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Mass graves feared near Mariupol

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Satellite photos of what appeared to be rows upon rows of freshly dug mass graves on the outskirts of Mariupol brought the horrors of the war increasingly into focus, as Russia pounded away Friday at Ukrainian holdouts in the city's steel mill and other targets in a drive to seize the country's industrial east.

"Every day they drop several bombs on Azovstal," Petro Andryushchenko, an adviser to Mariupol's mayor, said of the besieged steelworks. "Fighting, shelling, bombing do not stop."

Cities elsewhere in the Donbas region also came under Russian fire overnight, and the attacks interfered with efforts to evacuate civilians.

The region, home to coal mines, metal plants and heavy-equipment factories, is bracing for what could be an epic clash as Russian President Vladimir Putin attempts to salvage a victory from the 8-week-old war widely seen as a blunder and a humanitarian disaster.

On Thursday, Putin claimed victory in the battle for the strategic southern port city of Mariupol, even though an estimated 2,000 Ukrainians remained holed up at the sprawling steelworks, which has been bombarded for weeks. Putin ordered his troops not to storm the stronghold but to seal it off.

At the same time, Maxar Technologies released new satellite images that it said

showed more than 200 graves in a town near Mariupol, prompting accusations that the Russians were trying to conceal the slaughter of civilians taking place in the city.

Initial estimates from the Ukrainians said the graves could hold 9,000 bodies, but Andryushenko said there could be more. Ukrainian authorities have said over 20,000 civilians have been killed in the nearly two-month siege of Mariupol.

"The graves have been dug up and corpses are still being dumped there," the mayor's aide said.

Putin said Friday that Russia gave Ukrainian forces inside the steel plant the option to surrender, with guarantees to keep them alive, and offered "decent treatment and medical care," according to an account of a phone call with European Council President Charles Michel, provided by the Kremlin.

"But the Kyiv regime does not allow them to take this opportunity," Putin charged.

Repeated attempts to evacuate civilians from the city have failed because Russia did not honor cease-fires, Ukrainian officials have said.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said no humanitarian corridors for civilian evacuations would be open in Ukraine on Friday because it was too dangerous. She urged civilians to "be patient" and "hang in there."

Days into the Russian offensive to take

the east, the campaign has yet to become a full-out assault, with military analysts saying Moscow's forces are still ramping up. But scattered towns in the east have experienced the thud of incoming shells that drive citizens out in panic.

Sloviansk, a city of about 100,000 in eastern Ukraine, came under fire during the night, according to Mayor Vadym Lyakh, who said no injuries were reported. But he urged residents to leave and said a convoy of buses would be organized. In Rubizhne, Russian fire prevented attempts to bring buses in, Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai said.

Intensive shelling was also heard overnight in Kharkiv, a northeastern city that lies outside of the Donbas but is seen one of the gateways the Russians intend to use to encircle Ukrainian forces in the Donbas from the north, the south and the east.

If successful, the campaign would give Putin a vital piece of the country and a badly needed victory to show the Russian people amid the war's mounting casualties and the economic hardship caused by Western sanctions.

But analysts say Russian forces have yet to achieve any major breakthroughs in the Donbas or gain any significant ground. A senior U.S. defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the Pentagon's assessment, said the Ukrainians were hindering the Russian effort to push south from Izyum, which lies outside the Donbas.

In reversal, Philadelphia ends indoor mask mandate

Associated Press

Philadelphia is ending its indoor mask mandate, city health officials said Thursday night, abruptly reversing course just days after people in the city had to start wearing masks again amid a sharp increase in infections.

The Board of Health voted Thursday to rescind the mandate, according to the Philadelphia health department, which released a statement that cited "decreasing hospitalizations and a leveling of case counts."

The mandate went into effect Monday.

Philadelphia had ended its earlier indoor mask mandate March 2.

The health department did not release data to back up its reversal on masking, but said more information was to be provided Friday. But the acting health commissioner, Dr. Cheryl Bettigole, told the Board of Health at a public meeting Thursday night that hospitalizations had unexpectedly gone down 25% in a matter of days.

"We're in a situation that we really had not anticipated being in this soon but it is good news," she said, according to a transcript of the meeting. "So I'm really very

happy ... to say it appears that we no longer need to mandate masks in Philadelphia and that we can actually move to simply a strong recommendation."

Philadelphia had become the first major U.S. city to reinstate its indoor mask mandate, but faced fierce blowback as well as a legal effort to get the mandate thrown out. Few masks were worn at the Philadelphia 76ers' home playoff game on Monday, even though they were required under city rules.

City officials said the mandate was to be lifted Friday morning.

30 homes burned in Flagstaff area

Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Firefighters are bracing for the return of ferocious winds in the Southwest after a brief reprieve allowed them to attack flames from the air for the first time in days as a half-dozen large wildfires burn in Arizona and New Mexico.

The reprieve Thursday also finally allowed local authorities to enter rural neighborhoods near Flagstaff partially burned Tuesday by whipping flames 100 feet tall and determine that 30 homes were destroyed. Damage also included 24 properties with an unspecified number of destroyed outbuildings and a total of 109 properties were “impacted by the fire,” the Coconino County Sheriff’s Office said Thursday night in a statement.

Authorities previously estimated that 30 structures were burned but had no breakdown of that figure.

More than 500 firefighters were manning fire lines in the two states and more help was on the way Friday when the largest type of management team is scheduled to take com-

mand of resources at one of the biggest, most dangerous fires near Flagstaff.

Spirits were lifted Thursday as helicopters were able to start dropping water on that blaze for the first time. It has burned more than 32 square miles, forced evacuations of 765 homes and destroyed at least two dozen structures since it broke out on Sunday.

Aerial attacks also resumed in northern New Mexico, where at least one airtanker was able to join the effort northeast of Santa Fe — something that’s likely to be impossible on Friday.

Sheriff’s deputies called for additional evacuations Thursday of scattered homes and closed some roads at a big fire burning in a rural area southeast of Taos, N.M., where no structure damage has been reported.

But fire officials and weather forecasters across the region warn the worst may be yet to come.

“There is high confidence that a widespread extreme and catastrophic fire weather event will occur on Friday,” Santa Fe Na-

tional Forest officials said late Thursday.

Sustained winds of 30-50 mph are forecast there Friday morning, with gusts from 60-80 mph in the afternoon from the Gila Mountains up through the Rio Grande Valley to neighboring highlands.

The combination of the high winds, warmer temperatures and extremely dry conditions will make for an atmosphere that’s “pretty much on steroids,” said Scott Overpeck with the National Weather Service in Albuquerque.

“This is not typical,” he said, looking ahead to what he said could be potentially explosive fire growth on Friday. “This is really one of those days we need to be on our toes and we need to be ready.”

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey on Thursday declared a state of emergency in Flagstaff’s Coconino County.

The declaration clears the way for state funding for evacuations, shelter, repairs and other expenses. However, the money can’t be used to reimburse home and business owners for losses.

Federal judge blocks Kentucky abortion law

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A federal judge on Thursday temporarily blocked a state law that effectively eliminated abortions in Kentucky after the state’s two remaining clinics said they couldn’t meet its requirements.

The decision by U.S. District Judge Rebecca Grady Jennings was a victory for abortion rights advocates and a setback for the Republican-led legislature, which passed the law in March and then overrode Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear’s veto of the measure last week. Both of the clinics indicated Thursday that they would immediately resume abortion services.

The new law bans abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy and

requires women to be examined by a doctor before receiving abortion pills. It also contains new restrictions and reporting requirements that the Kentucky clinics said they couldn’t immediately comply with. Non-compliance can result in stiff fines, felony penalties and revocation of physician and facility licenses.

Jennings’ order did not delve into the larger issue of the new law’s constitutionality. Instead, it focused on the clinics’ claims that they’re unable to immediately comply with the measure because the state hasn’t yet set up clear guidelines. The judge said her order does not prevent the state from crafting regula-

Vaccination rates dip for kindergartners in 2020-21

Associated Press

A smaller portion of U.S. children got routine vaccinations required for kindergarten during the pandemic, government researchers said Thursday, raising concerns that measles and other preventable diseases could increase.

Rates were close to 94% for measles, whooping cough and chickenpox vaccinations for the 2020-21 school year. That was down 1% from a year earlier and means 35,000 U.S. children entered kindergarten without evidence that they were vaccinated for extremely contagious diseases, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a report.

In addition, almost 400,000 fewer children than expected

entered kindergarten and their vaccination status is uncertain, the CDC said.

Pandemic-related disruptions likely contributed to the decline, the report said, as pediatricians canceled non-emergency appointments, parents skipped checkups for their children and vaccine requirements were eased for students doing remote learning.

“We haven’t seen outbreaks and that’s probably representative of the fact that families were staying home during the pandemic,” said Dr. Georgina Peacock, the CDC’s director of immunization services. But authorities worry that could change if kids remain behind on their shots as more people return to normal routines.

Rep. Greene's candidacy for reelection challenged

Associated Press

ATLANTA — U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene was engaged in “legitimate political speech” when she called for a response to Joe Biden’s presidential victory prior to last year’s riot at the Capitol her lawyer argued Friday during a hearing over her right to run for reelection.

Voters in the Georgia congresswoman’s district have said Greene helped facilitate the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol that disrupted certification of Biden’s win, making her ineligible for reelection under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which says members of Congress cannot engage “in insurrection or rebellion.”

Greene has repeatedly denied aiding or engaging in an insurrection and has filed a lawsuit alleging that the law the voters are using to challenge her eligibility is itself unconstitutional. She is set to appear on the Republican ballot for Georgia’s May 24 primary and has been endorsed by former President Donald Trump.

Ron Fein, a lawyer for the voters who filed the challenge, called the hearing “a solemn occasion,” saying Greene took an oath and then broke it by engaging in an insurrection.

Unlike past insurrections, like the Civil War, that involved military uniforms and tactics, he said, “The leaders of this insurrection

were among us, on Facebook, on Twitter, on corners of social media that would make your stomach hurt.”

While Greene wasn’t on the steps of the Capitol, she nevertheless played an important role in stoking conservative fury ahead of the Jan. 6 attack, Fein said. The day before the riot Greene posted, “It’s our 1776 moment!” on the conservative-friendly social media platform Parler.

“The most powerful witness against Marjorie Taylor Greene’s candidacy, the most powerful witness in establishing that she crossed the line into engagement in insurrection is Marjorie Taylor Greene herself,” Fein said.

James Bopp, a lawyer for Greene, said the challengers are making a very serious charge with significant ramifications for Greene and the voters in her district.

“They want to deny the right to vote to the thousands of people living in the 14th District of Georgia by removing Greene from the ballot,” he said.

The evidence will show that Greene was sworn in on Jan. 3, 2021, and met with Trump about making objections to certain states’ electoral votes because of concerns about voter fraud, Bopp said. At the time of the riot, she was in a dark hallway at the Capitol urging people via social media to be safe and remain calm, he said.

Audio: McCarthy said he may urge Trump to resign

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy told fellow GOP lawmakers shortly after the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol insurrection that he would urge then-President Donald Trump to resign, according to audio posted by The New York Times and aired on Rachel Maddow’s MSNBC show.

In the recording of a Jan. 10 House Republican Leadership call posted by the Times Thursday night, McCarthy is heard discussing the Democratic effort to remove Trump from office and saying he would tell Trump, “I think it will pass and it would be my recommendation he should resign.”

It’s unclear whether McCarthy, who is in line to become House speaker if Republicans gain control during the fall midterm elections, followed through on his thinking or was merely spit-balling ideas shared privately with his colleagues in the aftermath of the deadly Capitol assault.

In the same conversation, McCarthy told his colleagues he doubted Trump would take the advice to step aside.

“That would be my recommendation,” McCarthy is heard saying in response to a question from Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., who would emerge as a staunch Trump critic. “I don’t think he will take it, but I don’t know.”

Earlier Thursday, after the Times published its initial story describing the conversation, McCarthy released a statement calling it “totally false and wrong.” His spokesman, Mark Bednar, had told the paper, “McCarthy never said he’d call Trump to say he should resign.”

Bednar did not immediately respond to questions late Thursday night after the audio’s release. Representatives for Trump did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the tape.

The audio threatens to badly damage the relationship between McCarthy and Trump, who remains the most popular figure in the Republican Party, despite his role in inciting the Jan. 6 insurrection and his refusal to accept the results of the 2020 election. And it could threaten McCarthy’s standing with House Republicans aligned with Trump, whose support he will need for votes to become House speaker next year.

There was little immediate reaction Thursday night from fellow Republicans who could determine his future.

Egg producers vary in approaches to protect from bird flu outbreak

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa — Is it OK for free-range chickens to not range freely?

That’s a question free-range egg producers have been pondering lately as they try to be open about their product while also protecting chickens from a highly infectious bird flu that has killed roughly 28 million poultry across the country.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that chickens be moved indoors to protect against the disease, but while some are keeping their hens inside, not everyone agrees.

John Brunnuell, the CEO of Indiana-based Egg Innovations, which contracts with more than 50 farms in five states to pro-

duce free-range and pasture-raised eggs, said any of his chickens in states with bird flu cases will stay in “confinement mode” until the risk passes.

“We will keep them confined at least until early June,” Brunnuell said. “If we go four weeks with no more commercial breakouts then we’ll look to get the girls back out.”

Bird flu cases have been identified in commercial chicken and turkey farms or in backyard flocks in 29 states, according to the USDA. Spread of the disease is largely blamed on the droppings of infected migrating wild birds.

Research has not clearly proven significant immune system differences in chickens housed outdoors versus indoors.

IG: Fire safety issues at nuclear dump

Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — The U.S. government's nuclear waste repository in New Mexico has major issues in fire training and firefighting vehicles, with its fleet in disrepair after years of neglect, according to an investigation by the U.S. Energy Department's Office of Inspector General.

The investigation was spurred by allegations regarding fire protection concerns at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, which is the backbone of a multibillion-dollar effort to clean up Cold War-era waste from past nuclear research and bomb making at national laboratories and defense sites across the U.S.

Investigators noted that the issues with the fire department training program went

back to at least 2016. They pointed to an un-developed training curriculum for the technical rescue program and claims by firefighters that their training needs weren't being met.

According to the inspector general's report, the issues persisted because the contractor that manages the repository inadequately addressed and closed recommendations from prior internal assessments that were aimed at fixing the deficiencies. The report also blamed inadequate oversight by Energy Department officials.

"WIPP has experienced growth with the number of buildings and employees since 2006 and is anticipated to operate beyond 2050. The next management and operating contractor must be able to provide effective

emergency response at WIPP to protect lives, property and the environment," the Office of Inspector General stated.

Energy Department officials in a response to the inspector general said the agency has followed through with corrective actions and will continue to "make progress on ensuring local fire departments and first responders have all necessary training and equipment to handle any event in relation to WIPP's operations."

Still, agency officials acknowledged there was more work to do.

As for the fire department's fleet, federal officials said they were in the process of revising maintenance procedures and that about \$1.2 million was spent to purchase two new fire trucks in 2021.

Dozens die in bomb blast at Afghan mosque

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A bombing at a mosque and religious school in northern Afghanistan on Friday killed at least 33 people, including students of a religious school, a Taliban official said.

Zabihullah Mujahid tweeted news of the devastating bombing in the town of Imam Saheb, in Kunduz Province, saying it also wounded another 43 people, many of them students.

No one immediately claimed responsibility, but Afghanistan's Islamic State affiliate on Friday claimed a series of bombings that happened a day earlier, the worst of which was an attack on a Shiite mosque in northern Mazar-e-Sharif that killed at least 12 Shiite Muslim worshippers and wounded

scores more.

Earlier the Kunduz provincial police spokesman put the death toll at the mosque and madrassa compound in Imam Saheb at two dead and six injured. Mujahid later tweeted the higher casualty numbers tweeting "we condemn this crime ... and express our deepest condolences to the victims."

Since sweeping to power last August, the Taliban have been battling the upstart Islamic State affiliate known as Islamic State in Khorasan Province or ISIS-K which is proving to be an intractable security challenge for Afghanistan's religiously driven government. Last November the Taliban's intelligence unit carried out sweeping attacks on suspected ISIS-K hideouts in east-

ern Nangarhar province.

In a statement Friday, ISIS-K said the explosive device that devastated Mazar-e-Sharif's Sai Doken mosque was hidden in a bag left inside among scores of worshippers. As they knelt in prayer, it exploded.

The Taliban say they have arrested a former ISIS-K leader in northern Balkh province, of which Mazar-e-Sharif is the capital. Zabihullah Noorani, information and culture department chief in Balkh province, said Abdul Hamid Sangaryar was arrested in connection with Thursday's mosque attack.

ISIS-K had been relatively inactive in Afghanistan since last November, but in recent weeks have stepped up its attacks in Afghanistan and in neighboring Pakistan.

Israeli police storm holy site after rocks thrown

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli police in full riot gear stormed a sensitive Jerusalem holy site sacred to Jews and Muslims on Friday after Palestinian youths hurled stones at a gate where they were stationed.

The renewed violence at the site, which is sacred to Jews and Muslims, came despite Israel temporarily halting Jewish visits, which are seen by the Palestinians as a provocation. Medics said more than two dozen Palestinians were wounded before the clashes subsided hours later.

Tens of thousands of worshippers took part in the main Friday prayers at midday, which were held as planned without any reports of violence.

Palestinians and Israeli police have regularly clashed at the site over the last week at a time of heightened tensions following a string of deadly attacks inside Israel and arrest raids in the occupied West Bank. Three rockets have been fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip, which is controlled by the Islamic militant group Hamas.

The string of events has raised fears of a repeat of last year, when protests and violence in Jerusalem eventually boiled over, helping to ignite an 11-day war between Israel and Hamas, and communal violence in Israel's mixed cities.

Palestinian youths hurled stones toward police at a gate leading into the compound, according to two Palestinian witnesses who spoke on condition of anonymity out of security concerns. The police, in full riot gear, then entered the compound, firing rubber bullets and stun grenades.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Resident dies of illness spread by tick bite

ME AUGUST — A person in eastern Maine has died from a rare virus spread from the bite of an infected tick, the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention said Wednesday.

The person from Waldo County contracted Powassan virus, developed neurologic symptoms and died while in the hospital, the center said in a news release. The person likely became infected in Maine.

Humans become infected with Powassan through the bite of an infected deer tick or woodchuck tick. Symptoms usually start one week to one month after the tick bite. People who get sick may have fever, headache, vomiting, weakness, confusion, seizures or memory loss, the center said.

Man pleads guilty in construction scheme

WV CHARLESTON — A Kentucky man has pleaded guilty in a construction scheme in three states, officials said.

William Hurst, 44, of Morehead, admitted he agreed to building projects in West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky, the U.S. attorney's office for the Southern District of West Virginia said. Hurst never began the projects or bought any materials, the release said. He admitted receiving more than \$35,000 from the customers and eventually stopped communicating with them.

Hurst pleaded guilty Wednesday to two counts of wire fraud and is scheduled to

be sentenced on July 28. He faces up to 40 years in prison.

Recreational pot petition gets signatures

MO ST. LOUIS — A group pushing a constitutional amendment that would make recreational marijuana legal in Missouri says it has collected enough signatures to put the issue on the ballot but it plans to gather thousands more signatures.

Legal Missouri 2022 announced it has 200,000 signatures supporting the amendment, KMOV-TV reported.

The group wants thousands more signatures before the May 8 deadline to ensure it has enough cushion to put the issue before voters in the November general election, said John Payne, campaign manager for Legal Missouri 2022.

The ballot initiative would allow Missourians over 21 to possess, consume and cultivate marijuana. It would also expunge criminal records for most prior, nonviolent marijuana offenses.

Hunting guide pleads guilty to harassment

LA VENICE — A hunting guide has pleaded guilty to harassing duck hunters and shooting their decoys.

The 32-year-old guide from Buras was trying to make the other duck hunters leave public land in Venice so he could hunt there, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement spokesman Adam Einck said in an email on Tuesday.

"It is public land, so it is first come first serve[d] and the duck

hunters he harassed were already set up in that area," Einck wrote.

A judge sentenced the man on April 12 to pay a \$1,075 fine, a \$200 civil penalty to the department, and restitution for the decoys, the department said.

Police: Woman posed as health aide to steal

MA RANDOLPH — A woman has been charged with stealing jewelry and other valuable personal items from several different senior living facilities by posing as a health aide.

Randolph Police Chief Anthony Marag said Tuesday that Anne Rose Fleurant, 36, of Weymouth, faces charges including identity fraud, receiving a stolen credit card and improper use of a credit card.

The investigation began last month when a resident of Randolph senior facility reported their jewelry was missing. They later discovered their credit card had been taken and used at a department store.

Police determined that similar thefts had occurred at other senior living centers in several towns including Randolph, Quincy, Braintree, Weymouth, Cohasset and Westwood. Additional victims may be unaware of the thefts, police said.

2 banned from hunting after grizzly poached

ID BOISE — Two men have been sentenced to jail time and banned from hunting after pleading guilty to poaching a grizzly bear near Yellowstone National Park.

The Idaho Department of

Fish and Game said in a press release that Rex Baum, 79, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor in connection with the female grizzly's death last year. He was ordered to serve 3 days in jail and was banned from hunting for a decade.

Baum's son, Jared Baum, of Ashton, was sentenced to 30 days in jail and banned from hunting for life after pleading guilty to a felony in connection with the incident.

Fish and Game officers discovered the grizzly's carcass on April 9, 2021, after the bear's radio tracking collar signaled it had died, the Idaho Statesman reported.

X-rays of the bear showed she had been shot more than a dozen times. Conservation officers visited the bear's den, discovering a dead cub.

Armed thieves stop and rob mountain bikers

CA OAKLAND — Armed thieves are targeting mountain bikers in the Oakland hills, stopping some of them as they ride along trails and stealing their bicycles at gunpoint, authorities said.

The Oakland Police Department said it has responded to three armed robberies in the last month, calling the thefts "an alarming trend," SFGate reported Tuesday.

The East Bay Regional Parks Police Department said it, too, has responded to an armed robbery of a cyclist in the Oakland hills.

"Don't be distracted by your electronic devices, Oakland police said. "Do not resist. Property can be replaced."

— From Associated Press

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Grizzlies rally past Timberwolves

Associated Press

Ja Morant and the Memphis Grizzlies arrived in Minneapolis, determined to seize control of the series from a young, confident Timberwolves team that looks and acts a lot like them.

The Grizzlies are growing up a lot faster.

Desmond Bane made seven three-pointers and had 26 points and Memphis overcame a 26-point deficit to beat the Minnesota Timberwolves 104-95 on Thursday night for a 2-1 lead in the first-round playoff series.

"We found a way to get some stops. Our offense started clicking a little bit more," Bane said, "and the rest is history."

The Grizzlies tied their franchise record for the biggest comeback victory, down by 26 early in the second quarter. They were also down by 25 late in the third.

Brandon Clarke scored 16 of his 20 points in the second half for Memphis, which closed the game on a staggering 50-16 run over the final 15:10.

"That's why we're really the deepest team in the league," said

Ja Morant, who had the franchise's first postseason triple-double with 16 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists — and told his team afterward he needed to play better.

Tyus Jones hit two dagger three-pointers against his former team down the stretch to finish with 11 points for the Grizzlies, who seized back home-court advantage from a stunned Wolves team that won Game 1 on the road 130-117 and took an ugly 124-96 loss in Game 2.

Game 4 is on Saturday night in Minneapolis.

"No one said it as going to be easy. We don't want it to be easy. We want it to be extremely hard, and it was," said Patrick Beverley, who had 14 points for the Wolves.

The Wolves were outscored 23-12 in the second quarter and 37-12 in the fourth, pitifully putting to waste some superb basketball in the first and third periods.

"When we get too high, it comes back and it haunts us," said D'Angelo Russell, who had 22 points and eight assists as the

key driver of Minnesota's third-quarter surge.

Russell went 0-for-3 and was scoreless in the fourth. Karl-Anthony Towns, Minnesota's other max-contract player, had another clunker on offense with eight points, five fouls and only four shots.

"It's really tough. We've got to regroup," said Towns, who had five blocks.

After taking a 47-21 lead early in the second quarter with a deafening roar in the 32-year-old downtown arena as the soundtrack, the Wolves were outscored 15-0 over the final 5:45 of the second quarter.

After the NBA's highest-scoring team made only 30 field goals in Game 2 to match a season low, the Wolves hit only 33 in Game 3. They went 8:34 of game time between the second and third quarters without a basket until Russell made a three.

Jones, who grew up in the Twin Cities and was drafted by the Timberwolves the same year as Towns, hit a three-pointer to give the Grizzlies their first lead at 86-85. Memphis never trailed

again.

"You think of and dream of those moments," said Jones, who won a state championship at Target Center for Apple Valley High School in 2013.

Small towns

Towns had just six points over the final three quarters of Game 2, and after coach Chris Finch implored him to play a "cleaner game" the two-time All-Star center struggled again. Towns picked up his fifth foul with 9:24 left and spent much of the fourth quarter on the bench.

"They swarm him everywhere," Finch said.

Oh, Dad

Towns and Morant each had their fathers cheering them on from courtside seats again — and this time the two friends were right next to each other. Tee Morant watched through designer sunglasses beneath a black bucket hat. Karl Towns, who wore a dark blue Timberwolves hat and a black KN95 mask, helped the arena hype fans by tossing T-shirts into the crowd during a timeout.

Bruised Brunson, Mavericks down Jazz

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Jalen Brunson was lying flat and still, watching his Dallas teammates build a 17-point lead before half-time on the monitor in the locker room.

"I saw how hard the team was playing when I was laying back there," Brunson said. "It gave me a little mojo to come back out there and do my thing."

Brunson scored 31 points playing with a bruised back and the Mavericks — without the injured Luka Doncic — beat the Utah Jazz 126-118 on Thursday night to take a 2-1 lead in the first-round playoff series.

"We're all on the same page," Brunson said. "We're all clicking. We're all talking and com-

municating."

Dallas coach Jason Kidd isn't satisfied with the road win and the series advantage.

"I just told the guys we haven't done anything," Kidd said. "They won at our place and now we won here. We need to put this game behind us and figure out what we need to do better."

It's hard to imagine the Mavericks playing much better without Doncic and hope to have him back for the next game.

Spencer Dinwiddie scored 10 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter for Dallas, Maxi Kleber had 17 points and Dorian Finney-Smith added 14 points, hitting a three-pointer with 1:56 left for a 10-point lead.

Doncic has missed all three of the games in the series with a strained calf, with signs pointing to his return for Game 4 on Saturday in Salt Lake City.

Donovan Mitchell scored 28 of his 32 points in the second half for Utah. Bojan Bogdanovic added 24 and Mike Conley had 21. The Jazz had won 11 in a row at home against Dallas.

Conley got the Jazz to 103-102, but Dinwiddie made two baskets and Brunson scored six points on three straight possessions to make it 113-104.

"His shot-creating and shot-making has been amazing all season, but the determination he has coming down the stretch to hit those big shots and the confidence he has is just fun to

watch," Kleber said.

Brunson appeared to hurt his back midway through the second quarter when Royce O'Neale hit him full-speed from behind. He moved gingerly, rubbed his lower back and earned a technical on his way off the court complaining about a cheap shot.

Brunson didn't want to elaborate on the hit after the game. "I said what I had to say" on the floor.

But he shook it off and toyed with the Jazz on a variety of drives to the baskets against several different defenders. Brunson now has 96 points in the three games of the series. He only has one turnover in the last two games.

Warriors push Nuggets to verge of elimination

Associated Press

DENVER — The Golden State Warriors proved they're good counter punchers, withstanding a fired-up Denver Nuggets team that finally took the fight to them instead of the officials and each other.

Stephen Curry and Jordan Poole scored 27 points each, Klay Thompson made six three-pointers on his way to 26 points and the Warriors muscled past the Nuggets 118-113 Thursday night to take a 3-0 lead in their playoff series.

"It's a Poole party!" Thompson hollered as he interrupted Poole's post-game television interview.

Draymond Green added a key steal from Nikola Jokic, who finished with 37 points and 18 rebounds, in the final minute and the Warriors closed on a 9-2 run to put the Nuggets on the cusp of elimination.

"We played great down the stretch on both" ends of the court, Thompson said.

Andrew Wiggins hit a second-chance three-pointer to put Golden State ahead for good 112-111, and Green, who played the final four minutes with five fouls, came up big by poking the ball away from Jokic with 40 seconds left.

"For Draymond to battle him all night and to make that play in the end was just a huge part of the win," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said.

NBA teams in a 3-0 hole are 0-143 all-time in the playoffs, and Golden State can sweep the series Sunday in Denver.

After two blowouts in San Francisco, Nuggets coach Michael Malone said, "I know that this sounds weird because it was a loss and there are no moral victories, I get that. But we gave ourselves a chance tonight. We didn't do that in Golden State. We put ourselves in a position late to beat a very good basketball team."

After the Nuggets bickered with each other on the bench and Jokic got ejected for hollering at an official in Game 2, they stuck together and stayed in this game until the end.

"I love how we fought tonight," said Malone, who challenged his team to replicate that effort Sunday: "Are we going to roll over? Are we going to fight like hell and send this back to Golden State?"

DeMarcus Cousins said Malone needn't wonder.

"I've been a fighter my whole life. I know how I'm approaching it," Cousins said.

Tigers win, Cabrera still at 2,999 hits after late walk

Associated Press

DETROIT — Miguel Cabrera was intentionally walked in the eighth inning with 2,999 career hits, setting off a loud chorus of boos at Comerica Park as the Detroit Tigers beat the New York Yankees 3-0 Thursday.

Cabrera was 0 for 3 with two strikeouts, forcing him and Detroit fans to wait at least another day for him to hit the 3,000 mark.

Detroit led 1-0 and had runners at second and third with two outs in the eighth when New York manager Aaron Boone gave Cabrera the free pass. Austin Meadows then blooped a two-run double to put Detroit ahead by three.

Guardians 6, White Sox 3: Josh Naylor had two hits and two RBIs, continuing his comeback from a devastating leg injury and helping host Cleveland to a three-game sweep of Chicago.

Naylor hit an RBI single in the fifth and a run-scoring double in the seventh. He was activated Friday after suffering multiple fractures in his right leg during an outfield collision last June.

Cleveland right-hander Zach Plesac (1-1) allowed two runs, one earned, and seven hits in 6⅓ innings.

Mets 6, Giants 2: Carlos Carrasco pitched into the eighth inning for the first time in almost three years, leading host New York past San Francisco.

San Francisco Lindor and Eduardo Escobar each connected for solo homers as the Mets took three of four from the Giants.

Carrasco (1-0) allowed four hits and walked none while striking out seven over 7⅓ innings. He retired 18 in a row after Thairo Estrada's RBI single in the second.

Marlins 5, Cardinals 0: Pablo López pitched three-hit ball over seven dominant innings days after getting married and Miami beat visiting St. Louis.

Jesús Sánchez and Jazz Chisholm Jr. homered for the Marlins, who snapped an eight-game losing skid against St. Louis.

The Cardinals swept two series last season and won the first two games in Miami.

López and wife Kaylee were married during Miami's day off Monday, and López (2-0) celebrated with one of his best starts. He struck out nine, including Cardinals star Albert Pujols three times.

Rangers 8, Mariners 6: Kole Calhoun lined a two-out RBI double to score Adolis García in the ninth, García made a terrific

diving catch in the bottom of the inning and Texas rallied from an early five-run deficit to beat host Seattle.

Texas snapped a five-game losing streak and avoided being swept by the Mariners by taking advantage of some sloppy defense by Seattle and getting Calhoun's key hit.

García walked with two outs in the ninth against Seattle's Drew Steckenrider (0-1). Calhoun followed by a lining a 2-2 pitch down the right-field line, and García scored from first without a throw.

Blue Jays 3, Red Sox 2: Kevin Gausman took a shutout into the ninth inning, and Jordan Romano escaped with a save as visiting Toronto beat Boston.

Gausman (1-1) struck out eight and walked none and was pulled after allowing Trevor Story's single to lead off the ninth.

Twins 1, Royals 0: Joe Ryan pitched six innings of two-hit ball against Kansas City's revamped lineup and visiting Minnesota avoided a sweep.

Jhoan Duran and Joe Smith handed the slimmest of leads to Emilio Pagan, who secured the Twins' first save this season.

Athletics 6, Orioles 4: Sean Murphy hit a two-run homer and RBI double, Cristian Pache also connected and host Oakland beat Baltimore.

Orioles manager Brandon Hyde and designated hitter Trey Mancini were ejected in the fourth after Mancini was called out on an odd play. Mancini was tagged after running through first base and walking back to the bag.

Diamondbacks 4, Nationals 3: Arizona closer Mark Melancon retired Juan Soto with the bases loaded in the ninth inning, helping Cooper Hummel's tiebreaking two-run home run hold up against host Washington.

Hummel had two hits, Matt Davidson and Jake McCarthy also homered, and Arizona split the four-game series with consecutive wins for the first time this season.

Pirates 4, Cubs 3: Daniel Vogelbach hit a two-run homer, Yoshi Tsutsugo had a two-run double and Pittsburgh rallied past visiting Chicago.

Pittsburgh starter Bryse Wilson allowed Rafael Ortega's leadoff single in the first, then walked three straight batters. Jonathan Villar added a sacrifice fly for a 2-0 lead, and Seiya Suzuki had an RBI groundout in the second for a 3-0 edge.

Stamkos tops scoring list in Tampa Bay

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Steven Stamkos scored his 34th goal of the season and became Tampa Bay's all-time scoring leader as the Lightning beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 8-1 on Thursday night.

Stamkos, the first overall pick in the 2008 draft, fired a one-timer from the left circle off a feed from Nikita Kucherov for the record-breaking 954th point of his career. He moved past Martin St. Louis, who had 365 goals and 588 assists with the Lightning.

Stamkos, who added two assists, has 473 goals and 483 assists in 917 career games, all with Tampa Bay.

Kucherov collected career point No. 600 on the Stamkos goal and added his 20th goal of the season. Alex Killorn, Ondrej Palat and Ross Colton each finished with three points. Colton and Killorn scored twice. Pat Maroon added his 10th of the season for the Lightning, who set a season high in goals scored and margin of victory.

Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 36 shots and picked up his first win in seven starts, recording his first victory since April 1 in Chicago.

Ilya Mikheyev scored a power-play goal for the Maple Leafs. Erik Kallgren stopped 28 shots for Toronto.

Flames 4, Stars 2: Matthew Tkachuk scored his 40th goal, Christopher Tanev had the tie-breaking goal in the third period, and host Calgary beat Dallas to win the Pacific Division title.

The Flames won their division for the eighth time in franchise history but just the third in the last 27 years.

Rangers 6, Islanders 3: Andrew Copp scored three goals in the first period, Chris Kreider got his 51st of the season and the Rangers beat the rival Islanders.

The Rangers remained tied with Carolina atop the Metropolitan Division with 108 points.

Hurricanes 4, Jets 2: Seth Jarvis scored on a rebound at 8:21 of the third period to help

host Carolina overcome a two-goal deficit and beat Winnipeg.

Penguins 4, Bruins 0: Casey DeSmith made a career-high 52 saves and Jake Guentzel scored three goals in host Pittsburgh's win over Boston.

Guentzel completed the hat trick with an empty-netter, his 40th goal of the season, as Pittsburgh moved two points ahead of Washington for third place in the Metropolitan Division.

Wild 6, Canucks 3: Kevin Fiala scored twice, including the go-ahead goal in the third period, and host Minnesota beat Vancouver.

The Wild ensured they will finish either second or third in the Central Division and locked in a first-round playoff matchup with St. Louis, which is two points behind in the standings.

Blues 3, Sharks 1: Robert Thomas scored his 20th goal to extend his points streak to 15 games and visiting St. Louis beat San Jose.

Kings 4, Blackhawks 1: Philip Danault scored for the fifth straight game and host Los An-

geles moved closer to wrapping up a playoff spot with a win over Chicago.

Sabres 5, Devils 2: Kyle Okposo and Alex Tuch scored short-handed goals less than a minute apart in the second period, and visiting Buffalo beat New Jersey.

Flyers 6, Canadiens 3: James van Reimsdyk had two goals and an assist, Ivan Provorov had a goal and an assist and visiting Philadelphia snapped a six-game skid with a win over Montreal.

Panthers 5, Red Wings 2: Aleksander Barkov scored his 38th goal of the season and host Florida Panthers tied a franchise record with its 12th straight win, beating Detroit and claiming first in the Atlantic Division and the top spot in the Eastern Conference.

The Panthers (118 points) also moved two points ahead of Western Conference-leading Colorado in the race for the best record in the NHL. Florida and the Avalanche have five games remaining.

Hockey Hall of Famer Guy Lafleur dies at age 70

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Hockey Hall of Famer Guy Lafleur, who helped the Montreal Canadiens win five Stanley Cup titles in the 1970s, has died at age 70.

The No. 1 pick in the 1971 NHL Draft, Lafleur registered 518 goals and 728 assists in 14 seasons with Montreal. With the flashy forward leading the way, the Canadiens won it all in 1973, and then four more times from 1976 to 1979.

Nicknamed "The Flower," Lafleur was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2019 when tumors were discovered by doctors performing emergency quadruple bypass heart surgery.

Two months later, he went under the knife again to remove

both the upper lobe of his lung and lymph nodes.

Lafleur, however, received bad news in October 2020 that the cancer was back, forcing him to resume his treatment.

Named one of the NHL's 100 greatest players of all-time in 2017, Lafleur finished with 560 goals and 793 assists in 1,126 games in his 17 seasons.

Lafleur won the Art Ross Trophy as the NHL's leading scorer three straight years from 1976 to 1978, the Hart Trophy as league MVP in 1977 and 1978, and the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP in 1977.

Former Raiders QB Lamonica dies at 80

Daryle Lamonica, the deep-throwing quarterback who won

an AFL Player of the Year award and led the Raiders to their first Super Bowl appearance, has died. He was 80.

The Fresno County Sheriff's said Lamonica passed away at his Fresno home on Thursday morning. The death is considered to be from natural causes.

In his six seasons as a starter for the Raiders, Lamonica was one of the most prolific passers in the game, leading led pro football with 145 TD passes — 24 more than second-place Fran Tarkenton. His 16,006 yards passing ranked third from 1967-72.

Lamonica finished his career with 19,154 yards passing and 164 TDs. The Raiders went 62-16-6 in Lamonica's starts for the best winning percentage for any

starting QB in the Super Bowl era with at least 75 starts.

Hornets fire Borrego after four seasons

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Charlotte Hornets have fired coach James Borrego after blowout losses in back-to-back seasons in the play-in tournament.

Hornets president of basketball operations and general manager Mitch Kupchak made the announcement on Friday.

Kupchak said the team will begin its search for a new head coach immediately.

The 44-year-old Borrego was 138-163 in four seasons with the Hornets and had received a multi-year contract extension last August.