sunday in Oklahoma City.

The Spurs ran out to a 35-20 lead after a three-pointer by David West, but the Thunder responded with a 9-2 run to creep back into the game. San Antonio led 47-42 at halftime after making 7 of 11 three-pointers. Westbrook made just 6 of 17 shots before the break.

The Spurs opened the second half on a 7-2 run to force a Thunder timeout, but Oklahoma City, behind 10 points from Durant in the quarter, cut San Antonio's lead to 72-69 heading into the fourth.

Back-to-back threes by Ibaka and Westbrook gave the Thunder an 81-77 lead with just over 7 minutes to play. San Antonio regained the lead 91-89, then Westbrook and Durant turned the ball over on back-to-back possessions. West's bucket in close pushed the Spurs ahead 96-89 with 1:19 to play.

The Thunder trimmed San Antonio's lead to 98-96 on a floater by Dion Waiters with 4.8 seconds remaining, but Leonard made two free throws with 2.7 seconds left to put the game out of reach.

# Russians accused of doping

Associated Press

Four Russian gold-medal winners at the Sochi Olympics used performance-enhancing drugs, the whistleblowers who exposed systemic cheating in that country's track program tell "60 Minutes" in an interview to air Sunday.

In the interview, an excerpt of which appears on CBS Evening News on Friday, Vitaly Stepanov says the former head of Russia's drug-testing lab told him he had a "Sochi List" of Russians who competed on performance-enhancing drugs, and four athletes on that list won gold medals.

Stepanov and his wife, 800-meter runner Yulia, revealed details about doping on the Russian track team that led to an investigation that has put the team's status in jeopardy for the upcoming Summer Olympics. The team's fate will be determined next month at a meeting of the sport's governing body.

Athletes and others have called for the investigation, undertaken by an independent commission appointed by the World Anti-Doping Agency, to expand beyond track. Lead investigator Dick Pound kept the initial probe centered on track, as was the investigation's mandate. WADA leaders have said they would consider expanding the investigation if evidence calls for it.

WADA spokesman Ben Nichols said agency leaders "will watch the ('60 Minutes') program with interest" but won't comment until they've seen the entire thing.

The WADA Foundation Board meets next week in Montreal; an update on the commission's investigation and enhancements to WADA's whistleblowing policy are on the agenda.

The accusations were dismissed as "speculation" by Russian Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko on Saturday.

"Stepanov is back on his hobby horse," Mutko told Russia's state TASS news agency. "All of his so-called revelations are based on speculation."

Anti-doping procedures in Sochi "took place under very tight control" and were not Russia's responsibility, Mutko said.

The Moscow anti-doping lab operated on-site testing facilities at the Sochi Olympics and provided staff, although it was under the supervision of the International Olympic Committee.

In other Olympic news:

- Two years after John Coates called delayed preparations for the Rio de Janeiro Games "the worst I have experienced," the International Olympic Committee vice-president said Saturday that he's impressed with the progress organizers have made with 90 days until the games begin.
- Coates, also president of the Australian Olympic Committee, was in Brazil in early April for the last IOC coordination commission meeting, accompanied by Australian team chef de mission Kitty Chiller.

# Cavaliers close in on sweep of Hawks

Associated Press

ATLANTA — LeBron James and Kyrie Irving had their usual stellar performances.

Kevin Love came up big, too.

But when Channing Frye turned in the best playoff game of his career, the Atlanta Hawks didn't have a chance.

Frye scored 27 points and the Cavaliers kept up their three-point barrage Friday night, dominating down the stretch for a 121-108 victory that gave Cleveland a commanding 3-0 lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

"We're a team that's destined for greatness," James said.

Certainly, the Cavaliers will be hard to stop if Frye plays like he did in Game 3.

Acquired from Orlando in February to provide another outside threat and extend defenses, the 32-year-old played that role to perfection. He made 10 of 13 shots, including 7 of 9 from three-point range.

It was a devastating blow for an Atlanta team that already was outgunned by the Cavaliers and couldn't cope with someone else stepping into a lead role.

"We brought him here to shoot," James said. "And shoot and shoot and shoot."

Two nights after setting an NBA record with 25 baskets beyond the arc, the Cavaliers were nearly as good in a 21-for-39 performance that moved them within one victory of their second playoff sweep over the Hawks in two years.

Atlanta turned in a much more respectable showing after getting blown out in Game 2. But in the end, it was the same

result for a team that has lost 10 straight to the Cavaliers going back to last year's conference final.

Game 4 is Sunday in Atlanta, but this was likely the last chance to make it a competitive series.

"We're fighting for our playoff lives right now," Al Horford said. "At this point, we have to do some changes, because what we've done hasn't worked."

The Hawks led by as many as 11. Turns out, that wasn't nearly enough to hold off the Cavaliers.

James and Irving each scored 24 points, while Love chipped in with 21.

Then there was Frye, whose previous high in these playoffs was 12 points and best showing ever in the postseason was a 20-point effort in 2010, when he played for Phoenix.

Frye relayed some advice from teammate James Jones: "Channing, you've got to stop passing. You're not very good. You've just got to shoot it."

So he did. Over and over again.

The Hawks led 103-99 with just over 8 minutes remaining, but the Cavaliers were relentless and the home team — which had matched Cleveland shot for shot — suddenly went cold.

Cleveland went ahead for good when the Hawks inexplicably left James all alone outside the three-point stripe. He had time to step up to the line, set himself, and put up the jumper. Nothing but net, naturally, giving the Cavaliers their first lead since late in the second quarter.

At the other end, Paul Millsap had a pass knocked away by J.R. Smith, the ball winding up in James' hands. He saw Frye

breaking toward the other end, all alone, and fired ahead for a thunderous dunk that extended Cleveland's lead with 5:56 left.

Cleveland scored 22 of the final 27 points, the Hawks making just two of their final 12 shots, with four turnovers mixed in.

The frustration boiled over in the closing seconds. As James attempted to drive, Jeff Teague shoved him into the seats behind the basket with a shoulder shot, drawing a flagrant foul.

Looking for a boost after the Game 2 blowout, the Hawks changed up their lineup. Thabo Sefolosha started in place of struggling Kyle Korver, who reacted to the demotion with his best game of the series.

Korver scored 18 points and made 5 of 9 from three-point range. Horford led the Hawks with 24 points, also his best showing of the series. On top of that, the Hawks got some valuable minutes out of little-used reserve Kris Humphries, who had nine points and four rebounds.

It didn't matter.

In other NBA news:

- The Memphis Grizzlies already faced a lot of decisions that could reshape their roster this offseason — now add a coaching search to the list.
- The Grizzlies fired Dave Joergel on Saturday in a surprising move after three seasons and three straight playoff appearances. A team battered by injuries finished the regular season at 42-40 before being swept in the first round by San Antonio.



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# Yankees get emotional win over Red Sox

Associated Press

NEW YORK — David Ortiz watched Andrew Miller's 3-1, bases-loaded slider hook past him as crossed-up catcher Brian McCann reached down to grab it, heard plate umpire Ron Kulpa call strike and stuck out both arms in anger.

"No!" Big Papi screamed a half-dozen times, convinced he had just walked to force in the tying run against the Yankees with one out in the ninth inning. Manager John Farrell bolted out of the dugout to block Ortiz and quickly was ejected, then waved his right arm as if he were tossing the umpire.

Ortiz returned to the batter's box, took another slider for strike three, walked to the dugout, threw down his bat and helmet, then barked some more. When he, too, was ejected, Ortiz ran back onto the field, screaming at Kulpa and pointing with his arms.

Farrell and third base coach Brian Butterfield had to restrain the slugger, and Farrell escorted him back to the dugout.

Hanley Ramirez then swung over a 1-2 slider, ending a wild Friday night in the Bronx that culminated in a 3-2 New York victory, easily the Yankees' biggest win of their thus-far sorry season.

"You'd need a hockey stick for the 3-2 pitch," a disgusted Farrell said.

Aaron Hicks hit a tiebreaking home run off Rick Porcello (5-1) leading off the seventh inning, sparking Yankee Stadium's new lights to flash like strobes at a rock concert.

Two innings later, tempers flared as the game turned tense and testy.

"My heart's still racing. I think it's something that's going to take a little while to come down from," Miller said a half-hour after the final out

Ortiz hit a two-run homer in the first off Michael Pineda, but McCann hit an RBI double in the bottom half and Dustin Ackley singled in a run during the second.

Kulpa called third strikes on seven batters, six of them Red Sox.

"It's just another game, another big game between the Yankees and Red Sox. Emotions are high," Kulpa said. "The 3-1 pitch, I had it coming through the zone. That's why I called it a strike. McCann didn't help me out. He took the ball down a little bit, but the pitch still came through the zone. And the 3-2 pitch, I had it in the zone right down the middle."

Ortiz insisted Kulpa blew the calls, say-

ing all the pitches were balls, even the one he swung at.

**Marlins 6, Phillies 4:** Giancarlo Stanton hit a tie-breaking two-run homer in the eighth inning and host Miami beat Philadelphia for its 11th victory in 12 games.

Stanton's 10th home run of the season was a deep shot to left-center field off Hector Neris (0-1).

The Marlins won seven in a row before losing 14-5 at Milwaukee on May 1 and have won the first four games of their nine-game homestand to improve to 16-12.

**Rangers 5, Tigers 1:** Cole Hamels held Detroit to one hit in seven scoreless innings, and visiting Texas became the first team this season to beat Jordan Zimmermann when they topped the Tigers on Friday night.

Hamels (4-0) allowed a bloop single to right by Ian Kinsler — the first batter he faced — and that was Detroit's only hit until Kinsler doubled to lead off the bottom of the ninth. The Tigers managed a couple walks off Hamels, but he struck out nine and won his 11th straight decision. He hasn't lost since Aug. 7.

**Cubs 8, Nationals 6:** Ben Zobrist homered twice, Anthony Rizzo added a towering solo shot and host Chicago beat Washington for its fifth straight victory.

Tommy La Stella also homered to help the Cubs win for the ninth time in 10 games and improve to 22-6, the best record in the majors.

**Indians 7, Royals 1:** Jose Ramirez got three hits and drove in a career-high five runs to help host Cleveland beat reeling Kansas City for its their fourth straight victory.

The World Series champion Royals have lost eight of 10.

**White Sox 10, Twins 4:** Melky Cabrera had four hits and three RBIs, Jose Abreu hit a solo homer, and Chicago beat visiting Minnesota to become the second major league team to reach 20 wins.

Benches cleared in the eighth when Trevor May hit Abreu with a 97 mph fast-ball. That came after Minnesota's Byung Ho Park was hit by a pitch in the top of the inning. White Sox manager Robin Ventura was ejected, but no players were tossed.

Ricky Nolasco (1-1) gave up seven runs, five earned, and nine hits in five innings, and Oswaldo Garcia hit a two-run homer for the Twins. They fell to an AL-worst 8-21.

**Reds 5, Brewers 1:** Brandon Phillips homered for the third straight game and Cincinnati's bullpen finally ended its historic streak of giving up runs, closing out a victory over visiting Milwaukee.

Tim Adleman (1-0) got his first major league victory in his second career start, holding the Brewers to Alex Presley's solo homer in five innings.

Phillips' three-run shot in the third off Tyler Cravy (0-1) made it 5-0. It's the second time that Phillips has homered in three straight games — he also did it in 2012. Joey Votto also had a solo shot off Cravy, who was called up from Triple-A when Willy Peralta went on the paternity list earlier in the day.

**Blue Jays 5, Dodgers 2:** Kevin Pillar hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the eighth inning, Jose Bautista also connected and Toronto beat visiting Los Angeles.

Gavin Floyd (1-2) worked one inning for the win and Drew Storen survived a shaky ninth to earn his second save as the Blue Jays recorded their season-best fourth straight win.

**Pirates 4, Cardinals 2:** Jung Ho Kang homered twice and Francisco Liriano continued his dominance at Busch Stadium to help Pittsburgh beat host St. Louis.

Kang, who was activated from the disabled list before the game, ripped the first pitch he saw from Tyler Lyons into the right field bullpen for a two-run homer to give the Pirates a 3-0 lead in the sixth. Kang followed with a 427-foot homer into the upper deck in left in the eighth.

Liriano (3-1) improved to 4-0 with a 2.07 ERA in six career starts at Busch Stadium. Liriano fanned 10 through seven innings for his 24th career double-digit strikeout performance of his career.

Mark Melancon got his eighth save for Pittsburgh. The Pirates won their fifth straight road game and improved to 4-0 against the Cardinals this season.

**Diamondbacks 7, Braves 2:** Zack Greinke allowed two runs in six innings, Brandon Drury hit a homer and visiting Arizona beat Atlanta to snap a six-game losing streak.

David Peralta had three hits and drove in a run, and Wellington Castillo had a two-run single for Arizona in its highest-scoring game in almost two weeks. The Diamondbacks had been held to no more than four runs in each of their last nine games.

The Braves (7-21) have the worst record through 28 games in their Atlanta history.

They are 1-13 at home.

**Astros 6, Mariners 3:** Carlos Correa homered and finished with three hits and two RBIs to lead Houston past visiting Seattle.

Marwin Gonzalez had a two-run homer and also doubled to help the Astros win for the third time in four games. Correa's homer came off Taijuan Walker (2-2) with two outs in the first inning. It was his second home run in three games after not homering in the previous 24 games.

Evan Gattis reached on an error by shortstop Ketel Marte with no outs in the second. The Astros made it 3-0 when Gonzalez sent one into the seats in right field for the first multi-run homer of his career. The first 25 homers in his five-year career were solo shots.

Houston starter Doug Fister (3-3) allowed three hits and three runs with two walks in 6 1/3 innings for his second straight win. Luke Gregerson pitched a scoreless ninth for his seventh save.

**Rays 5, Angels 2:** Chris Archer pitched six scoreless innings and Corey Dickerson snapped out of a career-worst, 0-for-23 drought with a three-run homer to lead Tampa Bay over host Los Angeles.

Brad Miller added four hits, including a home run.

Archer (2-4) scattered five hits, struck out six and stranded four runners in scoring position during his 100th major league start.

The right-hander, who fanned a franchise-record 252 batters last season and pitched in his first All-Star Game, is 5-1 with a 2.48 ERA in six career starts against the Angels.

**Padres 2, Mets 0:** Drew Pomeranz and four relievers combined on a three-hitter, Jon Jay had three hits and an RBI, and San Diego beat visiting New York for the second straight game.

The Padres, who have been blanked eight times this year, pitched their first shutout of 2016. They've held the defending NL champion Mets to three runs and seven hits in the first two games of a four-game series.

**Giants 6, Rockies 4:** Brandon Crawford hit a three-run homer, Madison Bumgarner survived a shaky second inning and host San Francisco ended a three-game losing streak to Colorado.

Hunter Pence, who had three hits, Matt Duffy and Brandon Belt also drove in runs for the Giants, who ended a two-game slide.

# Garrison's OT goal gives Tampa Bay 3-1 series lead

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The Tampa Bay Lightning again withstood an early push from the New York Islanders and pulled out another big overtime victory.

Jason Garrison scored 1:34 into the extra period to give the Lightning a 2-1 victory over the Islanders on Friday night for a 3-1 series lead.

Garrison took a pass from Andrej Sustr and fired a slap shot from the right faceoff circle past goalie Thomas Greiss. The Lightning won two straight overtime games in Brooklyn to move them one win away from reaching the conference finals for the second straight year.

"Sustr made a nice play over to me, on a screen I think, and I was able to find the back of the net," Garrison said. "That's a nice feeling. Any goal in the playoffs is big, obviously an overtime one is definitely a sigh of relief."

Nikita Kucherov, who tied the score with 38.4 seconds left in regulation in Game 3 on Tuesday night, evened this one at 7:49 of the third for his NHL-leading eighth of the playoffs for Tampa Bay. He took a pass from Tyler Johnson and fired a slap shot from the left faceoff dot past Greiss' blocker.

"He's proven he's not a one-hit wonder," Lightning coach Jon Cooper said about Kucherov, who had 10 goals and 12 assists during the team's run to the Stanley Cup finals last year. "Just continues to amaze. Pretty impressive."

Ben Bishop made 27 saves for Tampa Bay, including 15 in the first period.

Kyle Okposo scored early in the first for the Islanders, and Greiss stopped 20 shots.

New York came out aggressive at home for the second straight game, but again gave up a lead in the third period and is now a loss from being eliminated.

"The last two games have been good hockey games," Islanders coach Jack Capuano said. "That's how close these two teams are.... We gave up five shots in the third period, maybe one chance, and they tie the game. You can't ask our guys for too much more."

Okposo, who had a chance for a second goal midway through the second but was stopped in close by Bishop, didn't take much solace in the team's strong effort.

"At this time of year it's not about playing well and losing," he said. "You got to win."

Game 5 of this best-of-seven series is Sunday in Tampa, Fla. There was a delay at the start of the third period to repair boards damaged by the Zamboni during the second intermission. When play resumed, 31 minutes had elapsed since the end of the second period.

The Islanders were outshooting the Lightning 9-3 over the first six minutes of

the game and finished the opening period with a 16-6 advantage while 11 others were blocked by the Lightning. The pace slowed in the second as Tampa Bay out-shot New York 4-2 over the first 10 minutes and finished with a 10-7 edge.

Greiss left the game about 1 1/2 minutes into the second due to an issue with his skate.

Jean-Francois Berube came on for his playoff debut and stopped both shots he faced over 4:47 before Greiss returned with 13:40 remaining in the period.

Okposo got the Islanders on the scoreboard less than five minutes into the game. With Tampa Bay's Mike Blunden off for roughing, Okposo took a pass from Nikolay Kulemin from behind the net, settled it just to the right of the left faceoff circle and fired it past Bishop at 4:20. It was Okposo's second goal of the playoffs — first since Game 1 of the first round against Florida.