

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Debt-ceiling delay could threaten DOD pay

BY TRAVIS J. TRITTEN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Defense Department paychecks are again hanging in the balance of Capitol Hill politics.

This time, lawmakers have until November to raise the federal debt ceiling, allowing the government to continue paying its bills, or money will begin drying up for active-duty, civilian, contractor and retirement pay, as well as for other federal obligations.

The Treasury Department has said it will run out of borrowing power Nov. 3 unless Congress moves to lift the debt ceiling. With no increase, the federal government will essentially be living paycheck to paycheck, paying obligations as revenue comes in. It will be

forced into tough spending decisions, including whether to pay about \$3 billion toward the military and its retirement system.

“You still have some money coming in but not enough. They would have to prioritize what they would pay,” said Steve Strobridge, director of government relations at the Military Officers Association of America.

In all, Treasury could find itself \$68 billion short of what it needs to pay all its bills during November, and about 31 percent of its obligations would go unpaid without an increase in the debt ceiling from Congress, according to an analysis by Bipartisan Policy Center, a Washington think tank.

With just two weeks to go, Congress has yet to float a solution. “If you look at history, they (lawmakers) have never

defaulted before. But if you look at the present, we’ve never had this situation before,” Strobridge said.

Uncertainty has deepened in the House as a Republican majority struggles with a leadership crisis after Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, announced he will resign. Boehner was ousted by the fiscal conservatives in his party who support reining in spending — and prefer a more confrontational approach with Democrats.

The Senate also is locked in a fight that has paralyzed the defense budget and other spending. Conservatives led by Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, have vowed to oppose any spending measure that does not cut funds to Planned Parenthood, while Democrats have blocked budget bills because they want caps

lifted on domestic spending. The intransigence will complicate any deal on the debt ceiling.

“You’ve got the potential for a serious train wreck,” Strobridge said.

The White House has called for Congress to come together and lift the limit. “There’s no reason for us to engage in that kind of irresponsible brinksmanship, and it’s why Republican leaders in Congress need to accept the responsibility that they have to act without drama and delay to raise the debt limit,” White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Thursday.

While a default would damage the wider U.S. economy, it is also the most recent in a series of fiscal crises in Washington to test the nerves of the military community.

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## Ford problems spur questions about future supercarriers

*Daily Press (Newport News, Va.)*

Questions are being raised in Washington about the future of aircraft carriers as more problems with the USS Gerald R. Ford carrier program are reported.

Last week, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee repeated his call that the U.S. should pursue smaller, cheaper aircraft carriers if the Navy can’t control costs on the Ford program.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., also talked about bringing new competition into the market. His 18-page report, devoted solely to the Ford, was titled “America’s Most Wasted.”

McCain also has directed the Navy to study whether something other than a nuclear-powered supercarrier should be a key part of the Navy’s future.

The cost overruns and delays

that have dogged the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford were entirely predictable, the result of unrealistic assumptions that are “by no means unique” in the Defense Department, a government watchdog official told Congress on Thursday.

One analyst said executives at Huntington Ingalls Industries, whose shipyard in Newport News, Va., is the sole U.S. manufacturer of the nuclear-powered behemoths, shouldn’t lose a lot of sleep.

Loren Thompson, CEO of the Lexington Institute, said the Navy has examined that question before. Each time, it has settled on nuclear-powered aircraft carriers as the ship that gives the biggest bang for the buck. McCain’s ire over the Ford is part of a larger concern about reforming Pentagon purchasing practices, he said.

“This study presents no threat to Newport News Shipbuilding,” he said, “because it will just discover what other previous studies have found.”

The first-in-class Ford will end up costing taxpayers about \$12.9 billion, about 22 percent over initial estimates. The Navy plans to take delivery of the Ford next year, although questions persist about all the new technology incorporated on one ship.

Thompson said smaller, cheaper ships come with their own problems. A smaller ship carries fewer aircraft, both in sheer numbers and variety. And the Navy would need more of them.

“Although money might be saved, it would be penny-wise and pound foolish,” he said.

Bryan McGrath is the deputy director of the Center for Amer-

ican Seapower at the Hudson Institute. He co-authored a 108-page report released two weeks ago that examines the role of aircraft carriers in future conflicts. The study devoted a short section to alternative carrier designs.

He agreed with Thompson that any cost savings come with a decline in capability.

“The performance declines — sorties, ordnance storage, fuel capacity for the air wing — from a smaller, conventionally powered carrier are dramatic,” he said.

The Hudson Institute study cited a late-1990s Navy analysis that said a smaller nuclear-powered aircraft carrier would cost 87 percent to 92 percent of a Ford-class ship, but with a 50 percent drop in sortie rate.

To put it another way, “size matters,” McGrath said.

# Navy ship welcomed to new homeport in Japan

BY ERIK SLAVIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy welcomed the upgraded destroyer USS Benfold to its new homeport Monday, bolstering the Asia-Pacific fleet amid calls for the United States to assert its freedom of navigation rights in the region.

Although the ship was built in the 1990s, its Baseline 9 Aegis ballistic missile defense system and other improvements make it among the most advanced ships in the Navy, sailors said Monday.

The Benfold's capabilities ensure it will patrol in some of the region's more sensitive waters. Should North Korea ever launch long-range missiles at the U.S. or its allies, ships like the Benfold will be counted on to shoot down those threats.

"We look forward to getting Benfold into the fold ... either in the South China Sea, the East China Sea or the Korean theater of operations," Capt. Christopher Sweeney, commodore of Destroyer Squadron 15, told reporters Monday.

Each of those areas has emerged as a flashpoint in recent years. China maintains a

claim on 90 percent of the South China Sea, including islands claimed by several other nations, and waters that the U.S. and many other countries consider to be part of the global commons.

Although Chinese officials have warned the U.S. about transiting close to some of those islands — a few of which have been artificially enlarged — the U.S. has maintained its right to do so under international law.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said while speaking to reporters in Tokyo on Thursday that the service's routine operation in the

area "should not be a surprise to anybody."

The East China Sea has seen China and Japan repeatedly scramble their jet fighters over the Japan-administered Senkaku Islands, which China also claims. In 2013, China declared an Air Defense Identification Zone over East China Sea airspace, which the U.S. military does not recognize.

Benfold becomes the eighth destroyer and 13th ship based at Yokosuka. The ship left its former home in San Diego on Oct. 2.

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## Lawmaker wants VA officials subpoenaed

BY HEATH DRUZIN  
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WASHINGTON — The chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs is threatening to subpoena VA senior executives at the center of a damning investigation into a questionable hiring scheme if they refuse to appear at a hearing Wednesday.

Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla., requested their attendance Oct. 1, in the wake of a VA Inspector General's report that found two regional directors manipulated the agency's hiring system for financial gain and included evi-

dence that former Undersecretary for Benefits Allison Hickey was involved. Hickey resigned Friday, and Miller is now requesting that her subordinate, Principal Deputy Undersecretary for Benefits Danny Pummill, testify in her place, along with the two directors.

"The allegations in the IG's report underscore the immediate need to change the culture at VA, and I will not allow bureaucratic foot dragging to interfere with Congress' role in this process," Miller said Friday in a statement. "The employees

referenced in this report — all of whom enjoy generous, taxpayer-funded salaries — owe the American people an explanation for their actions."

But in a letter obtained by Stars and Stripes, VA Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson told Miller that making those officials appear before the committee could violate their constitutional right against self-incrimination, since there is an ongoing Department of Justice review of potential criminal actions uncovered by the report.

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## More damage at hospital in Afghanistan

BY TARA COPP  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — U.S. forces investigating the deadly airstrikes at the Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz rammed the gate in an Afghan vehicle last week, further damaging the facility, the Pentagon said Monday.

The destruction of the gate has further incensed Doctors Without Borders after the hospital was attacked by a U.S. AC-130 gunship in the early hours of Oct. 3, killing at least 22 people and wounding many more. The main building was destroyed and the hospital has been shut down.

Last week, Doctors Without Borders, also known by its French name, Médecins Sans Frontières, released a statement following the gate break-in, calling it an unannounced and forced entry that "potentially destroyed evidence." MSF also renewed its calls for an independent investigation of the Oct. 3 attack.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.  
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## Large NATO exercise gets underway in Italy

*Stars and Stripes*

The U.S.-led NATO alliance kicked off its largest exercise in more than a decade Monday with thousands of troops fanning out across southern Europe, where allied rapid-response capabilities will be put to the test.

The exercise will demonstrate "that NATO is ready and able to defend any ally against any threat in any form," NATO Deputy Secretary-General Al-

exander Vershbow said at an opening ceremony for Trident Juncture held at Trapani Air Base in Italy. "It will demonstrate our ability to move quickly and decisively beyond our borders to protect our partners and our interests."

The exercise, which involves 36,000 troops from more than 30 countries, comes as NATO attempts to transform itself into a more nimble fighting force.

Since Russia's intervention in Ukraine last year, NATO

officials have declared that the alliance must adapt to a changed security environment in Europe. During the past year, NATO has worked to heighten its state of readiness by doubling the size of its crisis-response force, set to grow to 40,000 troops. In addition, a new spearhead force, known as the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, has been established as a rapid-reaction unit capable of mobilizing in 48 hours.



# Mets top Arrieta, Cubs for series lead

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Say this for Daniel Murphy and the New York Mets: They have their October formula down and are sticking with it.

Murphy homered off yet another ace to provide an early cushion for Noah Syndergaard, and the Mets breezed past Jake Arrieta and the Chicago Cubs 4-1 Sunday night for a 2-0 lead in a surprisingly one-sided NL Championship Series.

Power, pitching, plus some dazzling defense — just like the Amazin' Mets of 1969.

"We've beaten some of the best the game has to offer," Mets captain David Wright said.

Baseball's most dominant pitcher since the All-Star break, Arrieta had not even settled in when Murphy homered for the fourth straight game, a two-run drive just inside the right-field pole in a three-run first inning.

"We're having a whole bunch of fun right now," said Murphy, who homered in the first inning for the second straight game and seems to have a reserved star-of-the-game seat in the interview room.

Given the quick lead on a chilly night, Syndergaard kept the bats of Chicago's young sluggers on ice with shutout ball into the sixth.

Curtis Granderson robbed Chris Coghlan of a likely home run with a leaping grab at the center-field wall, swiped a pair of bases and scored two runs for the Mets.

After beating Clayton Kershaw, Zack Greinke, Jon Lester and Arrieta, the Mets are two wins from reaching their first

World Series since 2000.

New York starts NL Rookie of the Year Jacob deGrom on Tuesday night at Wrigley Field. Rookie left-hander Steven Matz is set for Game 4, followed by Game 1 winner Matt Harvey on Thursday, if needed.

"They don't have the credentials that Kershaw and Greinke and Lester and Arrieta have, but they're going to be good pitchers," Mets manager Terry Collins said. "We think we can stack up with anybody."

Chicago goes with Kyle Hendricks in Game 3. If the long-downtrodden Cubs are to reach the World Series for the first time since 1945, they must first force the best-of-seven NLCS back to Citi Field next weekend.

"We're all about one-game winning streaks," Chicago manager Joe Maddon said. "I know it's psychobabble 101, but it actually works."

After homering off Kershaw, Greinke and Lester, Murphy added his fifth home run of the postseason, giving him eight RBIs in seven games. He's one from matching Carlos Beltran's record of homering in five straight postseason games.

"He's about as locked in as I've seen a hitter," Wright said.

Long, blond locks flowing out the back of his cap, Syndergaard seems to be taking on a bit of Harvey's cockiness. He gained the nickname Thor — the Norse god known for fierce storms — after he tweeted a photo of himself in costume doing squats on Halloween two years ago.

Ahead of his start against the Cubs, Syndergaard changed the photo atop his

Twitter page to a shot featuring lightning striking Chicago's famous Willis Tower.

Having made the first relief appearance of his big league career in Game 5 against the Dodgers, Syndergaard came out throwing darts at up to 99 mph until the sixth, when Dexter Fowler singled and scored on Kris Bryant's two-out double off the left-field wall.

"It makes pitching a lot more easy when you go out there and offense puts a three-spot on one of the best pitchers in the game right now," Syndergaard said.

Jon Niese came in and struck out Anthony Rizzo. Chicago didn't advance another runner past first.

Syndergaard allowed three hits, struck out nine and walked one. Jeury's Familia's fourth postseason save finished a five-pitcher five-hitter and sent the Cubs to consecutive losses for the first time since they dropped three in a row from Sept. 23-26. Arrieta had not lost since July 25.

It was 45 degrees at game time with an 18 mph northwest wind. Some players wore balaclavas that covered their faces, including Mets outfielder Yoenis Cespedes, who played on his 30th birthday.

Arrieta, who wore short sleeves, had not given up a first-inning run in 25 consecutive starts since May 29. With his velocity down slightly, he found himself trailing after nine pitches and down 3-0 after 13.

Granderson singled through the shift into right field for his ninth hit in 22 postseason at-bats. Wright, in a 1-for-19 playoff slide, drove a fastball on a hop off the center-field wall with Granderson running.

Murphy hit an 0-1 pitch about 10 feet to

the foul side of the right-field pole, then reached down for a shin-high curveball and with a one-handed swing sent it just inside the pole. Murphy raised his right fist in triumph while rounding first base and took a curtain call after a prolonged ovation.

"The ambush early got us," Maddon said.

Granderson made his dashing defensive play in the second, leaping to get his glove to the top of the 8-foot wall just to the right of straightaway center.

"I was able to time it up, reel it in," Granderson said.

He walked leading off the third and stole second as Wright struck out. After Murphy was walked, Granderson swiped third, too — at Murphy's suggestion. He came home when Cespedes grounded to the shortstop hole for an infield single.

"Two tough games here, but the series is not over," Arrieta said. "We feel good where we're at."

**Up next: Cubs:** Hendricks (8-7) did not get a decision in the Division Series against St. Louis, allowing three runs and four hits in 4 2/3 innings with seven strikeouts and no walks.

**Mets:** DeGrom (14-8) got the wins in Games 1 and 5 against the Dodgers. He is 0-2 in three career starts against the Cubs.

**Dress code:** The Mets stayed with their alternate blue jerseys after winning in them in Game 3 of the Division Series and the NLCS opener. New York lost in its traditional pinstripes in Game 4 against the Dodgers.

# Logano spins out Kenseth late for victory

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — Joey Logano could have backed off. He could have let Matt Kenseth drive away. He could have prevented all kinds of controversy by deciding that second place was good enough.

Instead, he decided to go for first.

Logano got under Kenseth entering Turn 1 with five laps remaining in Sunday's Sprint Cup race at Kansas Speedway, sending him spinning across the track. Logano ultimately drove away for his second straight win in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship, while Kenseth was left in a win-or-lose situation heading into next weekend's race at Talladega.

"That's good, hard racing," said Logano, who was already assured of a spot in the next round of the Chase thanks to his win last week at Charlotte. "We were racing each other really hard. I felt like I got fenced twice. He raced me hard so I raced him back."

Kenseth had every reason to race hard. He had a difficult run at Charlotte, leaving him in a dire situation in trying to make it to the final eight in the "eliminator" round of the playoffs.

"I'm really disappointed," Kenseth said.

"I was running the lane he wanted to run in, but my goodness, isn't this racing? Strategically, I think it wasn't the smartest move on his part. He'll probably sleep good tonight. I hope he enjoys that one. It's not what I would have done."

Kenseth wound up leading a race-high 153 laps, but his wild ride with a handful to go dropped him to 14th in the race and, more importantly, last among the 12 drivers in the title race.

"I don't like to see that any more than anybody else," said Roger Penske, who owns Logano's team. "It's one of those racing accidents. It's real tough when it's in this kind of a situation, but there was no question Kenseth was doing everything he could to keep Joey from going by."

So, Logano did everything he could to get by.

"I saw two guys racing their butts off," said his crew chief, Todd Gordon. "Joey had a couple runs at Matt and Matt blocked both of them and unfortunately got us in the wall."

Already eliminated from contention, Jimmie Johnson had a strong car all day and wound up behind Denny Hamlin in third. Kasey Kahne was fourth, followed

by Chase drivers Kyle Busch and Kurt Busch. Ryan Blaney was seventh as the youngster continues to improve, followed by more title contenders in Carl Edwards, pole sitter Brad Keselowski, Jeff Gordon and Ryan Newman.

Hamlin's second-place finish allowed him to climb to second in the standings, giving him the best chance of everybody outside of Logano of moving onto the next round.

"It was a very good day," he said. "I wanted to be seventh or better entering this weekend, and obviously second was a good run for us. Some of the guys in front of us had some troubles."

Plenty of guys behind him, too.

When the field pitted under green with 53 laps remaining, Martin Truex Jr. had a tire roll away and served a pass-through penalty, while Kevin Harvick drove off with his fuel can and had to serve a stop-and-go penalty. Both lost a lap and precious points in the title race.

Truex got his lap back and finished 15th. Harvick came across in 16th.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. had a wheel go loose during a long run and pitted under green. That dropped him off the lead lap, too,

and Earnhardt wound up two laps down and in 21st place.

"There's no place I would rather go next week," said Earnhardt, one of the best restrictor-plate drivers in the series, and the winner at Talladega in the spring.

The wild finish at Kansas led to a massive shake-up in the Chase standings, with Logano the only driver who can head to Talladega without feeling any pressure.

Hamlin, Kurt Busch and Edwards have a bit of a cushion, but everyone else is hanging in the balance. Truex currently holds down the eighth and final spot in the next round, but he's just six points ahead of Kyle Busch. Ryan Newman is only eight points back.

Then there's Kenseth, now 35 points out of the final spot. If he wasn't facing a must-win Sunday, his late-race spin from Logano left him facing exactly that next weekend.

"I thought we did an excellent job this weekend of controlling the things we could control," Kenseth said. "We did everything as a team to win the race, just couldn't get away enough to keep him from pulling that move on me there at the end."



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# Patriots win after Colts' flub

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Colts coach Chuck Pagano stayed aggressive. Bill Belichick just wanted the Patriots to stay composed.

It was no contest — again.

This time, Indianapolis' unusual-looking punt formation fooled nobody and the ill-advised play backfired. The botched fake punt gave Tom Brady the ball back at the Colts 35-yard line late in the third quarter, and six plays later he threw an 11-yard touchdown pass to LeGarrette Blount to seal a 34-27 victory.

"It turned out to be one of the worst failed fakes probably of all time," Indianapolis punter Pat McAfee said.

Actually, the play was put in during practice last season and pulled out of the playbook at exactly the wrong time — with New England clinging to a 27-21 lead.

The Colts (3-3) shifted most of their players near the right sideline. Pagano was hoping to draw the Patriots into a mistake. Instead, receiver Griff Whalen inexplicably snapped the ball to safety Colt Anderson, who was immediately tackled for a 1-yard loss.

"I saw the formation, and I wasn't sure what was going on," Patriots defensive end Chandler Jones said. "It was great awareness by our team."

The bizarre play overshadowed everything else in one of this season's most hyped games — the rematch of January's AFC championship game, which spawned the "Deflategate" controversy.

Tom Brady was his usually brilliant self, going 23 of 37 with 312 yards, three touchdowns and his first interception of the season as the Patriots improved to 5-0 for the first time since they're 16-0 season in 2007.

Andrew Luck returned from an injured right shoulder after missing the previous two games and played his best game of the year. He was 30 of 50 for 312 yards and three touchdowns.

Pagano's risky play calls did pay some dividends.

His first fourth-down gamble, on the game's opening series, resulted in a 5-yard TD pass from Luck to Donte Moncrief. His second, an onside kick after Indy took a 14-10 lead, nearly worked but the refs ruled New England recovered the ball, a play that was upheld on a coach's challenge.

But after Brady's 25-yard TD pass to Rob Gronkowski gave New England a 27-21 lead early in the third quarter, the fake punt proved costly.

"We expected this to be a gadget game," Belichick said. "Their punter ran a sweep against Tennessee a couple weeks ago, so that's something they've done in the past."

**Bengals 34, Bills 21:** Andy Dalton threw three touchdown passes as Cincinnati beat host Buffalo to improve to 6-0 and match the best start in franchise history.

With star receiver A.J. Green covered much of the game, Dalton completed touchdown passes to Marvin Jones, Tyler Eifert and Jeremy Hill. Dalton finished 22 of 33 for 243 yards for Cincinnati, which was also 6-0 to start the 1975 and '88 seasons.

The Bengals broke the game open by scoring 17 points on their first three second-half possessions to build a 34-14 lead.

The Bills (3-3) were undone by injuries and several penalties.

**Packers 27, Chargers 20:** Green Bay stopped San Diego on fourth-and-goal from the 3 with 15 seconds left and overcame a career day by Philip Rivers to hold off the visiting Chargers.

Rivers set career highs with 43 comple-

tions, 65 attempts and 503 yards passing. He threw for two touchdowns for the Chargers (2-4). But he needed one more completion.

Rookie cornerback Damarious Randall lunged to poke away Rivers' short pass to Danny Woodhead near the front right pylon in the final seconds.

Green Bay (6-0) survived its biggest scare of the year to stay unbeaten.

Running back James Starks had touchdowns on a 65-yard run and a 5-yard pass in the first quarter.

**Lions 37, Bears 34 (OT):** A win, finally. Matt Prater kicked a 27-yard field goal with 2:29 left in overtime, and host Detroit won for the first time this season.

Matthew Stafford heaved a 57-yard pass to Calvin Johnson to set up the kick for the Lions (1-5). Johnson finished with six receptions for 166 yards.

The Bears (2-4) had chances for a third straight comeback win.

Chicago's Robbie Gould kicked a 29-yard field goal as time expired in regulation. The tying score was set up by Darius Slay getting called for interference after Jay Cutler's 25- and 24-yard passes to Alshon Jeffery.

**Panthers 27, Seahawks 23:** Cam Newton threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Greg Olsen with 32 seconds left as Carolina remained unbeaten, rallying for a stunning win over host Seattle.

Newton led the Panthers (5-0) to touchdowns on their final two possessions after trailing 23-14, the second straight week the Seahawks collapsed in the fourth quarter. Newton found Olsen wide open down the seam as All-Pro Earl Thomas and Richard Sherman looked at each other in confusion.

Newton was 12 of 15 for 162 yards in the fourth quarter and threw for 269 yards overall. He led the Panthers on a pair of 80-yard touchdown drives in the final period as the Panthers improved to 5-0 for the second time in franchise history.

It was the second straight week the Seahawks (2-4) suffered a late defensive meltdown.

**Jets 34, Redskins 20:** Ryan Fitzpatrick threw two touchdown passes and ran for another score as the host Jets overcame a sloppy first half.

Chris Ivory ran for 146 yards and a TD on 20 carries for the Jets, who improved to 4-1 for the first time since 2010. Brandon Marshall had seven catches for 111 yards, and Eric Decker also caught a TD. The Redskins are 2-4.

**Steelers 25, Cardinals 13:** Landry Jones threw two touchdown passes to Martavis Bryant in relief of Michael Vick as host Pittsburgh rallied for the win.

Vick left in the third quarter with a hamstring injury and Pittsburgh's offense took off when Jones took over. Jones hit Bryant for an 8-yard score to give the Steelers (4-2) the lead. The two hooked up later for an 88-yard strike.

Jones completed 8 of 12 passes for 168 yards and the two scores. Bryant caught six passes for 137 yards in his first action of the season.

Carson Palmer threw for 421 yards with a TD and two interceptions. John Brown caught 10 balls for 196 yards for the Cardinals (4-2).

**Vikings 16, Chiefs 10:** Despite an erratic performance by Terry Bridgewater, host Minnesota's tough defense and rookie wide receiver Stefon Diggs came through over mistake-prone Kansas City.

Alex Smith's 42-yard touchdown pass to Albert Wilson midway through the fourth quarter pulled the Chiefs within three points, but the Vikings (3-2) played well enough early to survive their ragged finish.

The Chiefs (1-5) had eight penalties for 95 yards.

Diggs had 129 yards on seven catches. Bridgewater threw two interceptions. Adrian Peterson, who was on the sideline late in the game with the Vikings trying to put it away, finished with 60 yards on 26 carries.

**49ers 25, Ravens 20:** Colin Kaepernick completed a 76-yard touchdown pass to ex-Ravens star Torrey Smith, and Joe Flacco threw two interceptions as host San Francisco beat Baltimore to end a four-game losing streak.

Phil Dawson kicked four field goals in the first win since Week 1 for San Francisco (2-4), while Anquan Boldin — a Super Bowl star for the Ravens against the Niners — made a 51-yard reception late that set up Quinton Patton's 21-yard TD catch.

Flacco's desperation pass to the end zone on the final play went incomplete.

The rematch of the Super Bowl three seasons ago featured a pair of last-place teams trying to turn around their seasons, and it showed in some sloppy play.

Steve Smith caught a 34-yard TD pass from Flacco in the third, but the Ravens (1-5) are reeling through the worst start in franchise history. Tough weekend for the Harbaugh brothers after Baltimore coach John Harbaugh's brother Jim's Michigan team lost Saturday to Michigan State on a botched punt.

**Dolphins 38, Titans 10:** Cameron Wake got his first four sacks this season and also forced two fumbles — all in the first half — as visiting Miami won in Dan Campbell's debut as interim coach.

The Dolphins (2-3) came in having lost three straight, costing coach Joe Philbin his job Oct. 5.

Miami finished with six sacks and two interceptions against Marcus Mariota. The rookie quarterback needed a knee brace and was replaced by Zach Mettenberger after the 2-minute warning.

The Titans (1-4) lost their fourth straight.

**Texans 31, Jaguars 20:** Brian Hoyer threw three touchdown passes on third down, two to DeAndre Hopkins, for visiting Houston.

The Jaguars (1-5) lost their fourth in a row and raised more questions about coach Gus Bradley's job security.

The Texans (2-4) started emptying the stadium midway through the fourth after Andre Hal returned an interception 41 yards for a touchdown and a 31-14 lead. It was the sixth pick-six thrown by Blake Bortles in 19 career starts.

**Broncos 26, Browns 23 (OT):** Peyton Manning made all the plays when it mattered most. He shook off three interceptions and drove Denver in range for Brandon McManus' 34-yard field goal with 4:56 left in overtime, giving the unbeaten Broncos a win.

Manning took the Broncos from their 12 to the Cleveland 16 before McManus kicked his game-winner to make Denver 6-0 for the seventh time in franchise history. The Broncos only rallied thanks to their top-ranked defense, which came up huge in overtime.

After Manning's third pick, Denver recorded a tackle behind the line of scrimmage and then made two consecutive sacks of Josh McCown to push the Browns (2-4) out of field-goal range.

Given another chance, Manning took over. He completed 4 of 4 passes for 39 yards on the last drive. Manning, who has thrown seven touchdown passes and 10 interceptions this season, finished 26 of 48 for 290 yards and the one TD, a 75-yarder to Emmanuel Sanders.

McCown, who passed for a franchise-record 457 yards last week, went 20-for-39 for 213 yards with two TDs to Gary Barnidge and two interceptions, including one with 44 seconds left in regulation.

# Stempniak saves NY

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Seconds after Lee Stempniak scored against the New York Rangers in overtime, the New Jersey Devils stormed off the bench, staked across the ice and mobbed the veteran on the far boards.

It was a celebration worthy of an overtime playoff victory.

For the Devils though, it was simply a first win under new coach John Hynes and they really needed it.

Stempniak finished off a 2-on-1 break with Adam Henrique at 3:07 of overtime and the Devils ended some recent frustrations against the Rangers with a 2-1 decision Sunday.

"It feels great," said Hynes, who lost his first four games, the last in a shootout Friday night. "I am really just happy for the team."

Stempniak, who made the roster after coming to camp on a tryout basis, also got the satisfaction of beating the Rangers, who had sent him to Winnipeg in a trade deadline deal.

"It feels good to beat them, always, but more important, it's a huge win for us as group," said Stempniak, who snapped his winner over the pad of Henrik Lundqvist in ending the 3-on-3 overtime. "Instead of going down 0-5, to get win, pick up a point last game, we're turning in the right direction."

Derek Stepan, who scored for the Rangers in the opening minutes, had hit the crossbar just before New Jersey won for the first time in five games.

"It feels great," said Devils goalie Cory Schneider, who had 26 saves. "Maybe that celebration was a little too much for the fifth game of the year, but you could just tell, everyone, some frustration and anger came out there. It was exciting. It felt really good, but it just one game."

The loss was the third straight for the Rangers, who opened the season with three wins.

"I think we need to be concerned," Rangers defenseman Dan Girardi said. "We're not pressing any panic button by any means but it needs to be addressed right now."

The overtime was wild. Devils defenseman Andy Greene reached behind goaltender Cory Schneider in the opening 23 seconds and pulled Rick Nash's shot off the goal line before it went across.

"I felt like the game was right there for us," said Lundqvist, who had 22 saves. "We had some opportunities late in the game but couldn't cash in."

**Blues 4, Jets 2:** Vladimir Tarasenko scored twice and Brian Elliott made 26 saves in St. Louis' victory over host Winnipeg.

Scottie Upshall and Carl Gunnarsson also scored for St. Louis.

**Kings 2, Avalanche 1:** Tyler Toffoli scored on a breakaway late in the second period to help Los Angeles beat visiting Colorado.

Marian Gaborik also scored, and Jonathan Quick made 21 saves.

**Ducks 4, Wild 1:** Anton Khudobin rebounded from a rough outing with 34 saves, and Cam Fowler, Rickard Rakell, and Mike Santorelli scored in host Anaheim's victory over Minnesota.

**Oilers 2, Canucks 1 (OT):** Lauri Korpikoski scored on a breakaway at 1:46 of overtime lift Edmonton past host Vancouver.

Anders Nilsson stopped 33 shots to help Edmonton win for the second straight night.