

# STARS AND STRIPES<sup>®</sup>

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## 'UNCHARTED TERRITORY'

*The Washington Post*

This fall, after Iranian naval vessels veered dangerously close to American ships in the Middle East, then-candidate Donald Trump promised a swift response.

"With Iran, when they circle our beautiful destroyers with their little boats, and they make gestures at our people that they shouldn't be allowed to make, they will be shot out of the water," the Republican presidential nominee told supporters in September.

Trump's vow to escalate a standoff with a significant military power stood in contrast to the Obama administration's calibrated response to the naval confrontations with Iran, which included using loudspeakers to wave off approaching ships and firing warning shots into the water.

It also raises questions about what the nation can expect from a commander in chief who, as a candidate, vowed to upend many of the fundamentals of U.S. defense policy and transform the use of the world's most powerful military.

"He's got a fundamental decision now about whether he's going to continue in the same vein as president," said Michael O'Hanlon, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. "If you literally implement his [campaign's] security policy, you're probably risking war in multiple theaters simultaneously."

During a speech on security policy in September, Trump promised his dealings with the world would be based on "diplomacy, not destruction." But many of his sometimes contradictory statements on foreign policy have suggested the opposite, leaving defense experts scrambling after his surprise election victory over Hillary Clinton to evaluate how Trump would shape the United States'

### What will Trump be like as commander in chief?

military posture.

Brian Katulis, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, a left-leaning think tank, said that Trump and Vice President-elect Mike Pence had expressed a range of positions "but never offered a full blueprint" on security issues. "America is in uncharted territory on defense policy," he said.

Some of the statements that have created the most consternation among current and former officials included suggestions that the United States could withdraw from NATO, statements of support for allowing new nuclear nations, and a proposal to "take out" families of suspected terrorists. He also said that he would resume imprisonment of terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay, which President Barack Obama has struggled for eight years to close, and renew the use of torture during prisoner interrogations.

As a candidate, Trump has suggested in some cases a more muscular response to events overseas, possibly including to China's land reclamation activities in the South China Sea. The candidate also promised a harder line on the Islamic State but has provided little detail about how he would do so.

Trump could take office with two major U.S.-backed offensives underway in the Syrian city of Raqqa and the Iraqi city of Mosul, providing allied forces an opportunity to deliver a major blow against Islamic State militants and offering the next president a chance to claim a tactical victory.

In other areas, Trump has suggested a more conciliatory approach to U.S. adversaries. Those include Russian President Vladimir Putin, despite

his annexation of Crimea in Ukraine, and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, despite the country's spiraling civilian death toll. Trump also signaled less appetite for foreign interventions than his competitor might have favored.

Trump supporters have suggested the president-elect won't deliver on his most inflammatory statements and say that they expect continuity on many central defense issues: commitments to defend NATO members, alliances with South Korea and Japan, even something close to the uneasy status quo with Russia.

Some of Trump's proposals may encounter resistance from military leaders, including a suggestion that he would broaden military cooperation with Russia in Syria. A similar Obama administration proposal earlier this year generated intense Pentagon opposition, as military officials worried about giving Russia valuable insight into their operations.

Other proposals from Trump will sit well with the military leadership. He has promised to eliminate congressionally mandated spending caps, for example, and restore cuts to personnel and equipment that he said have left the military dangerously unprepared. If he can succeed in getting NATO nations to contribute more to shared defense without rupturing the alliance, it would also be a popular move.

O'Hanlon said Trump "could find a way to find a kinder, gentler way to pressure the allies to burden share, and he need not withdraw commitments or he need not do it immediately."

No matter what, Trump may find it harder to execute his defense plans once in office than expected.

"I think he will discover what Mitt Romney would have discovered in 2012, which is that the money has to come from somewhere" to pay for defense priorities, said Christopher Preble, a scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute. While Trump has promised to pay for military spending increases with government savings, a major boost could run afoul of Congress if it required new borrowing or a tax increase.

The defense bureaucracy could prove difficult to tame in other ways if, as has taken place in the past, Pentagon leaders push back against the White House during the policy-making process or publicize information that can sway public opinion about pressing defense issues.

Uniformed leaders, in keeping with the law and military tradition, are certain to fall in line with presidential mandates. The exception would be if those orders break the law, as his proposals to permit torture or intentionally attack civilians would probably do.

The sheer volume of defense issues facing the next president means that President Trump will need to delegate to his staff.

While little is known about the campaign's personnel plans, retired Maj. Gen. Joseph "Keith" Kellogg Jr., who commanded the storied 82nd Airborne Division in the late 1990s, is one senior adviser expected to steer the military transition. While Trump has distanced himself from the traditional Republican foreign policy establishment, some veterans of the George W. Bush administration are expected to flock to government again. Several Republican leaders, including Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., have been named as a potential defense secretary pick.

# Obama: 1st meeting with Trump is 'excellent'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a cordial beginning to their transfer of power, President Barack Obama and President-elect Donald Trump met at the White House Thursday. Obama called the 90-minute meeting “excellent,” and his successor said he looked forward to receiving the outgoing president’s “counsel.”

At the close of the sit-down, Obama said to Trump, “We now are going to want to do everything we can to help you succeed because if you succeed, the country succeeds.”

The two men, who have been critical of each other, were meeting for the first time, Trump said. The Republican called Obama a “very good man” and said he looked forward “to dealing with the president in the future, including counsel.”

Obama blasted Trump throughout the campaign as unfit to serve as a commander

in chief. Trump spent years challenging the legitimacy of Obama’s presidency, falsely suggesting Obama may have been born outside the U.S.

But at least publicly, the two men appeared to put aside their animosity. As the meeting concluded and journalists left the Oval Office, Obama smiled at his successor and explained the unfolding scene.

The Republican president-elect, who will govern with Congress fully under GOP control, has vowed to repeal Obama’s signature health care law and to dismantle the landmark nuclear accord with Iran.

First lady Michelle Obama also met privately in the White House residence with Trump’s wife, Melania, while Vice President Joe Biden prepared to see Vice President-elect Mike Pence later Thursday.

From the White House, Trump headed to Capitol Hill for meetings with House

Speaker Paul Ryan, of Wisconsin, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, of Kentucky, to discuss the GOP legislative agenda.

Trump’s scant transition team sprang into action, culling through personnel lists for top jobs and working through handover plans for government agencies. A person familiar with the transition said the personnel process was in its early stages, but Trump’s team was putting a premium on quickly filling key national security posts. The person spoke on condition of anonymity.

According to an organizational chart for the transition obtained by The Associated Press, Trump was relying on experienced hands to help form his administration. National security planning was being led by former Michigan Rep. Mike Rogers, who previously worked for the FBI. Domestic issues were being handled by Ken

Blackwell, former Ohio secretary of state.

Trump was expected to consider several loyal supporters for top jobs, including former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani for attorney general or national security adviser and campaign finance chairman Steve Mnuchin for Treasury secretary. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Tennessee Sen. Bob Corker were also expected to be under consideration for foreign policy posts.

As president-elect, Trump is entitled to get the same daily intelligence briefing as Obama — one that includes information on U.S. covert operations, information gleaned about world leaders and other data gathered by America’s 17 intelligence agencies. The White House said it would organize two exercises involving multiple agencies to help Trump’s team learn how to respond to major domestic incidents.

## Protests across US denounce Donald Trump

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A day after Donald Trump’s election, campaign divisions appeared to widen as many thousands of demonstrators — some with signs declaring “NOT MY PRESIDENT” — flooded streets across the country to protest his surprise triumph.

From New England to heartland cities like Kansas City, Mo., and along the West Coast, demonstrators bore flags and effigies of the president-elect, disrupting traffic and declaring that they refused to accept Trump’s victory.

Flames lit up the night sky in California cities Wednesday as thousands of protesters burned a giant papier-mache Trump head in Los Angeles and started fires in Oakland intersections.

Los Angeles demonstrators also beat a Trump pinata and sprayed the Los Angeles Times

building and news vans with anti-Trump profanity. One protester outside LA City Hall had a sign that simply said “this is very bad.”

Late in the evening, several hundred people blocked one of the city’s busiest freeways, U.S. 101 between downtown and Hollywood.

More than a dozen people were arrested as officers in full riot gear walked the protesters off the freeway. In Orange County, about 10 people were arrested after three police cars were damaged during rallies in Santa Ana.

To the north in Oakland, several thousand people clogged intersections and freeway on-ramps.

Nearby in Berkeley, more than 1,000 students walked out of high school classes Wednesday, brandishing anti-Trump signs and Mexican flags.

In Chicago, where thousands recently had poured into the streets to celebrate the Chicago Cubs’ first World Series victory in over a century, several thousand people marched through the Loop. They gathered outside Trump Tower, chanting “Not my president!”

Chicago resident Michael Burke said he believes the president-elect will “divide the country and stir up hatred.”

Police said that an estimated 1,800 to 2,000 people participated in the Chicago protests. Police reported five arrests but said there were no major incidents.

A similar protest in Manhattan drew about 1,000 people.

Hundreds of protesters gathered near Philadelphia’s City Hall. Participants — who included supporters of both Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt.,

who lost to Clinton in the primary — expressed anger at both Republicans and Democrats over the election’s outcome.

In Boston, thousands of anti-Trump protesters streamed through downtown, chanting “Trump’s a racist” and carrying signs that said “Impeach Trump” and “Abolish Electoral College.” Clinton appears to be on pace to win the popular vote.

Hundreds also gathered in Providence, R.I., and Portland, Maine.

Since Tuesday night, there have been protest marches in the Midwest, including, St. Paul, Minn.; Omaha, Neb.; and Kansas City, Mo.

Marchers protested in front of the Trump International Hotel in Washington.

Another group stood outside the White House. They held candles, listened to speeches and sang songs.

# Asia applauds Trump, but frets about change

BY PAUL ALEXANDER  
*Stars and Stripes*

Asian allies are heartily congratulating Donald Trump for his election victory while worrying whether his “America first” focus will erode regional security and undercut trade agreements.

No one is quite sure what to expect from the billionaire businessman who has no political experience and is perceived as a hothead who sees the world in terms of profits and losses.

Some of the biggest questions are what will happen to the “Pacific pivot,” President Barack Obama’s plan to bolster America’s military and trade presence in a region that he saw as critical to the future, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the 12-nation trade deal that Trump has derided as contrary to America’s best interests.

Trump has sent mixed messages to Asia. He sparked concern across Japan and South Korea when he said during his campaign they need to pay more of the costs of basing U.S. troops in the region and suggested they should start their own nuclear weapons programs to defend themselves from possible attacks by North Korea or China.

“He has said that he is going to increase the military presence in the Asia-Pacific region, but he also signaled that he would draw troops down from Japan and Korea,” said James Brown, a defense expert at the United States Studies Centre in Sydney.

“I think whatever form the rebalance takes, it will certainly have a harder edge. There will be no TPP. And it will be about muscle moves, I think. I think his policy in Asia will look a lot like China’s policy in Asia, which is driven by commercial considerations, backed by strong deployments of military force when need be.”

## ‘A great deal of fear’

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Park Geun-hye both spoke with Trump by telephone Thursday to offer their congratulations on the Republican’s

stunning upset victory over Hillary Clinton. Spokesmen for both leaders said Trump made assurances that he hopes to further strengthen their bilateral relationships.

Even with the inauguration two months away, world leaders already are trying to cozy up to Trump and are setting up task forces to engage with his Cabinet once it’s formed. Abe is working out plans to meet with Trump on Nov. 17 before the APEC meeting in New York, said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga.

“I think that they made a great start to build a trusting relationship,” Suga said.

That would mark a turnaround for Trump.

“Where I think the biggest impact of Trump’s security policy in Asia will be felt is on the U.S.-Japan relationship,” Brown said. “That’s one of the things he’s been very consistent about. He doesn’t like Japan. He hasn’t liked them for 30, 40 years. He sees them as exploitative of the U.S., and so this trend toward a more intensified US-Japan alliance, I think, will be halted and potentially reversed.”

Brendon O’Connor, an expert on U.S. foreign policy at the United States Studies Centre, said an international poll taken before the election showed “an overwhelmingly negative attitude” toward Trump, with only 3 percent support in South Korea, 5 percent in Japan and 15 percent in Australia.

“In the case of Korea and Japan, there is a great deal of fear that Trump will pull back commitments to those two countries,” O’Connor said. “His argument that they should consider getting their own nuclear weapons was not something that would be seen positively by either nation. Those, I think, were dangerous and unwise statements to make.”

Japan is already in the midst of a transformation of its military that makes many in the region uneasy. Despite majority opposition, Abe has worked to ease the heavy restrictions on its military that are enshrined in the post-World War II constitution. The country now could come to the aid of an ally under

attack.

Faced with Chinese aggression over the disputed Senkaku islands, Japan is expanding its capabilities beyond self-defense, participating in military exercises with the U.S. this week on the island on Tinian that are part of its push to develop a Marines-like amphibious capability.

But it’s far from ready for a confrontation, so the U.S. troops based in the country — half in Okinawa — will be needed for the foreseeable future.

Many Okinawans bristle against the ongoing U.S. presence, and Gov. Takeshi Onaga won election on an anti-base platform. He said he will visit the U.S. early next year in an effort to persuade Trump to reduce the military presence on the island.

While Japan does foot about 75 percent of the U.S. military’s costs here, that still makes up only 1 percent of its budget, which has led to criticism from Trump and others, said Yasushi Watanabe, a professor of American studies at Japan’s Keio University.

“In the eyes of the United States, it’s not fair,” Watanabe said. “It’s certain that he (Trump) will demand more burden” be carried by Japan.

South Korea has been uneasy about a Trump presidency, which Lee Junhan, political science professor at South Korea’s Incheon National University, said will bring greater “unpredictability and uncertainty.”

“It is uncertain what his policies toward South Korea, North Korea and Asia are likely to be,” Lee said, adding that he sees worst-case scenarios. “No good scenario is in sight.”

## Pragmatism over issues

China is waiting to see whether Trump will try to boost trade ties or take a harder line in the South China Sea, where Beijing has built up tiny islands, reefs and shoals and has added airstrips, radars and buildings.

O’Connor said he thinks dealing with China will be one of Trump’s biggest challenges “given that he’s talked pretty

tough on China in regard to trade.

“He talked a lot about building up America’s military,” O’Connor said. “Those are concerning thoughts. There’s been a degree of peace and economic prosperity in building relations with China since the Bill Clinton administration, and to see that disturbed, I think, would be a real mistake.”

China is also seen as one of the keys to calming down North Korea, which has spent the entire year showing off the improvements in its nuclear weapons and missile programs. Trump has said he’s willing to have talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who is in the midst of an aggressive push to upgrade his nuclear weapons and missiles so they could reach the U.S. mainland.

North Korea warned Thursday that it has no intention of giving up its nuclear weapons program.

“Washington’s hope for North Korea’s denuclearization is an outdated illusion,” the official ruling party newspaper Rodong Sinmun said in a commentary. It didn’t mention Trump by name but it was published after his election.

One of the more interesting aspects of Trump’s presidency is how he will deal with Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who some see as being cut from the same cloth as Trump: a maverick who won election with promises of change.

Duterte sent his congratulations to Trump on Thursday too, and talked of military exercises which the U.S., which he recently said would end.

“Looking at the personalities, President Duterte will respect President Trump,” said Brown. “He will see some similar characteristics in Trump to himself. But I think that relationship is going to become one driven by pragmatism rather than one that’s driven by values.”

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## 1 pilot ejects, other lands after Marine jets collide off Calif.

*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

SAN DIEGO — One pilot ejected safely after a Wednesday morning midair collision between two jets over water near Miramar Marine Corps Air Station, while the second aviator was able to land safely, Marine officials said.

Search-and-rescue teams received a mayday call at 12:11 p.m. PST, and sailors from the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson recovered the unnamed Marine pilot 30 minutes later, according to a Marine Corps news release.

The Marines said the pair of single-seat F/A-18 Hornets assigned to the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing struck each other during a training mission near San Diego.

The second unnamed pilot landed safely at the North Island Naval Air Station in Coronado. Both pilots are in stable condition and are in an undisclosed medical facility.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

## Russia: Warships drove off Dutch sub shadowing them

BY VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV

*Associated Press*

MOSCOW — Russian warships in the eastern Mediterranean Sea on Wednesday drove away a Dutch submarine shadowing the squadron, the military said.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said two Russian navy destroyers spotted the Walrus-class submarine Wednesday while it was some 11 nautical miles away from the Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier and its escorting ships.

The destroyers had tracked the submarine for more than an hour, using anti-submarine helicopters, before forcing it to leave the area, Konashenkov said. He didn't elaborate on how the warships prompted the submarine to leave.

The spokesman added that such "clumsy" attempts to maneuver close to the Russian squadron could have resulted in an accident.

Konashenkov said the Russian squadron previously had spotted several NATO submarines, including a U.S. Virginia-class nuclear submarine, while en route to eastern Mediterranean waters.

A NATO official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't allowed to discuss the sensitive issue on the record, said the alliance's navies have been monitoring the Russian fleet in recent weeks in a "measured and responsible way, as is customary."

# Report: GIs, vets smoke, drink more, sleep less

BY NIKKI WENTLING

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — People who have served in the military smoke and drink more and sleep less than the general population, according to a report released Thursday by the United Health Foundation.

The study, based on a survey of approximately 60,000 veterans and servicemembers annually from 2011 through 2014, also found higher rates of coronary heart disease, heart attack and cancer. Researchers said they'll deliver the results to the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs and other health care providers in the hopes that it will help with treatment.

"We owe it to these people to see if anything can be done, if we could identify opportunities to improve," said Richard Migliori, senior adviser to the United Health Foundation, an off-spring of insurer United Health Group. "I think we found some meaningful things here."

The findings show 25.2 percent of servicemembers and veterans who are 18 to 39 years old smoke, compared with 20.7 percent of the general population of the same age range. Approximately 20 percent of servicemembers and veterans drink excessively, while 18.1 percent of others do. Drinking excessively was defined by the report as either binge drinking, having five or more drinks in one sitting, or heavy drinking, which means having more than two drinks each day.

Servicemembers and veterans are 39 percent more likely than others not to sleep enough.

"Since we found issues with sleep, smoking and alcohol use, we know we may be dealing with an area of stress — these are all stress-related," Migliori said. "The good things about those findings, those are things that can be immediately worked on. Physicians should be focusing on those particular behaviors as they engage their patients."

Smoking and drinking could be a direct cause of the higher rates of coronary heart disease and cancer in people with military service, Migliori said.

Servicemembers and veterans are 62 percent more likely to have coronary heart disease and 67 percent more likely to have a heart attack, the study found.

Nearly 50 percent of veterans older than 80 years of age have been diagnosed with cancer, compared with about 34 percent of others older than 80. The types of cancers most frequently diagnosed by the VA are prostate, lung and colorectal cancer, the report states.

Previous studies have linked military service to increased risk for different types of cancer, such as the herbicide Agent Orange causing non-Hodgkin lymphoma in some veterans of the Vietnam War.

Rene Campos, a retired commander in the Navy and leader with the Military Officers Association of America, a nonprofit group that collaborated on the report, said she wanted to "dig into" the cancer statistics, as well as a finding that female servicemembers and veterans experience depression at higher rates. About 25.5 percent of them reported they were told by a health care provider they had a depressive disorder, while 22 percent of other females did.

Though they're at more risk for various health issues, veterans and servicemembers are less likely to tell their doctors about them.

"This data suggests those who have served will understate their illness or burden," Migliori said. "Because I know these individuals who have served are less likely to complain about something, physicians should be advised to follow their instincts and maybe lower your threshold for ordering tests and making diagnoses."

There were some positive findings too.

People with military service are more likely to be physically active and have health insurance. More servicemembers and veterans also see their doctors for cancer screenings, and more get flu vaccines and have regular dental visits.

Campos said the information could help drive policy changes.

"There's a very big topic of discussion on how the VA provides care to veterans," Campos said. "This paints a comparative portrait of those who have served against the civilian population. I think it gives that baseline view of who this population is and gives us data to work from."

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## US, Japan forces train on Tinian

BY ERIK SLAVIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

TINIAN, Northern Marianas — Japan took new steps toward integrating its air, sea and land forces this week during its most complex field exercise with the U.S. military since Tokyo passed laws expanding defense options last year.

Ground troops from the two security allies landed aboard helicopters on the U.S. commonwealth island of Tinian, site of a major 1944 World War II battle where U.S. forces defeated a 9,000-strong Japanese garrison, consolidating their hold on islands within striking distance of the Japanese mainland.

On Tuesday, servicemembers from both sides hiked into a tropical jungle to mop up against a mock opposition force. In one case, they marched just a few feet past pits where the atomic bombs headed to Hiroshima and Nagasaki were loaded onto planes 71 years ago.

Marines, Air Force tactical air controllers and sailors joined the approximately 1,300 Japan Self-Defense Force troops involved in the exercise.

The U.S. military offered its amphibious operations experience throughout the event, which began Nov. 4. However, the U.S. forces on the ground Tuesday mostly asked the Japanese troops questions and followed their lead.

"This is definitely a JSDF-planned and -executed exercise," Rear Adm. Marc Dalton, commander of Amphibious Force 7th Fleet, said Tuesday while observing the scenario on Tinian.

Not everything went as planned during the event, which ended Wednesday. The amphibious landing was canceled due to high surf offshore, according to U.S. and Japanese officials.

Troops continued the scenario as if the landing happened successfully. After troops took positions, the plan continued with helicopter assaults, F-2 fighter-jet flyovers and jungle ambushes.

Farther from shore, the helicopter destroyer JS Hyuga led a four-ship force augmented by the landing dock ship USS Comstock and embarked 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit Marines.

Marines from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment based out of Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, embarked on the JS Osumi with Japanese ground troops.

## US: 64 civilians have been slain in airstrikes in Iraq, Syria

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — As many as 64 civilians have been killed in the past 12 months in airstrikes by the U.S.-led coalition fighting the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, U.S. Central Command announced Wednesday.

The civilian deaths and eight noncombatant injuries occurred in 24 strikes that were each independently investigated and deemed lawful, said Air Force Col. John Thomas, a spokesman for Central Command. Thirteen of the strikes occurred in Iraq and 11 in Syria.

Thomas said avoiding civilian casualties is a "key tenet" of the Operation Inherent Resolve campaign, and he emphasized the coalition believes it's possible that fewer than 64 noncombatants were killed in the strikes.

"We have teams who work full time to prevent unintended civilian casualties," he said. "... Sometimes civilians bear the brunt of military action, but we do all we can to minimize those occurrences even at the cost of sometimes missing the chance to strike valid targets in real time."

Thomas said the military takes all reports of civilian casualties seriously. He said coalition investigations used internal records alongside reports from news outlets, non-governmental organizations and other U.S. government department and agencies.

Some outside organizations, including Amnesty International, have accused the U.S. military of inadequate investigations into reports of civilian deaths. In October, Amnesty International accused Operation Inherent Resolve airstrikes in Syria alone of killing more than 300 civilians between September 2014 and June 2016.

Pentagon and Central Command officials have disputed those numbers and touted the military's commitment to transparency when it is accused of killing civilians.

Here are the airstrikes that Central Command said likely killed civilians since November 2015:

- Nov. 20, 2015, near Dayr-az-Zawr in Syria, against a tactical unit. Five civilians killed and three injured.
- March 5, near Mosul in Iraq, against

a weapons production facility. Ten civilians killed.

- March 24, near Qayara in Iraq, against an unspecified militant target. One civilian killed.

- April 1, near Raqqa in Syria, against a tactical unit. Three civilians killed.

- April 9, near Mosul, against a tactical unit. One civilian killed.

- April 30, near Mosul, against Islamic State group military leadership. Five civilians killed.

- May 25, near Mosul, against a tactical unit. One civilian killed.

- May 26, near Mosul, against enemy fighters. One civilian killed.

- May 29, near Mosul, against a weapons system. Six civilians killed.

- June 15, near Kisik in Iraq, against a weapons storage facility. Six civilians killed.

- June 15, near Mosul, against unspecified targets. Two civilians injured.

- June 21, near Raqqa, against a headquarters building. Three civilians killed.

- June 23, near Raqqa, against a militant-held building. Four civilians killed.

- June 26, near Mosul, against an unspecified enemy target. One individual injured.

- June 26, near Mosul, against an unspecified enemy target. One individual injured.

- July 3, near Manbij in Syria, against a fighting position. Four civilians killed.

- July 10, near Manbij, against an unspecified enemy target. Two civilians killed.

- July 14, near Qayara, during a strike on an enemy-held building. One civilian killed.

- July 31, near Manbij, against enemy fighters. One civilian injured.

- Aug. 17, near Raqqa, against an enemy target. Two civilians killed.

- Aug. 20, near Manbij, against an artillery firing position. One civilian killed.

- Aug. 31, near Ramadi in Iraq, against an unspecified enemy target. Two civilians killed.

- Sept. 7, near Dayr-az-Zawr, against an oil collection point. One civilian killed.

- Sept. 10, near Raqqa, against an unspecified enemy target. Five civilians killed.

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STARS AND STRIPES®

# Freshmen take center stage

Associated Press

Get ready to learn some new names as the college basketball season tips off this week.

The 2015-16 season was billed as “the year of the senior,” but newcomers figure to take center stage this season with the arrival of a talented and deep freshman class.

Jerry Meyer, the national director of scouting for 247Sports, calls the incoming freshman class the best since the 2007-08 season, which featured eventual NBA all-stars Derrick Rose, James Harden, Blake Griffin and Kevin Love.

“I would be surprised if this class doesn’t eventually produce multiple NBA all-stars when it’s all said and done,” said Eric Bossi, the director of basketball recruiting at Rivals.

That represents a major change from last season, when experience was emphasized. Four of the five first-team selections on the AP All-America team last year were seniors: Virginia’s Malcolm Brogdon, Oklahoma’s Buddy Hield, North Carolina’s Brice Johnson and Michigan State’s Denzel Valentine.

The starting lineups in last season’s NCAA championship game between Villanova and North Carolina included four seniors, three juniors, two sophomores and only one freshman. The nation’s most celebrated freshman was LSU’s Ben Simmons, who became the No. 1 overall pick in the NBA Draft but failed to reach the NCAA Tournament.

This year’s freshman class features considerably more depth.

“I wouldn’t put anyone on that Ben Simmons level — I really think Ben Simmons is an exceptional talent — but I think there’s a bunch of guys just a step below,” Meyer said.

As usual, freshmen could make the biggest impact at No. 1 Duke and No. 2 Kentucky.

Duke’s six-man freshman class has four of the nation’s top 15 prospects, according to composite rankings of recruiting websites compiled by 247Sports.

That group includes forwards Harry Giles (No. 2) and Jayson Tatum (No. 4), guard Frank Jackson (No. 13) and center Marques Bolden (No. 15).

“As everyone can see, these guys are already talented,” Duke senior forward Amile Jefferson said. “They already have the tools and the gifts that God gave them to be really good basketball players.”

Tatum has a sprained foot and Giles underwent arthroscopic knee surgery last month that kept both players out of Duke’s preseason exhibitions. Bolden is expected to miss Duke’s first two regular-season games because of a leg injury.

Kentucky’s John Calipari landed five of the nation’s top 24 prospects, according to the 247Sports Composite. The new Wildcats in-

clude guards De’Aaron Fox (No. 6) and Malik Monk (No. 11) and forwards Edrice “Bam” Adebayo (No. 9), Wenyen Gabriel (No. 14) and Sacha Killeya-Jones (No. 24). They combined for 78 points Sunday in a 156-63 exhibition blowout of NAIA Division II school Asbury.

“His fan base hears every year about that crop of young guys, and about every other year they’ve been as good as advertised,” Auburn coach Bruce Pearl said. “This is another special group. This could be another Karl Towns-type group.”

Meyer noted Adebayo “is going to bring something to the table that Kentucky was woefully missing last year as far as physical play inside and explosiveness.”

Meyer added it’s “arguably the best” class John Calipari has brought to Kentucky, though Calipari himself is reluctant to compare.

“It’s hard to think back,” Calipari said. “All I can tell you is it’s a very smart group — a very driven, wired group, a competitive group.”

But the freshman talent is spread around.

No. 3 Kansas has guard Josh Jackson, rated as the nation’s No. 1 prospect in his class by the 247Sports Composite. No. 16 UCLA, attempting to bounce back from a rare losing season, has added guard Lonzo Ball (No. 3) and forward T.J. Leaf (No. 18). Florida State has forward Jonathan Isaac (No. 8) and No. 12 Michigan State adds forward Miles Bridges (No. 12).

Bridges averaged 26.5 points and 7.5 rebounds in Michigan State’s two exhibition games.

“I think he can be one of the more versatile players that we’ve had since Jason Richardson,” Michigan State coach Tom Izzo said. “He shoots it pretty good. He’s stronger than most freshmen. He’s a man-child in that respect. He’s a power jumper. But he’s been an incredible kid. Sometimes your top-10 or 15 players are full of themselves. He’s been as humble and hard-working and coachable a kid as I’ve had.”

Ball leads a bumper crop of point guards that also includes Fox, Washington’s Markelle Fultz (No. 5) and North Carolina State’s Dennis Smith Jr. (No. 7).

Ball and Leaf posted double-doubles in UCLA’s exhibition victory over NAIA school The Master’s University. Smith averaged 23 points and 5.0 assists in North Carolina State’s two exhibition games. Isaac averaged 18.5 points and 7.5 rebounds in Florida State’s two exhibitions.

Those early performances lend some credence to the notion this freshman class could live up to its considerable billing.

“In terms of guys who are going to make significant impacts as freshmen, it’s definitely going to be one of the top three or four classes of the last 16-17 years,” Bossi said.

# Non-tourney teams in Top 25

Associated Press

The preseason Top 25 that was released Monday includes five teams that failed to reach the 2016 NCAA Tournament. They’re all included in this list of six potential 2017 NCAA Tournament contenders that weren’t included in the 2016 field.

## Creighton

**2015-16 record:** 20-15 (NIT quarterfinals)

No. 22 Creighton returns three players who had double-figure scoring averages last season in seniors Maurice Watson Jr. (14.1), Cole Huff (11.3) and Isaiah Zierden (10.2). Creighton adds Marcus Foster, who transferred from Kansas State after leading the Wildcats in scoring each of his two years there.

## Florida State

**2015-16 record:** 20-14 (NIT second round)

Florida State is the only unranked team on this list. The Seminoles return two of their top three scorers from last season in guards Dwayne Bacon (15.8) and Xavier Rathan-Mayes (11.8). FSU also added freshman forward Jonathan Isaac, rated as the nation’s No. 8 prospect in his class.

## Louisville

**2015-16 record:** 23-8 (ineligible for postseason)

No. 13 Louisville is different from the rest of the teams on this list, as the Cardinals would have been in last year’s tournament if they hadn’t self-imposed a postseason ban in response to an NCAA investigation.

## Rhode Island

**2015-16 record:** 17-15

No. 23 Rhode Island is ranked in the preseason Top 25 for the first time since 1998-99. The Rams return four starters from last season and also get back guard E.C. Matthews, who hasn’t played since tearing his anterior cruciate ligament in the 2015-16 season opener.

## Saint Mary’s

**2015-16 record:** 29-6 (NIT quarterfinals)

The 17th-ranked Gaels return all five starters from a team that won 29 games and tied for first place in the West Coast Conference last season. Seniors Dane Pineau and Joe Rahon and juniors Emmett Naar and Calvin Hermanson all averaged over 10 points per game last season.

## UCLA

**2015-16 record:** 15-17

UCLA is ranked 16th despite finishing below .500 last season. The Bruins return four starters from last season, while adding freshman guard Lonzo Ball, rated as the No. 3 overall prospect in his class. Other UCLA freshmen include forward T.J. Leaf (18th) and forward/center Ike Anigbogu (46th).

# Tide 'D' embraces 'hateful' mentality

Associated Press

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — If Ryan Anderson and Alabama's defense treat opposing offensive players hatefully, it's not personal.

It's just business.

"It's what defenders do," said Anderson, a Crimson Tide linebacker. "Mostly, we're all hateful guys. We hate everybody on the other team. Everybody that's lined up across from us, we hate you; we're trying to kill you."

No. 1 Alabama certainly played with that sort of ferocity last Saturday in shutting out LSU and smothering star tailback Leonard Fournette — again. Afterward, when coach Nick Saban said the Tide has some "pretty hateful guys" on defense, he meant it as a compliment.

Tide defenders certainly didn't take offense to their coach's comments.

Alabama leads the nation in rushing defense and sacks per game and is second in total yards allowed and scoring de-

fense going into Saturday's game against Mississippi State.

And hatin' with a vengeance. Anderson might have stated it more strongly than Saban would prefer, but the coach doesn't want his defensive guys playing nice so long as they play by the rules.

"We want a guy that's going to go hit a guy that weighs 250 pounds running downhill as hard as he can hit him," the coach said.

Saban tells the story of his time with the NFL's Cleveland Browns when the franchise brought in a guy to administer a psychological test to draft prospects. Chances are he didn't interpret the results quite the same way as, say, an accounting firm.

"I looked at the guy and said, 'What are we hiring these guys to do? We want them to be aggressive, we want them to be competitive, not in the real world but at least on the football field,'" Saban said. "These characteristics are important in defensive players. We're

evaluating these guys as to what they're like on Sundays, which may not be the same."

For instance, off the field it wouldn't have been socially acceptable when defensive tackle Da'Ron Payne completely disrupted one first-half play after sending LSU guard Josh Boutte tumbling onto his backside. On the field, it was Alabama being Alabama.

The Tide held LSU to 125 yards and six first downs in a 10-0 victory, earning the entire defense Walter Camp National Defensive Player of the Week honors. It's only the second time that award has gone to a defense collectively.

The dominating performance came after star safety Eddie Jackson was lost for the season with a broken leg. A defense that also lost four second-round draft picks to the NFL after last season just keeps on trucking.

The defense's mental make-up was apparent in a game that was scoreless at halftime. LSU went nowhere on three drives starting near or across

midfield, including the Tigers' first possession. They took over at Alabama's 33-yard line and gained 1 yard before missing a field goal.

The Tide yielded only 35 yards to Fournette, four more than he gained in last season's meeting. Anderson was named the SEC defensive player of the week.

Alabama, meanwhile, is giving up 66 yards a game on the ground.

"People play within the defense. We've all got one goal," said Anderson, who leads the team in tackles for loss. "I feel like this team's goals are more team-oriented. Guys aren't talking about wanting 100 tackles, 60 tackles. Guys just want to stop the run, stop the pass, stop everybody we play."

And if that effort is fueled by a healthy dose of hate, that's OK with Alabama.

"Our front seven is very hateful, especially the D-linemen," cornerback Marlon Humphrey said. "They just play mad, to me."

## Sun Belt teams set for pivotal showdown

Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Troy and Appalachian State are set for a pivotal Sun Belt Conference showdown one season after waging a three-overtime contest.

The two teams play Saturday at Troy in only the third meeting this deep into the season between Sun Belt teams with unbeaten league marks.

"It's going to be a great college football game," Mountaineers coach Scott Satterfield said. "You've got two of the better teams in the league that are battling, especially this late in the season with everything on the line. This is why you play the game. When you coach the game, you play the game, this is what it's for. It's exciting and it's fun to be a part of this game."

Troy (7-1, 4-0) hasn't been involved in such a meaningful Sun Belt game since the program's string of five straight league titles ended in 2010. The Trojans have been getting votes in the Associated Press poll for the first time.

The Mountaineers (7-2, 5-0), who won last season's marathon game 44-41, are

more familiar with this position having become the only other Sun Belt team to start 7-1 last season.

Both teams are riding six-game winning streaks. Arkansas State (4-4, 4-0) also hasn't lost a league game. Troy hosts the Red Wolves in a Thursday night game next week, while Appalachian State doesn't play them this season.

"People are excited and rightfully so," Trojans coach Neal Brown said. "I am excited about the energy on campus and in our community. Our community support is higher than it has been in the six years I have been a part of the program."

Troy, whose only loss came 30-24 to No. 3 Clemson, has fallen behind by two touchdowns each of its past two games before rallying.

This is a matchup that's intriguing for more than the stakes. Troy leads the league in scoring offense and Appalachian State is second; that pecking order is reversed for scoring and total defense.

The Mountaineers have run for 218.6 yards per game and a league-best 18 touchdowns behind the Sun Belt's only

1,000-yard rusher, Jalin Moore. Troy has allowed only five rushing touchdowns and 97.8 yards per game. Plus Appalachian State leads the nation in interceptions and Troy is tops nationally in picks per game.

The Trojans also sport the league's No. 2 rusher Jordan Chunn and second-leading passer Brandon Silvers.

"What they did to get to us last year is what they're doing every game this year," Satterfield said. "Last year they were still trying to find themselves early on in the season, and when they played us it was clicking on all cylinders."

The 36-year-old Brown doesn't want his players getting too swept up in the magnitude of the game.

"Any time you play a game that is perceived as a big game to the outside world and people are going to be talking more about this game, they have to understand, you don't have to play a perfect game to win," the second-year head coach and former offensive coordinator said. "We just have to play really sound. The same thing goes for Appalachian State."

# Panarin's overtime goal lifts Blackhawks

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Corey Crawford has the Chicago Blackhawks on an early-season roll.

Crawford stopped 27 shots and Artemi Panarin scored 25 seconds into overtime, leading the Blackhawks over the St. Louis Blues 2-1 on Wednesday night for their seventh straight win.

Crawford won his sixth consecutive game while improving to 15-5-5 against the Blues.

Chicago has earned a point in nine straight games, thanks in part to Crawford, who has given up just six goals in his last six contests.

"He's been phenomenal," Chicago defenseman Brent Seabrook said. "He's been the backbone."

Crawford made 11 stops in the third period, including a sliding kick save on Vladimir Tarasenko while nursing a 1-0 lead.

"I'm in a good spot right now," Crawford said. "I feel good. I'm reading plays (well). I'm patient when I have to be and aggressive when it's time."

Crawford is 7-3-1 this

season.

"He has been outstanding, instrumental in winning most of these games," Chicago coach Joel Quenneville said. "Again tonight, a couple of big saves."

Panarin whipped a wrist shot from the slot past Jake Allen for his sixth goal of the season. The tally came just 1 second after St. Louis' Alex Pietrangelo left the penalty box.

Allen said he never saw the shot.

"I just heard it hit the net," Allen said. "It was a tough way to go."

Panarin, a Russian-born winger, does not speak English. His usual interpreter, center Artem Anisimov, left the game in the second period with an upper-body injury.

"He's day-to-day," Quenneville said. "He'll be all right."

Pietrangelo tied the game with 2:11 left in the third on a drive from the point that squeezed past Crawford, who got a piece of the shot.

Marian Hossa pounced on the rebound of a shot by Gustav Forsling and followed it in for a 1-0 lead early in the second period. It was his seventh goal of

the season and sixth in the last seven games.

"We've been in a lot of those games, close the whole way," Quenneville said. "We seem to always find a way to get two points at the end of the night."

Chicago has outscored opponents 30-15 during this nine-game run.

"It feels nice to have a streak like this," Seabrook said. "We keep getting it done. Every game is big and all the points are big."

Allen made 28 saves for the Blues. He played well but has lost three of his last four and fell to 5-4-2.

This is the Blackhawks' longest winning streak since they won 12 in a row from Dec. 29, 2015 to Jan. 19, 2016.

St. Louis is struggling after starting the season with three successive wins.

"We're taking way too many penalties when the game is on the line," coach Ken Hitchcock said. "We're having to extend a lot of energy with a short bench. It is not a good recipe."

**Blue Jackets 3, Ducks 2 (OT):** Zach Werenski scored 1:21 into overtime after host

Columbus blew a two-goal lead before escaping with a victory over Anaheim.

Brandon Saad had a goal and an assist and Boone Jenner got his first score this season for Columbus, which won its fourth straight at home and stretched its point streak to five (4-0-1). Sergei Bobrovsky made 30 saves.

Anaheim's Nick Ritchie tied it at 2 early in the third period after Rickard Rakell scored late in the second. John Gibson made 15 stops.

**Senators 2, Sabres 1 (SO):** Bobby Ryan and Kyle Turris scored during a shootout, helping visiting Ottawa beat Buffalo.

Turris scored in the first round to match Sam Reinhart's tally, and then Ryan put Ottawa ahead in the second round. Mike Condon stopped Brian Gionta on Buffalo's final attempt and finished with 31 saves.

Ryan Dzingel got a tying goal for Ottawa 7:15 into the second period.

Nicholas Baptiste scored for Buffalo and Robin Lehner made 28 saves while the Sabres lost their second in a row.

# DeRozan's 37 points leads Toronto past Oklahoma City

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — DeMar DeRozan won a shootout with Russell Westbrook, scoring 37 points to lead the Toronto Raptors to a 112-102 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder on Wednesday night.

DeRozan, the NBA's leading scorer with a 34.1 average heading into the game, made 13 of 22 field goals and 11 of 15 free throws.

"You know, sometimes you've got to tip your hat, and good offense can beat great defense," Thunder coach Billy Donovan said. "He had that happen several times where he made some very, very difficult shots."

Westbrook had 36 points, seven rebounds and seven assists, but he made just 9 of 26

shots and committed eight turnovers.

"I thought everybody that guarded him did a decent job, but it was a five-man job," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said.

Kyle Lowry added 19 points, 13 assists and nine rebounds and Patrick Patterson had 13 points for the Raptors. Toronto, which shot 51.8 percent from the field, has won four of five.

The Thunder (6-2) entered the night tied for the NBA's best record, but their offense was inconsistent against the Raptors.

**Rockets 101, Spurs 99:** James Harden had 24 points, 15 assists and 12 rebounds as Houston held off San Antonio to hand the Spurs their third straight home loss.

**Warriors 116, Mavericks**

**95:** Klay Thompson hit his first seven shots and scored 18 of his 20 points in the first quarter as host Golden State cruised past undermanned Dallas.

**Clippers 111, Trail Blazers 80:** Blake Griffin had 22 points and 13 rebounds and Chris Paul added 19 points as host Los Angeles rolled past Portland to improve to an NBA-best 7-1.

**Pacers 122, 76ers 115 (OT):** Paul George scored seven of his team's 13 points in overtime as host Indiana beat winless Philadelphia.

**Knicks 110, Nets 96:** Carmelo Anthony scored 14 of his 22 points in the third quarter and Kristaps Porzingis added 21 in host New York's victory over Brooklyn.

**Suns 107, Pistons 100:** Eric Bledsoe scored 14 of his

21 points in the fourth quarter, helping host Phoenix rally past Detroit.

**Wizards 118, Celtics 93:** Otto Porter scored a career-high 34 points as host Washington beat Boston for its second victory of the season.

**Hawks 115, Bulls 107:** Thabo Sefolosha scored 20 points, Dwight Howard added 18 and host Atlanta beat Chicago for its third consecutive victory.

**Timberwolves 123, Magic 107:** Zach LaVine scored 37 points and Andrew Wiggins added 29 as Minnesota beat Orlando for its first road victory of the season.

**Hornets 104, Jazz 98:** Kemba Walker scored 21 points to help host Charlotte beat Utah for its fourth straight victory.