

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Russian airliner crashes in Sinai

*The Associated Press*

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt — A Russian aircraft carrying 224 people crashed Saturday in the Sinai Peninsula about 20 minutes after taking off from a Red Sea resort, the Egyptian government said. There were no survivors.

Adel Mahgoub, chairman of the state company that runs Egypt's civilian airports, said everyone on board was Russian except for three Ukrainian passengers. The 217 passengers consisted of 138 women, 62 men and 17 children. There were seven crewmembers aboard.

A senior aviation official said the pilot radioed that the aircraft was experiencing technical problems shortly before air

traffic controllers lost contact with the plane.

Most of the bodies recovered so far from the crash site were burned, said Egyptian military and security officials.

A civil aviation ministry statement said the plane's wreckage was found in the Hassana area about 45 miles south of the city of el-Arish. It's the general area in northern Sinai where Egyptian security forces have battled a burgeoning Islamic militant insurgency now led by an affiliate of the Islamic State group.

The plane took off from Sharm el-Sheikh shortly before 6 a.m. for St. Petersburg in Russia and disappeared from radar screens 23 minutes after takeoff.

Friends and relatives of the victims were gathering at a hotel near St. Petersburg's Pulkovo airport. Psychologists were meeting with them.

Yulia Zaitseva said her friends, newlywed couple Elena Rodina and Alexqander Krotov, both 33, were on the flight.

The Egyptian officials said the aircraft was cruising at 36,000 feet when contact with air traffic controllers was lost.

Although details of what caused the crash were unclear and the pilot reported technical difficulties, the Islamic State group sought to claim responsibility for bringing the plane down. They offered no evidence at all and are not known to have the capability to do so.

## Dems decry decision to send troops to Syria

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Congressional Democrats on Friday criticized President Barack Obama's decision to dispatch a small band of U.S. special operations forces to northern Syria, saying they feared "mission creep" from a president who promised to end American involvement in two wars.

Democrats complained the move was being made without a clear U.S. strategy. They also said the move makes it essential that Congress debate and vote on a new authorization for the use of military force.

Sen. Tim Kaine, a Democrat, said that, about 15 months ago Obama announced two narrowly focused operations to protect American personnel in Irbil in northern Iraq and a humanitarian effort to save thousands of Iraqi civilians trapped by the Islamic State group on Mount Sinjar. Since then, the number of U.S. troops in Iraq has risen to an estimated 3,400.

"It is time for Congress to do its most solemn job — to debate and declare war," Kaine said. "It is also time for the administration to detail to the American people a comprehensive strategy to bring both the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, which are metastasizing around the globe, to a peaceful end."

Rep. Mac Thornberry, Republican chairman of the House Armed Service Committee, said a more intensive effort is overdue, but the small deployment might prove to be too little, too late. "I do not see a strategy for success, rather it seems the administration is trying to avoid a disaster while the president runs out the clock" on his presidency, he said.

## Large al-Qaida training site hit

*The Washington Post*

KABUL, Afghanistan — A multi-day operation in southern Afghanistan this month that involved 200 Special Operations forces and scores of American airstrikes targeted what was "probably the largest" al-Qaida training camp found in the 14-year Afghan War, the senior U.S. commander in Afghanistan said Friday.

Army Gen. John F. Campbell, the four-star officer in charge of the U.S. war effort, said the camp was used by AQIS, an acronym for al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent.

The operation, announced by the U.S. military on Oct. 11, hit a training area that sprawled over 30 square miles and a small camp, U.S. military officials said. U.S. and Afghan troops were involved in the ground assault, and 63 airstrikes provided cover. Some 160 al-Qaida fighters were reportedly killed.

The training camps were in Kandahar province's Shorabak district, and the facilities are believed to have been in existence for as long as one year.

That raised questions about the effectiveness of the U.S. military effort to find and strike the militants 14 years after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks prompted the United States to topple the Taliban and begin hunting al-Qaida.

Campbell, speaking in an interview in his office, said the existence of the camps in Kandahar province was discovered after a raid this summer on an al-Qaida facility in the Barmal district of eastern Afghanistan's Paktika province.

"We looked at it for a while to make sure we reduced the risk to the forces that go in on a target like that," Campbell said of the operation. "It was a very complex target set over several days."

Campbell said it was initially surprising to find the camps in the south, "but I think as we step back now and really analyze it, it shouldn't" be. Militant groups continue to evolve, he said, especially as Pakistan launches operations on its side of the border to root out insurgent fighters, and the Islamic State group competes with al-Qaida for global influence.

The training camps were hit just days before President Barack Obama announced on Oct. 15 that he will be keeping 9,800 troops in Afghanistan through most of 2016 and 5,500 into 2017, rather than reducing the force to about 1,000 service members by the end of 2016. He did so after a months-long review and a bloody year in which insurgents successfully, albeit temporarily, took control of cities such as Kunduz in the north and Musa Qala in Helmand province.

## Storms, strong winds lash parts of Texas

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — Another round of storms and strong winds was moving east across Texas on Saturday, and two people were missing from earlier flash floods in the Austin area.

In the Houston area, an official said a tornado has been reported in southern Harris County, and officials were checking on any possible damage there.

Francisco Sanchez of the Harris County Office of Emergency Management said 4 to 7 inches of rain has fallen since Friday night and more was expected. He said many locations had high water and more than two dozen water rescues had taken place.

About 32,000 customers were without power, CenterPoint Energy said.

Two people already were known to have died — in Austin and near San Antonio — when they were swept away by flood-

waters. A man and a woman also were still unaccounted for in separate incidents.

The storms and suspected tornadoes have socked an already-sodden swath of Texas that was still drying out from the remnants of Hurricane Patricia, forcing evacuations of flood-prone areas and slowing or shutting down traffic on long stretches of Interstate 35.

Teams from the National Weather Service were to examine three areas Saturday where tornadoes were thought to have wreaked havoc on Friday.

More than 16 inches of rain soaked one neighborhood and Austin Bergstrom International Airport suspended all flights after a half-foot of water flooded the air traffic control tower. A lazy creek cutting through Texas wine country swelled into a rushing torrent, sending eight members of a vacationing church group scrambling to a second floor before they were rescued by the National Guard.

## Man charged with arson in St. Louis-area church fires

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Authorities charged a black St. Louis man with arson for two of the seven church fires in a predominantly African-American part of the St. Louis region, and federal investigators said there is no evidence of a hate crime.

David Lopez Jackson, 35, was charged Friday in St. Louis Circuit Court with two counts of second-degree arson in the fires at Ebenezer Lutheran Church and New Life Missionary Baptist Church, both in the city. St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson said investigations continue into the other fires — three in St. Louis, two in nearby Jennings — and Jackson is a suspect in all of them.

The fires were set between Oct. 8 and Oct. 22. Five of the congregations are predominantly black, one is racially mixed and one is mostly white.

The fires spurred a hate-crime investigation to determine if the attacks were motivated by race or religion. But the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives downplayed that possibility in a statement on Friday.

“There appears to be no indication of a hate crime or sign ... any one particular Christian denomination or ethnic group was being targeted,” the federal agency said.

Dotson gave no alternative explanation for the attacks, saying investigators “are still trying to understand” the motive.

## Debate heats up over cuts to cold-weather airborne brigade

BY TARA COPP  
Stars and Stripes

FAIRBANKS, Alaska — The Army’s only extreme-cold-weather airborne brigade is prepared to fight in the Arctic. But first, they must fight for their existence.

The soldiers of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division are drilled in survival skills. They learn not to wear camouflage paint in the cold because it can mask frostbite. They are taught that firing a weapon when it’s 20 to 40 degrees below zero could kick up an icy fog that reveals their position. And as paratroopers, they jump in all white from pairs of C-17s above the Arctic Circle, assemble on the icy mass below and drill.

“We are the only unit that has this extreme-cold-weather capability across the Army,” said Lt. Col. Alan Brown, spokesman for Army Alaska.

But the brigade is slated to be cut under the Army’s plan to trim its force to 450,000 soldiers by 2017, a decision that would eliminate 59 percent of the Army personnel assigned there.

Since 2010, the Army has seen its budget shrink from \$144 billion to a requested \$126 billion for 2016. During the same time, the Army has reduced its force from 566,000 in 2010 to 490,000 in 2015, according to Defense Department figures.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said the cuts reflect “a decision the Army made as part of its overall posture adjustments to accommodate the budget it has and set priorities.”

However, he conceded that given the importance of the Arctic, the Pentagon’s strategy there is under review.

“There is an operational-requirements process under-

way,” Carter said on a plane en route to Alaska, where he was starting an eight-day trip through U.S. Pacific Command.

If the brigade is cut, the military will lose one of its critical Arctic and Pacific rapid-response assets, which has raised questions whether this is the right time to reduce this capability.

“The United States is just now coming to grip with the fact it is an Arctic nation,” said Bill Popp, president of Anchorage’s Economic Development Corporation, a nonprofit that promotes the city’s commerce by attracting businesses. “In terms of icebreakers, shoreside facilities in the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean — we are way behind compared to Russia.”

The brigade isn’t only the sole extreme-cold-weather brigade in the Army, it’s also the Army’s only airborne brigade in U.S. Pacific Command. The unit can reach most places to conduct a forced entry in the Pacific, and some European locations, in nine hours or less.

“Given the current circumstances, Alaska is a strategic location,” Popp said, in light of increased unpredictability by North Korea and rising tension with China.

“It’s the strategic location of being on top of the world,” Brown said. “It allows us to respond more quickly — our flight time is simply that much shorter.”

Anchorage is a city of 301,000 people. Based on the city’s early analysis of the impact, it would lose about 6,100 residents — the troops cut, plus their estimated 3,500 dependents.

The Army is still reviewing the proposed cuts. Under the plan, 2,631 soldiers from the brigade would be cut, leaving a lighter Airborne Task Force of 1,000 troops at the base.



# Mets win 1st of 3 straight in New York, trail Royals 2-1

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Two balls launched over the wall, one fired over an opponent's head and just like that, the New York Mets are right back in this World Series following a 9-3 win against Kansas City on Friday.

David Wright homered and drove in four runs, Curtis Granderson also connected and rookie pitcher Noah Syndergaard set a nasty tone with the first pitch as the Mets won the first of three straight games at their Citi Field home and cut the series deficit to 2-1.

Syndergaard caught everyone's attention with his first delivery to aggressive leadoff hitter Alcides Escobar.

Well aware of Escobar's penchant for attacking the first pitch — he opened Game 1 with an inside-the-park homer — Syndergaard threw a high fastball, and Escobar fell to the ground in his evasive action.

"I feel like it really made a statement to start the game off, that you guys can't dig in and get too aggressive because I'll come in there," said Syndergaard.

"My intent on that pitch was to make them uncomfortable, and I feel like I did just that."

Escobar, having a huge postseason, acknowledged he was caught off guard.

"I didn't like it one bit. He was saying yesterday that he had a plan against my aggressiveness. If that's the plan, that's a stupid plan," Escobar said. "I cannot fathom a pitcher would throw to the head a 98 mph pitch on the first pitch of the game."

Kansas City players spent the next few innings shouting at Syndergaard from the dugout.

"I think the whole team was pretty upset. The first pitch of the game goes whizzing by our leadoff man's head," Mike Moustakas said. "I think all 25 guys in that dugout were pretty fired up."

Shut down at the plate in Kansas City, the Mets broke loose with 12 hits from nine different players as they quickly dismissed Royals starter Yordano Ventura.

Syndergaard recovered from a shaky start and went six innings, giving the Mets the winning performance they didn't get from fellow young starters Matt Harvey and Jacob deGrom at Kauffman Stadium.

"Real big game for us," Collins said. "He delivered. He came through exactly as we expected."

Another rookie, hometown favorite Steven Matz, will try to pull New York even Saturday in Game 4 when he faces former Met Chris Young.

After the Mets fell behind in the top of the first inning, Granderson started the bottom half with a single and Wright hit his first World Series home run, a two-run shot that delighted a packed crowd.

The captain added a two-run single on Kelvin Herrera's first pitch during a four-run sixth inning that broke the game open. Juan Uribe, just back from a chest injury, had an RBI single in his first plate appearance for over a month. Slugger

## Thor rules: Mets rookie lives up to nickname

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Noah Syndergaard needed to do more than give the New York Mets a decent start. He needed to save their season.

And after a couple shaky innings, the 23-year-old rookie delivered.

Thor, indeed.

Syndergaard held off the Kansas City Royals until the Mets' offense got going, and New York cut its World Series deficit to 2-1 with a 9-3 victory Friday night.

While his slightly more seasoned teammates Matt Harvey and Jacob deGrom wore down in the first two games in Kansas City, Syndergaard did the opposite.

Pitching as if the enormity of the World Series was on his flowing golden locks, he was able to adjust against the persistent Royals and found his rhythm.

"I think one thing I learned throughout this entire season was to try not to let the game speed up on you," Syndergaard said. "I feel like a little bit in the first and a little bit in the second I started to feel that, so I stepped off the mound, took a deep breath."

Syndergaard started the game like he believed the hype behind his nickname, the Norse god of thunder, lightning and storms. He created a disturbance with his first pitch, a 97 mph fastball over the head of Alcides Escobar. And Syndergaard kept firing bolts: of 20 first-inning pitches, nine were at 98 mph, five more at 99 mph and one to Ben Zobrist reached 100 mph.

While Syndergaard struck out Escobar, Zobrist doubled on a hop off the center-field wall and scored after an infield hit and Eric Hosmer's sacrifice fly.

"He was probably overamped," Mets manager Terry Collins said. "That's the first time I've ever seen him throw the ball over the catcher's head."

Given a 2-1 lead on David Wright's homer, Syndergaard quickly gave it up in a four-hit second that included Alex Rios' RBI single and a run-scoring passed ball. He got a break when Alex Gordon was called out on video review when he tried to reach third on Rios' single. With a runner on second, Syndergaard got Zobrist to fly to center, starting a streak of 12 consecutive outs.

"He threw a lot of breaking stuff, a lot of change-ups a lot of sliders," Kansas City's Mike Moustakas said. "Kind of pitched backwards, threw his fastball when he needed to."

Turns out a clubhouse conversation with pitching coach Dan Warthen helped Syndergaard find his slider's release point.

"Once we started executing that, we were able to expand with his fastball or expand with his curveball," catcher Travis d'Arnaud said.

Syndergaard allowed three runs and seven hits in six innings with six strikeouts and two walks. While the pesky Royals swung and missed only eight of Harvey's 80 pitches and three of deGrom's 95, they swung past 16 of Syndergaard's 104.

Yoenis Cespedes added a sacrifice fly.

The Mets are trying to rekindle the comeback spirit of 1986, when the Mets rallied from a 0-2 World Series hole to beat Boston for their most recent championship.

The Royals hardly looked intimidated by Syndergaard's first-pitch warning, and scored three runs in the first two innings. Ben Zobrist doubled and scored on a groundout by Eric Hosmer that gave him 16 RBIs in 14 postseason games this year. Alex Rios had an RBI single in the second, and another run scored on a pitch that got away from the catcher.

But the Royals ran themselves out of a chance at a bigger inning when Alex

Gordon was thrown out at third. He was initially called safe but that was reversed following a replay review.

Syndergaard helped himself at the plate. He singled leading off the third ahead of Granderson's second homer of the Series, a line drive off Ventura to the right-field corner.

"He just wasn't sharp," Royals manager Ned Yost said about his starter. "Fastball velocity was down. Made a couple mistakes."

That put the Mets ahead to stay at 4-3, making it the first World Series game with three lead changes in the first three innings, according to STATS.

## Rare meeting of 6-0 teams set for Sunday

Associated Press

DENVER — At some point in every great athlete's career, he or she must deal with the reality that the best days are in the past.

Peyton Manning has reached that point. Aaron Rodgers isn't there yet.

While some view Sunday's game as a rare chance to compare and contrast two great quarterbacks at different points on their career arcs, the quarterbacks themselves prefer to focus on the task at hand: Green Bay vs. Denver, each looking to improve to 7-0.

Neither is blind to the fact, however, that they have always been judged as thoroughly and harshly as anyone when they take the field — with everything from age, to arm strength, to decision-making among the factors being evaluated.

"You've got to continue to play at a high level," said Rodgers, now in his 11th season and, like Manning, still in search of his second Super Bowl ring. "If you're an ascending player, you've got to stay on the rise. If you're near the end, you've got to avoid being a descending player."

Manning, now 39 and in his 18th season, has struggled mightily to avoid looking like a player in decline. For all his difficulties — when asked about his stat line of seven touchdowns and 10 interceptions, he quipped, "That's not breaking news" — his team is still 6-0. With one more victory, Manning will match Brett Favre with the most regular-season wins for a starting quarterback at 186.

It's Denver's top-ranked defense that's been winning games for the Broncos, but while the unit led by Von Miller and DeMarcus Ware hums along, many expect the Denver offense to look a bit different coming out of a bye week. If the Broncos can't run the ball, logic says they should revert to a passing game that more resembles what Manning is comfortable in: shotgun looks, quick reads and quick slants, no more bootlegs or throwing on the run.

Green Bay, meanwhile, is 6-0 largely because the team's star, Rodgers, is clicking along nicely.

He started the season with 11 touchdown passes and no interceptions to join Don Meredith and Manning as only the third QB to do that. Rodgers ranks either first or second in pretty much every important passing stat this season.

And yet, his offense has been at less than full strength because of injuries to receivers Jordy Nelson, Randall Cobb and Davante Adams. Last season, the Packers cracked the 35-point mark six times. This year, they've scored that many points just once. The Packers were heavily favored but didn't shine in home wins against St. Louis or San Diego, which caused some muttering in Wisconsin. Naturally, the quarterback took some of the heat.

"We're often in the crosshairs every Monday," Rodgers said. "Whether it was a good game or a bad game. Pundits and experts have their opinions. It comes with the territory. We're both 6-0. It's tough to do. I know everyone's excited about that."



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# Wizards rally to beat Bucks

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — John Wall typically is the Washington Wizards' crunch-time scorer.

So far this season, it's been Bradley Beal — and Wall is perfectly happy with that.

Beal scored 14 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, and the Wizards came back from a 13-point deficit to beat the Milwaukee Bucks 118-113 on Friday night.

"He's taken my role for another night," Wall said. "He stepped up. I made one three (in the fourth quarter), but he made some big shots for us."

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 23 of his 27 points in the first half after returning from a one-game suspension to open the season.

Ramon Sessions scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter as the explosive offense that coach Randy Wittman envisioned for his team finally materialized. The Wizards were 5-for-12 on three-pointers in the first three quarters, then 7-for-9 in the fourth.

"This is the first two games we've run this offense in the regular season," Wall said. "In the preseason it's totally different."

**Warriors 112, Rockets 92:** Stephen Curry scored 25 points and visiting Golden State beat Houston in a rematch of the Western Conference finals.

Curry listened to the crowd frequently rain down "MVP! MVP!" chants on Rockets guard James Harden. But Curry outscored him 25-16 and got the win again, just as he did in the real MVP vote and in the Warriors' five-game victory that sent them to the NBA Finals.

The reigning champions improved to 2-0 and the Rockets fell to 0-2.

Harden struggled with his shot for a second straight game. The MVP runner-up finished 4 of 18, including 1 of 10 from 3-point range, but added seven rebounds and five assists.

**Thunder 139, Magic 136 (20T):** Russell Westbrook banked in a three-pointer from just inside halfcourt at the end of regulation on his way to 48 points, Kevin Durant scored 43 points, and Oklahoma City outlasted host Orlando.

Westbrook added 11 rebounds and eight assists, and Durant had 12 rebounds.

Orlando had a chance to tie it with 6 seconds to play, but twice had three-point attempts blocked.

Oklahoma City trailed by as many as 18, but outscored the Magic 42-24 in the fourth quarter. Westbrook had 14 points in the extra periods.

Tobias Harris led the Magic with 30 points, and Nik Vucevic added 26.

**Cavaliers 102, Heat 92:** LeBron James scored 29 points, Kevin Love added 24 points and 14 rebounds and Cleveland won its home opener by beating Miami.

James was 13-for-19 from the field for Cleveland.

Dwyane Wade led Miami with 25 points, and Chris Bosh had 16. James, Wade and Bosh played in the same regular-season game for the first time since they were teammates in Miami.

James, who said Friday he planned on playing in all 82 games, showed no signs of the back troubles that sidelined him in training camp. He had five rebounds and four assists in 34 minutes.

**Pistons 98, Bulls 94 (OT):** Marcus Morris scored 26 points, Andre Drummond had 20 points and 20 rebounds and Detroit beat visiting Chicago to improve to 3-0.

The Pistons scored the first seven points of overtime, taking a 90-83 lead on Anthony Tolliver's three-pointer. Detroit is 3-0 for the first time since winning its first four games in 2008-09. They have been impressive on defense so far, and they held Chicago's Derrick Rose scoreless until the fourth quarter.

Rose finished with eight points, and Jimmy Butler led the Bulls with 23.

**Timberwolves 95, Nuggets 78:** Karl-Anthony Towns had 28 points and 14 rebounds and Minnesota beat host Denver.

Andrew Wiggins added 18 points despite a sore back to help the Timberwolves follow up a season-opening win over the Los Angeles Lakers with another road win. They have been playing with heavy hearts since coach Flip Saunders died Sunday after complications from Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Emmanuel Mudiay scored 15 points for the Nuggets in coach Michael Malone's home debut.

**Suns 110, Trail Blazers 92:** Eric Bledsoe scored 22 points, Brandon Knight added 18 and Phoenix pulled away in the

second half against visiting Portland.

Tyson Chandler set the tone after Phoenix's lackluster season debut against Dallas, scoring 10 points in the first quarter. He finished with 15 points and 13 rebounds on a night when the Suns inducted Steve Nash into the franchise's Ring of Honor.

Damian Lillard led Portland with 24 points.

**Spurs 102, Nets 75:** Kawhi Leonard had 16 points, Tim Duncan added 15 and host San Antonio regrouped after a sluggish start to beat Brooklyn.

LaMarcus Aldridge had 10 points, primarily on follows of missed shots as he continues to find his place in the Spurs' offense. Brook Lopez had 17 points to lead Brooklyn.

**Hawks 97, Hornets 94:** Dennis Schroder made his team's two-point guard lineup look good by scoring 14 points and Atlanta held off visiting Charlotte.

Kent Bazemore led Atlanta with 19 points and Paul Millsap and Al Horford each had 18. Nicolas Batum led the Hornets with 14 points and 11 rebounds.

**Kings 132, Lakers 114:** Rajon Rondo had 21 points and eight assists and DeMarcus Cousins added 21 points and 11 rebounds for host Sacramento.

With Rondo running the offense and benefiting from Los Angeles turnovers, the Kings had a 24-point lead at halftime and continued to pad the lead in the third quarter.

Jordan Clarkson scored 22 points for the Lakers. Kobe Bryant had 13 points in 22 minutes.

**Raptors 113, Celtics 103:** DeMar DeRozan scored 23 points and Terrence Ross had 13 of his 21 in the fourth quarter to help Toronto beat host Boston.

DeMarre Carroll scored 10 of his 21 points in the third quarter and Kyle Lowry finished with 14 points and nine assists for the Raptors. Isaiah Thomas led Boston with 25 points.

**Jazz 99, 76ers 71:** Derrick Favors had 20 points and 12 rebounds to lead visiting Utah past Philadelphia.

Rodney Hood added 17 points, and the Jazz used multiple 13-0 runs to build a 32-point lead. Jerami Grant and Nik Stauskas each had 12 points for the 76ers.

# Rangers roll past Toronto

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Mats Zuccarello's hat trick sent the New York Rangers to a 3-1 win over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Friday night.

Henrik Lundqvist made 22 saves as the Rangers improved to 7-2-2.

New York has won four of its last five, earning 10 points in its last six games.

The Rangers played for the first time since defeating Calgary, 4-1 on Oct. 25.

During the break, coach Alain Vigneault reconfigured his top two lines, reuniting Zuccarello with Derick Brassard and Rick Nash and putting Chris Kreider back with Derek Stepan.

Jonathan Bernier made 23 saves but Toronto fell to 1-6-2, losing five in a row.

Joffrey Lupul's deflection at 18:09 into the third spoiled Lundqvist's shutout bid.

**Canadiens 6, Flames 2:** Dale Weise completed his first career hat trick midway through the third period and visiting Montreal blew out hapless Calgary to end a two-game skid and become the first NHL team with 10 wins.

Weise scored in each of the first and second periods, then got his third with 8:16 left by smacking in the rebound from Tomas Fleishmann's shot.

**Hurricanes 3, Avalanche 2:** Victor Rask, Justin Faulk and Jeff Skinner scored and host Carolina beat Colorado for its third straight victory.

Colorado's Carl Soderberg scored with 31.8 seconds left, but Carolina got its first home win of the season.

**Sabres 3, Flyers 1:** Ryan O'Reilly had a goal and two assists, rookie goaltender Linus Ullmark got his first NHL win and host Buffalo beat Philadelphia.

Jack Eichel and Nicolas Deslauriers also scored for Buffalo. Ullmark made 27 saves.

**Capitals 2, Blue Jackets 1:** Justin Williams and T.J. Oshie each scored to lift host Washington over Columbus.

Braden Holtby made 29 saves to help the Capitals avoid back-to-back losses for the first time this season after falling 3-1 to Pittsburgh on Wednesday.

**Bruins 3, Panthers 1:** Brad Marchand scored twice and Zdeno Chara picked up his first goal of the season to lead visiting Boston over Florida.

Marchand, who extended his point streak to five games, also was given a major penalty and a game misconduct for boarding Dmitry Kulikov with 2:06 left in the game. Kulikov left the ice bleeding.

**Senators 3, Red Wings 1:** Kyle Turris and Matt Puempel scored in the first two periods and Bobby Ryan added an empty-net goal in the final minute, helping visiting Ottawa beat Detroit.

Andrew Hammond made 29 saves for the Senators.

**Wild 5, Blackhawks 4:** Jason Zucker scored 18 seconds into the game and assisted on Nino Niederreiter's winner to lead host Minnesota over Chicago.

Ryan Carter, Charlie Coyle and Jared Spurgeon also had goals for Minnesota, which dealt its playoff nemesis Chicago its second straight loss.

The Blackhawks have beaten Minnesota in the second round of the playoffs the past two seasons.

**Canucks 4, Coyotes 3:** Rookie Jared McCann scored the first of two quick goals in the opening period and visiting Vancouver held on for a win over Arizona.

The Canucks were sharp after blowing a two-goal lead in a loss to Dallas the night before, taking a 3-0 lead in the first.

# Thomas, Steele tied atop CIMB Classic

Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Justin Thomas birdied the final two holes to shoot a 5-under 67 at the CIMB Classic on Saturday and a share of the lead with American compatriot Brendan Steele going into the final round of the PGA Tour's Malaysian event.

Second-round leader Thomas had an eventful round of eight birdies and three bogeys to reach 20-under 196, level with Steele, who had a bogey-free 66.

They were a shot clear of last year's runner-up Kevin Na, who had the equal-best round of the day with a 64.

With only four strokes separating the top nine players, including former No.1 Adam Scott, and the course offering plenty of opportunities to pick up strokes, a close finish looms on Sunday.

Scott (66) and first-round leader Scott Piercy (69) were tied at 16-under, a shot behind a group of four players: Americans James Hahn (64), Brian Harman (66) and Spencer Levin (68) plus Japan's Hideki Matsuyama (68).

Steele has 13 birdies, an eagle and no bogeys over the second and third rounds, and that flawless performance has put him position to push for his second victory on tour, after the 2011 Texas Open.

Earlier this month, he also led into the final round of the Frys.com Open only to slide out of contention with a final-round 76.

**LPGA Tour:** Candie Kung bogeyed the final two holes Saturday in the windy Blue Bay LPGA at Hainan Island, China, to drop into a tie for the lead with Sei Young Kim at even par.

Kung had a 1-over 73, and Kim shot a 74 on another difficult day along the South China Sea at wind-battered and sun-baked Jian Lake Blue Bay. Only two of the 78 players broke 70 and there were 11 rounds in the 80s.

Kung failed to reach the green on the 127-yard 17th and left her chip 20 feet short, then three-putted — missing a 4-foot par try — on the par-5 18th. The 34-year-old Taiwanese player won the last of her four tour titles in 2008.

Kim also bogeyed the 17th. The 22-year-

old South Korean player won playoffs this year in the Bahamas and Hawaii in events also played in strong wind on tropical seaside layouts.

Third-ranked Stacy Lewis was 1 over. The American bogeyed the par-5 18th for a 73.

**Champions Tour:** Former UCLA players Scott McCarron and Steve Pate shared the lead at 8-under 63 on Friday after the first round of the Champions Tour's Toshiba Classic at Newport Beach, Calif.

McCarron is making his eighth start on the tour after turning 50 in July. The three-time PGA Tour winner eagled the par-5 15th and had six birdies and an eagle at Newport Beach Country Club.

The 54-year-old Pate eagled the par-5 third and had five birdies. He won six times on the PGA Tour.

Billy Andrade and Rod Spittle were a stroke back in the final full-field event of the season. Defending champion Fred Couples was two shots behind at 65 along with Kevin Sutherland, Paul Goydos, Jay Don Blake, Olin Browne, Scott Dunlap and Peter Senior.