

STARS AND STRIPES®

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Striking back at the Islamic State

Russian airstrikes blast militants in Syria; France calls on allies for aid

From staff and wire reports

Russia blasted Islamic State positions in Syria with bombers and cruise missiles Tuesday after confirming that a bomb brought down a Russian chartered jet in Egypt two weeks ago.

As the war against the Islamic State group accelerated, France turned to its European partners for support against the extremists who carried out Friday's deadly terrorist attacks in Paris that killed at least 129 people and left more than 350 wounded.

Secretary of State John Kerry, meanwhile, suggested that a cease-fire between Syria's government and the opposition could be arranged in the next few weeks to let nations — including Russia — focus on fighting the Islamic State group.

The Paris attacks and the bombing of the Russian airliner that killed all 224 people aboard have galvanized international determination to confront and destroy the terrorist movement.

Russia's Defense Ministry said its warplanes fired cruise missiles on militant positions in Syria's Idlib and Aleppo provinces, where the Islamic State group and the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front operate. Russian bombers struck the Islamic State capital in Raqqa and extremist positions in oil-rich Der-ez-Zor.

Russia struck Raqqa with Kalibr cruise missiles launched from a submarine in the eastern Mediterranean, according to the RBC news agency as quoted by The New York Times. RBC said it was the first time Russia had fired cruise missiles from a submarine in a war.

Russia began airstrikes in Syria in September to support the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad but has primarily targeted Western-backed rebels trying to overthrow the pro-Moscow government. U.S. officials said that for the first time, the Russians send prior notification of the latest attack to the Coalition Combined Operations Center in Doha.

"The notification was intended to help prevent accidents and ensure safe separation during operations in Syria," a U.S. defense official who spoke on the condition of anonymity said, noting Russian operations had not affected U.S. and coalition planned airstrikes for the day.

However, the defense official said the U.S. did "not coordinate or collaborate in any way with Russia on its activities in Syria" in the Tuesday airstrikes.

Reconciling Russia's support for Assad with U.S. demands for his ouster has been a major roadblock to cooperation between Moscow and American efforts in Syria.

If the cease-fire becomes reality, Russia could focus on attacking the Islamic State militants and the Nusra Front, which would probably refuse to accept a truce. That would enable the West and Russia to work together against the extremists without either side publicly shifting on their views of the Assad government.

As a sign of greater cooperation, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian missile cruiser Moskva, currently in the Mediterranean, to start cooperating with the French military on operations in Syria.

Also Tuesday, the French government invoked a never-

before-used article of the European Union's Lisbon Treaty obliging members of the 28-nation bloc to give "aid and assistance by all the means in their power" to a member country that is "the victim of armed aggression on its territory."

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said all 27 of France's EU partners responded positively, and they could help "either by taking part in France's operations in Syria or Iraq, or by easing the load or providing support for France in other operations."

Arriving for talks in Brussels with his EU counterparts, Greek Defense Minister Panagiotis Kammenos told reporters that the Paris attacks were a game-changer for the bloc. "This is Sept. 11 for Europe," he said.

Paris police said 16 people had been arrested in the region in relation to the deadly attacks, and police have carried out 104 raids since a state of emergency was declared Saturday.

French President Francois Hollande has vowed to forge a united coalition capable of defeating the jihadis at home and abroad. NATO allies were sharing intelligence and working closely with France, NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said.

Noting that victims of the Paris attacks came from at least 19 nations, Hollande says the international community, led by the U.S. and Russia, must overcome their deep-seated divisions over Syria to destroy the Islamic State on its home turf.

"(Syria is) the biggest factory of terrorism the world has ever known and the international community is still too divided and too incoherent" in its response, Hollande said, adding that the "acts of war" in

Paris were decided upon and planned in Syria.

Hollande is going to visit Washington and Moscow later this month to meet with President Barack Obama and Putin to discuss ways of stepping up international cooperation against the Islamic State and how to end the fighting in Syria.

An international police manhunt continued for the Paris attacks fugitives, including key suspect Salah Abdeslam, whose brother, Brahim Abdeslam, died in Friday's attacks.

Seven of the Paris attackers died Friday — six after detonating suicide belts and a seventh from police gunfire — but Iraqi intelligence officials told The Associated Press that their sources indicated 19 people had participated in the Paris attacks and five others had provided hands-on logistical support.

Two men arrested in Belgium admitted driving to France to pick up Salah Abdeslam early Saturday, their lawyers said.

Mohammed Amri, 27, denies any involvement in the attacks and says he went to Paris to collect his friend, Salah Abdeslam, according to his defense lawyer Xavier Carrette. Hamza Attou, 21, says he went along to keep Amri company, his lawyer, Carine Couquelet, said. Both are being held on charges of terrorist murder and conspiracy.

The mastermind of the Paris attacks has been identified as Abdelhamid Abaaoud, 27, a Belgian national who escaped to Syria after police foiled an attack in eastern Belgium.

The New York Times reported Tuesday that Abaaoud was the target of Western airstrikes in Raqqa as recently as last month. The newspaper quoted an unidentified European security official for the report.

Tokyo sues Okinawa over base relocation

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Japanese government filed suit Tuesday on Okinawa in what is largely seen as the first step in the final showdown between Tokyo and Gov. Takeshi Onaga over the closure of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and the relocation of its flight operations to Camp Schwab.

Ministry of Justice representatives asked the Naha Branch of the Fukuoka High Court to dismiss Onaga's revocation last month of a landfill permit essential to the construction of a military runway into Oura Bay at Henoko. The permit was issued in 2013 by Onaga's predecessor, Hirokazu Nakaima, in exchange for billions of dollars in subsidies. The move emboldened a small but fervent protest movement seeking to decrease the U.S. military presence in the island prefecture and pushed Onaga into power last year. An initial hearing in the case is expected before Dec. 1, according to Japanese media reports.

"The revocation I have made is lawful and justifiable," Onaga told a news conference last week. "I stand firm with my promise of not allowing a new military base to be built at Henoko."

The construction would be an expansion of an infantry base, not a "new" base as Onaga and Japanese media often claim.

The move to shutter Futenma dates to 1995 when two Marines and a Navy corpsman raped a 12-year-old girl. During the ensuing protests, residents called for the closure and relocation of the Marine Corps air base, which is in a densely populated urban area. The move was agreed upon a year later, yet it was decided that the operations would remain on Okinawa. In 1997, Schwab and Henoko, in Okinawa's remote north, were chosen as the relocation site.

Lawmaker: 4-star should take lead in fight vs. Islamic State

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The United States should deploy a four-star general to take command of the war against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee said Tuesday.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, charged the White House with micromanaging the war effort, and said increasing the military commitment above the U.S. three-star Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland, who currently leads a joint coalition of more than 60 nations, could revitalize the fight against the militant group and help achieve

much-needed tactical wins.

Deadly terrorist attacks in Paris on Friday showed the militants are capable of targeting Europe and have thrown fuel on Republican criticism that President Barack Obama's war strategy has been ineffective in dismantling the group.

"We need the military to be in charge of the military campaign in Iraq and Syria, and I think there should be serious consideration for a four-star there locally to run the campaign," Thornberry said. "This cannot be run from Tampa (Fla.); it certainly can't be run from the bowels of the White House."

He claimed the president's

National Security Council is managing "what military targets can be hit and under what circumstances they can be hit" in the 15-month-old air campaign.

"The level of micromanagement is absolutely unbelievable," Thornberry said. "That is why you get statistics like a huge percentage of the air sorties we have carried out over Iraq and Syria have not dropped their ordnance, and there's real doubts about the effectiveness of some of them who have."

Despite rising criticism, Obama defended his strategy following the Paris attacks, saying it will eventually win out against the group.

Ryan seeks Syrian refugee program 'pause'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Paul Ryan called Tuesday for a "pause" in Syrian refugees coming to the U.S. in the wake of the Paris attacks, and assembled a task force to bring legislation to a vote as soon as this week.

"Our nation has always been welcoming, but we cannot let terrorists take advantage of our compassion," Ryan, R-Wis., told

reporters after a closed-door House GOP meeting. "This is a moment where it's better to be safe than to be sorry, so we think the prudent, the responsible thing is to take a pause in this particular aspect of this refugee program in order to verify that terrorists are not trying to infiltrate the refugee population."

Republicans said the chairmen of national security-focused committees were working on legislation dealing with Syrian

refugees that the House could vote on as early as Thursday, though it was not clear exactly what the legislation would involve. Thus far, the numbers of Syrian refugees admitted to the U.S. have been extremely limited.

Rep. Luis Gutierrez, D-Ill., likened the GOP reaction to the U.S. government turning away Jews fleeing Nazi Germany and placing Japanese in internment camps during World War II.

Security to dominate Asia-Pacific summit

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

Expect security concerns and military rotations in Southeast Asia to receive heavy attention during President Barack Obama's three-day stop in the Philippines for a multilateral summit.

Although trade issues dominate the Asia-Pacific Eco-

nomics Cooperation's agenda, China's island-building and assertive actions in the South China Sea are a major concern for several nations, including the United States, at the annual meeting.

On the APEC sidelines, Obama is expected to meet with Philippines President Benigno Aquino III, as he did during an April 2014 visit that

produced an agreement on U.S. troop rotations to Philippine-owned military bases.

Aquino's administration had hoped that the bilateral Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement would be ruled constitutional by the Philippine Supreme Court on Monday, but the court announced a delay until at least mid-December.

Texans hand Bengals first loss

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Texans cornerback Charles James stopped in a corner of the tiger-striped end zone and cupped a hand to his right ear, seeing what the crowd had to say about this outcome.

Not much. They'd seen it before.

T.J. Yates came off the bench in the second half after Brian Hoyer sustained a concussion and rallied Houston to a 10-6 victory on Monday night that knocked the Bengals from the ranks of unbeaten and added to the Texans' legacy of tormenting the team from Cincinnati.

"Yes, it was a little nostalgic," said Yates, who threw a 22-yard pass to DeAndre Hopkins in the fourth quarter for the game's only touchdown.

Nostalgic for the Texans (4-6). Miserable for the Bengals (8-1), who struggled on offense all game and then let a chance to pull it out slip away in the end.

Andy Dalton had another subpar game against J.J. Watt and a Texans defense that has often made him look bad. He completed 22 of 38 passes for 197 yards with an interception and three sacks, including one by Watt.

The Bengals had pulled out three games in the fourth quarter to stay unbeaten, and got a chance to win this one at the end, too. Dalton completed a pass to A.J. Green for what would have been a first down at the Texans 23-yard line with 40 seconds left, but safety Quintin Demps stripped him of the ball and recovered

the fumble.

"I had both hands on the ball and I took one off to break my fall and he ripped it out," Green said. "I was trying to break my fall."

Some things to take away from the Texans' high-profile win:

The Texans have Dalton's number: Dalton's hometown team made him look very bad while beating the Bengals in first-round playoff games in the 2011 and 2012 seasons. He finally beat them last season, but looked bad again on Monday night. Dalton repeatedly sailed his long throws out of bounds and missed open receivers.

"They did a good job of taking throws away down the field," Dalton said. "And in the end, we didn't make enough plays. We had a lot of opportunities."

Finally a clunker: After playing well overall for eight weeks, the Bengals had their worst game all-around. The offense managed a season-low 256 yards. They had nine penalties for 70 yards. Punter Kevin Huber had one kick travel only 22 yards. Tight end Tyler Eifert dropped two passes. Green fumbled it away.

And on and on ...
"We just didn't play well," Eifert said. "I played awful. It was embarrassing."

Hoyer's status: Hoyer was sent to the locker room to be examined for a concussion after the second series of the second half. It's unclear whether he'll be able to play at home against the Jets next Sunday.

"It's probably a concussion," coach Bill O'Brien said. "I asked him on the sideline and he just said, 'Look, there's just something a little off with me right now,' and that's not like him to be like that. And that's when we made the decision with our medical staff to go with T.J."

Yates makes the most of it: Yates was signed on Oct. 28 to replace Ryan Mallett. Even though he had only a couple of weeks to learn the offense, a lot of it was familiar from his earlier years in Houston. As a rookie in 2011, he took over because of injuries and led the Texans to a win in Cincinnati and then that win over the Bengals in the playoffs, the franchise's first in the postseason.

"I've had a lot of good memories in Cincinnati," said Yates, who was 5-for-11 for 69 yards.

Watt gets in Dalton's head: Watt's sack gave him 66½ in his career. That moved him ahead of Hall of Famer Derrick Thomas into second place for the most sacks during a player's first five seasons since it became an official stat in 1982. He also got into Dalton's head by joking postgame that the Texans wanted to turn Dalton — dubbed the "Red Rifle" — into a "Red Ryder B.B. Gun."

"There are a lot of kids and people who look up to him," Dalton said. "And for him to make comments like that, he's just showing that it's acceptable to say that kind of stuff. It's disappointing for one of the best players in this league to come out and say something like that."

Correa, Bryant top MLB rookies

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Big expectations followed Kris Bryant and Carlos Correa from the moment each was drafted just a few years ago.

It didn't take long for both to deliver.

Bryant was a unanimous pick as NL Rookie of the Year on Monday, and Correa took the American League prize in a close vote by members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," Correa explained on a conference call from his home in Puerto Rico, where he said thousands of proud supporters were waiting to celebrate with him. "It really means a lot not only for them, but me as well."

The surprise top pick in the 2012 amateur draft, Correa recalled how some questioned whether he warranted that selection. But by June this year, he was starting at shortstop in the majors and leading the young Houston Astros toward the playoffs.

Bryant, chosen second overall by the Chicago Cubs in 2013, made his big league debut on April 17. The third baseman quickly became an All-Star on a rising team that also reached the postseason.

The 23-year-old Bryant batted .275 and led big league rookies with 26 homers, 31 doubles and 99 RBIs as Chicago returned to the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

Seeking their first championship since 1908, the Cubs were swept by the New York Mets in the NLCS.

"I think there is a way to top this year and that's to win the World Series," Bryant said. "I think heading into next year this whole experience is going to help myself and our whole team in general."

Correa began this year in Double-A and made his major league debut June 8. He hit .279 with 22 homers, 68 RBIs and 14 steals, helping the Astros make their first postseason appearance in a decade. The youngest position player in the major leagues, he turned 21 in September.

"It's like a season that I only thought was going to happen in a dream," said Correa, who acknowledged the metal plate in his right leg caused him pain much of the year.

Correa's 2014 season with Class A Lancaster was cut short in June because of a broken right ankle.

Houston's only previous Rookie of the Year was Jeff Bagwell, who won the 1991 NL honor. Bryant is the Cubs' sixth winner and first since Geovany Soto in 2008.

Houston gave Correa his debut after making sure he won't be eligible for arbitration until following the 2018 season.

Bryant was left in the minors at the start of the season despite showing off his prodigious power during an outstanding spring training. Chicago brought up Bryant after waiting just long enough to ensure he cannot become a free agent until after the 2021 season.

Osweiler to replace injured Manning

Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. — On his 25th birthday, Brock Osweiler will make his first NFL start, replacing an injured Peyton Manning in the Broncos' much-anticipated game against the Chicago Bears.

"That would be an awesome birthday present if we can go get a win," Osweiler said Monday a few minutes before a somber Manning stood at his locker a few feet away and spoke about his various ailments and the pain of being benched.

Broncos coach Gary Kubiak decided to make the switch Monday in the aftermath of Denver's 29-13 loss to Kansas City in which Manning was picked off four times and had a rock-bottom 0.0 passer rating in 2 1-2 quarters of work. Osweiler relieved him and drove Denver to two late touchdowns.

Kubiak was kicking himself for letting Manning play against the Chiefs after he'd been limited during the week by a torn plantar fascia in his right foot, a mysterious ribcage injury that announced itself over the weekend and a lingering sore throwing shoulder. Manning went for an MRI on his ribs Monday.

"All of our full attention is going to be to getting Peyton back and healthy," Kubiak said.

Manning wanted to gut it out again and see if he could practice during the week and play Sunday. But a day after Von Miller called Manning "the Sheriff,"

Kubiak made it clear he was the one calling the shots and wasn't going to acquiesce again to Manning's wishes out of deference to the five-time MVP.

Manning stood at his locker not long after Kubiak told the team of the switch and, ever the professional, accepted his coach's decision with grace.

"I want to try to get healthy this week," Manning said. "I'm disappointed that I'm injured. I'm disappointed in the game yesterday. I will try to take advantage of this week and try to get to feeling better and getting healthy."

Manning won't practice this week nor will he suit up against the Bears, when rookie Trevor Siemian will be Osweiler's backup. Manning will spend lots of time with team athletic trainer Steve Antonopoulos.

Kubiak wouldn't speculate how long Manning might be out, saying, "our focus is not going past today or the Chicago Bears. We're all-in this week as a football team to get better and get ready to go play."

The only time Manning ever missed a start in his 18-year career came when he sat out the entire 2011 season following a series of neck surgeries that ultimately led to his departure from Indianapolis and his signing with the Broncos.

In other NFL news:
■ The Cleveland Browns will go with quarterback Johnny Manziel as their starter for the remainder of this season.

The team made the announcement on Tuesday before practice. Coach Mike Pettine strongly hinted to the possibility of sticking with Manziel after the second-year QB passed for 372 yards in a loss at Pittsburgh on Sunday.

Manziel takes over for Josh McCown, who went 1-6 as a starter and missed the past two games with injured ribs.

■ Case Keenum will replace Nick Foles as the starting quarterback, St. Louis Rams coach Jeff Fisher said Monday.

Fisher said that over the last "four to five weeks" he had been looking at the "big picture" in the production of the offense.

"Decided to make a quarterback change," Fisher said. "This is my decision. Nobody came down the hall and said this is what we need to do."

Foles went 17-for-36 for 200 yards in Sunday's 37-13 loss at home to Chicago.

■ The New Orleans Saints' defense is in disarray and Rob Ryan will not be the one to fix it.

Coach Sean Payton promised changes to the team's NFL worst defense on Monday and hours later made a significant one, firing Ryan, the defensive coordinator.

Payton announced the move on his radio show on WWL-AM, adding that defensive coordinator duties were handed over to senior defensive assistant Dennis Allen, a former defensive coordinator in Denver and head coach in Oakland.



Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

www.navyauto.com or nasinfo@navyauto.com

Mavericks keep 76ers winless

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — It was no surprise to see Dirk Nowitzki come up big late in the game for the Dallas Mavericks.

Nowitzki scored 21 points, including seven during a pivotal stretch late in the fourth quarter, to lead Dallas to a 92-86 victory over the winless Philadelphia 76ers on Monday night.

Jahlil Okafor had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the 76ers, who have lost all 11 games this season and 21 in a row dating back to last season. Philadelphia's last win was March 25 at Denver, and the 76ers are within five defeats of matching the franchise's record for consecutive losses.

Chandler Parsons added 20 points — all in the first half — for the Mavericks, who needed a late push to edge Philadelphia.

The 76ers trailed by as many as 19 points in the first half but battled back to take an 82-81 lead with 4 minutes, 23 seconds remaining on a free throw by Nerlens Noel before Nowitzki took over.

The 13-time All-Star had seven points during a 9-2 Mavericks run over the next 2:36, ending with a three-pointer that made it 90-84 with 1:47 left.

"That was the killer shot for the game," Mavs coach Rick Carlisle said. "It was huge. Hey look, he's been doing that for almost two decades. You're never shocked when it happens."

The six-point margin was too much for Philadelphia to overcome.

Nowitzki returned to the lineup after sitting out to rest during the Mavericks' 110-98 victory at Houston on Saturday night.

"They kept staying in the game, clawing and scratching and they're obviously desperate to get their first win," Nowitzki said. "We had to dig deep and grind it out."

Noel had 12 points and 12 rebounds for Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's 0-11 start is six losses shy of tying the franchise mark, set last season, for most defeats to start a season.

Grizzlies 122, Thunder 114: Newcomer Mario Chalmers scored 16 of his season-high 29 points in the fourth quarter and host Memphis held on for a victory over Oklahoma City.

Chalmers, picked up in a trade with the Miami Heat last week, hit six of 13 shots, including four of seven from outside the arc, as five Grizzlies reached double figures. Mike Conley had 22, Jeff Green scored 20, while Marc Gasol added 17. Zach Randolph finished with 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Russell Westbrook led the Thunder with 40 points.

Spurs 93, Trail Blazers 80: Kawhi Leonard had 19 points, Manu Ginobili added 17, and San Antonio overcame a listless start to beat visiting Portland for its fifth straight victory.

Danny Green and Boris Diaw each had 12 points and Tony Parker and Tim Duncan

both added 10.

Damian Lillard scored 27 points and Al-Farouq Aminu added 17 points for Portland.

Bulls 96, Pacers 95: Jimmy Butler scored 17 points for host Chicago and played tough defense on Paul George on Indiana's final possession, helping the Bulls hold on for a victory.

Butler stayed right with George in the final seconds and contested his difficult fadeaway shot that was well short as time expired, giving the Bulls their third straight win and fourth in five games.

Celtics 111, Rockets 95: Isaiah Thomas scored 23 points and visiting Boston used a 32-point third quarter to pull away and cruise to a win over slumping Houston.

Boston led by 4 after a three-pointer by James Harden with just over 3 minutes left in the third quarter. The Celtics closed out the quarter by scoring 15 straight points to take a 87-68 lead into the fourth quarter.

Suns 120, Lakers 101: Brandon Knight had 30 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds for his first career triple-double and host Phoenix ran past Los Angeles.

Eric Bledsoe added 21 points and T.J. Warren had 19 for the Suns, who gradually pulled away after taking a five-point lead into the fourth quarter.

Jordan Clarkson scored 20 points to lead the weary Lakers, who were playing on consecutive days for the second time in a week.

GW stuns 6th-ranked Cavaliers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Virginia coach Tony Bennett knew his sixth-ranked Cavaliers would have a tough time with George Washington.

The Colonials are a veteran team, their building was loud and the weather outside was unseasonably warm for mid-November, making it uncomfortable for players on the court.

After the Cavaliers' 73-68 loss Monday night, Bennett wouldn't hear of any excuses.

"We can't [say], 'We were just off, it wasn't our game.' It wasn't that. We got outplayed. We got out-executed," Bennett said.

"Sometimes you forget how hard it is, and these settings remind you awfully quick."

The Colonials' on-campus arena, The Smith Center, was sold out. After their win, some fans stormed the court, but didn't get in the way of the departing Virginia players.

George Washington (2-0) took control with a 10-0 run that began with Patricio Garino's three-point play for a 57-55 lead with 8:06 left. Garino added a tip-in and an assist on Tyler Cavanaugh's layup. Cavanaugh hit two free throws to make it 64-55 with 5:24 remaining.

Garino and Cavanaugh led the Colonials with 18 points apiece.

Virginia (1-1) was led by Malcolm Brogdon, who had a career-high 28 points and eight rebounds.

No. 7 Iowa State 106, Chicago State 64: Jameel McKay scored a career-high 25 points with 11 rebounds, and the host Cyclones rolled past the Cougars in coach Steve Prohm's home debut.

No. 12 Arizona 90, Bradley 60: Allonzo Trier scored 22 points and made all 14 of his free throws to bounce back from a shaky debut, helping the host Wildcats pull away against the Braves.

No. 14 Indiana 102, Austin Peay 76: Kevin "Yogi" Ferrell scored 22 points and James Blackmon Jr. added 20 to help the host Hoosiers beat the Governors.

No. 15 California 85, Santa Barbara 67: Tyrone Wallace had 24 points and six assists, and freshman Jaylen Brown added 17 points and seven rebounds to send the host Golden Bears past the Gauchos.

No. 16 Utah 81, San Diego State 76: Jordan Loveridge scored 21 points and hit four 3-pointers to lead the host Utes over the Aztecs.

No. 17 Vanderbilt 98, Gardner-Webb

62: At Nashville, Tenn., Jeff Roberson, who missed the season opener with a concussion, scored a career-high 18 points and tied a career best with eight rebounds in his return, leading the Commodores over the Bulldogs.

No. 25 Oregon 74, No. 20 Baylor

67: Chris Boucher and Elgin Cook both scored 15 points to lead the host Ducks over the Bears in the first meeting between the teams.

No. 23 LSU 91, Kennesaw State 69: Ben Simmons had 22 points and Josh Gray returned from a one-game suspension to score 16 as the host Tigers beat the Owls in a regional round of the Legends Classic.

No. 24 Michigan 88, Elon 68: Duncan Robinson made every shot he took for the Wolverines, scoring 19 points in a win over the visiting Phoenix.

Ekblad's goal lifts Panthers over Lightning

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Aaron Ekblad and the Florida Panthers benefited from a little last-minute luck against the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Ekblad scored with 20.2 seconds left to give the Panthers a 1-0 win over the Lightning on Monday night.

Ekblad shot from the point and the puck bounced off the skate of defenseman Victor Hedman and over the shoulder of goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy into the net.

"Lucky, lucky, lucky, lucky. Good screens in front and just lucky — can't say anything else," Ekblad said. "(Nick) Bjuggstad was in front battling with Hedman. He had no idea that it hit the guy's skate. It goes up and over. It's great."

The game seemed destined for overtime but Ekblad's goal denied the Lightning a point.

"Ekblad should buy a lottery ticket," Lightning coach Jon Cooper said.

Roberto Luongo stopped 39 shots for his 69th career shutout. Luongo tied Glenn Hall for eighth all-time in wins with 407. The Panthers beat the Lightning for the second time in three nights and won for only the second time in nine home games against Tampa Bay.

"It took a nice shot with a lucky bounce at the end to go our way and get a big win in regulation," Luongo said.

Vasilevskiy made 18 saves for the Lightning, who have lost nine of their past 12. The Lightning have been shut out four times this season.

"They got the fortunate break at the end but we still didn't score a goal," Cooper said.

Canadiens 4, Canucks 3 (OT): David Desharnais scored 3:25 into overtime to cap host Montreal's comeback from three goals down.

Desharnais completed a tic-tac-toe play with P.K. Subban and Tomas Fleischmann

on a rush with a one-timer from the right side.

Fleischmann, playing his 600th NHL game, beat Jacob Markstrom on a rush down the right side to tie the score with 3:08 left in the third period and complete a three-goal comeback by Montreal.

Adam Cracknell and Jared McCann scored in the first period and Daniel Sedin had a power-play goal early in the second for the Canucks, who fell to 1-3-2 on a seven-game road trip that ends at Winnipeg on Wednesday night.

Lars Eller and Max Pacioretty also scored for Montreal, which is 5-3-2 since Vancouver ended the Canadiens' season-opening nine-game winning streak on Oct. 27.

Red Wings 4, Senators 3 (OT): Tomas Tatar scored on a breakaway 2:04 into overtime to lift visiting Detroit.

Dylan Larkin, Gustav Nyquist, and Riley Sheahan also scored for Detroit. Jimmy Howard finished with 22 saves.

Mike Hoffman, Bobby Ryan and Chris Wideman scored for Ottawa, and Craig Anderson stopped 37 shots.

On the winning goal, Tatar took a pass from Nyquist and went in alone from the Senators blue line before beating Anderson.

Ryan and Wideman scored in a frantic third period, including the tying score from Ryan with less than 3 minutes to go in regulation.

Blues 3, Jets 2: David Backes had two goals and an assist to help host St. Louis end a two-game skid.

Vladimir Tarasenko added a goal and an assist for the Blues. Jake Allen made 16 saves and Kevin Shattenkirk added two assists.

Blues coach Ken Hitchcock moved Backes up to the first line with wingers Tarasenko and Alexander Steen on Monday and the trio accounted for three goals and three assists.

