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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Chattanooga terrorism ruling still pending

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON—More than five months after attacks on two military facilities in Chattanooga, Tenn., left four Marines and a sailor dead, federal investigators still have not determined whether the attack was terrorism — and it's financially costing the families of those who died, as Purple Heart awards hang in the balance.

The July 16 attack killed Gunnery Sgt. Thomas Sullivan; Staff Sgt. David Wyatt; Sgt. Carson A. Holmquist; Lance Cpl. Squire D. "Skip" Wells; and Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Randall Smith. Other servicemembers and a Chattanooga police officer also were wounded by Mohammad Youssef Abdulazeez, 24, a naturalized U.S. citizen who was born in Kuwait. The attack was carried out at the Chattanooga Naval Reserve Center and a recruiting station a few miles away.

As previously reported, Abdulazeez called Muslims who waged jihad in earlier generations "the best human beings that ever lived" other than the prophets, on his blog. He also downloaded recordings of Anwar al-Awlaki, the American-Yemeni cleric who recruited for al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula until he was killed in a 2011 airstrike, according to a NBC News report.

But there still is no assessment of whether the incident qualifies as international terrorism. Sharry Dedman-Beard, a spokeswoman for the U.S. attorney's office in eastern Tennessee, said the investigation is ongoing and declined additional comment.

The issue is particularly sensitive in light of a similar attack last week in San Bernardino, Calif., that killed 14 people and wounded 21 more. It was carried out by a married couple, Syed Farook and

Tashfeen Malik. Malik, 27, was a Pakistani woman who entered the United States on a so-called "fiancee visa." She pledged allegiance to the Islamic State militant group on Facebook prior to the attack, a U.S. law enforcement official said Friday.

The Chattanooga shooting, occurring at military facilities, raised the possibility of Purple Heart medals being awarded to the families of the troops killed there and the survivors who were wounded. Under current criteria, however, the Chattanooga victims will not be eligible unless the government determines that Abdulazeez was in contact with a foreign terrorist organization beforehand and was "inspired or motivated by the foreign terrorist organization."

Military officials have prepared Purple Heart nomination packages for the troops involved, said Maj. Rob Dolan,

a Marine Corps spokesman in Quantico, Va. But the awards are still in limbo while the investigation remains open.

"Determination of eligibility still rests on the completion of the FBI investigation," Dolan said.

The financial benefits of the Purple Heart can include the payment of hostile-fire pay for those killed or wounded in an attack, and special compensation for troops whose disabilities are attributed to injuries for which they were awarded the medal.

The issue has come up before. Earlier this year, then-Army Secretary John McHugh ordered the Purple Heart and associated benefits be awarded to the families of 13 people who were killed and more than 30 who were wounded in the 2009 mass shooting at Fort Hood, Texas.

Air Force burning through bomb stockpiles

USA Today

WASHINGTON — The Air Force has fired more than 20,000 missiles and bombs in the air war against the Islamic State group, depleting its stocks of munitions and prompting the service to scour depots around the world for more weapons and to find money to buy them, according to records obtained by USA Today.

The Air Force efforts come as the Pentagon has stepped up airstrikes on the Islamic State group, or ISIL, targets in Iraq and Syria. That bombing campaign began in August 2014 in Iraq, spread to Syria a month later and has continued to target Islamic State fighters and

equipment.

"We're in the business of killing terrorists, and business is good," Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said in a statement. "We need to replenish our munitions stock. Weapons take years to produce from the day the contract is assigned until they roll off the production line."

The Air Force carries out most of the bombing runs, using a variety of warplanes from single-prop Predator drones to huge B-1 bombers. Navy and Marine pilots, and several other countries, also fly missions.

"We're expending munitions faster than we can replenish

them," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh said in a statement. "B-1s have dropped bombs in record numbers. F-15Es are in the fight because they are able to employ a wide range of weapons and do so with great flexibility. We need the funding in place to ensure we're prepared for the long fight. This is a critical need."

Since summer, the percentage of attack planes dropping bombs on missions has increased. In July and August, half of the warplanes returned to base without dropping weapons, Army Col. Steve Warren, the military's spokesman in Baghdad, said last week. By October, 60 percent of the planes attacked Islamic State targets,

and November's figure was 65 percent.

"We're attacking ISIL on numerous fronts," Warren said. "We've attacked their fighters in Syria and Iraq, we're hitting their ability to finance their illegal and despicable operations."

USA Today reported in November that Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, who oversees U.S. military activities in the Middle East, estimated that the air war has killed 23,000 Islamic State fighters, raising the death toll by 3,000 in just over a month. However, the movement continues to recruit replacements, and the Pentagon does not release its estimates of the war dead.

Slow going expected in opening jobs to women

The San Diego Union-Tribune

As the dust settled on Thursday's announcement that all U.S. military combat jobs will open to women, the Navy released an internal study that validated the tough physical standards for becoming an elite Navy SEAL — though the research showed that upper-body strength, probably the biggest challenge for females, is the least important predictor of success.

It's just one piece of the blank slate in front of the armed forces as the Pentagon rolls out this historic change, which may upend entrenched assumptions about what makes a good soldier.

Veteran SEALs said they expect that

leaders will try to follow Secretary of Defense Ash Carter's directive this week to keep standards the same.

But they predicted it will be difficult because of the intense spotlight that inevitably will be on the first women who report to the SEALs' Coronado, Calif., training ground.

"It's going to be a clown show," said retired SEAL Ed Hiner, a former training officer at the Coronado Naval Special Warfare Command. "I hate to say it. I know there's a lot of tough women out there."

Meanwhile, on the Marine Corps side, a female officer who has criticized the way Marines train women said the new policy just needs leaders to back it in a "no ifs,

ands or buts" way.

Lt. Col. Kate Germano compared this situation to the end in 2011 of "don't ask, don't tell," the restriction on gays serving openly in uniform. After fierce public debate, few problems have been reported in the ranks.

"Unless every single level of the chain of command is willing to commit to the success ... this will continue to be sort of a half-in, half-out approach," said Germano, former commander of the Marine Corps' all-female recruit battalion.

It's still unclear when and how the first women will apply for the newly open combat jobs, which include Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry and Army Rangers.

1st female combat engineer certified

Associated Press

COLCHESTER, Vt. — A few days after two women became the first female soldiers to pass the Army's grueling Ranger School, a college junior in Vermont became a military pathfinder in her own right. At first, she didn't even know it.

With no fanfare, Vermont National Guard Spc. Skylar Anderson became the first woman certified as a combat engineer — a battlefield job that, like many others, was once held exclusively by men.

"I knew I was going to be one of the first, but I didn't know I was going to be THE first," said Anderson, a University of Vermont student.

Anderson, 20, said it was a "big eye-opener" when her instructors told her that she was the first woman to complete the course allowing her to work alongside combat troops to solve battlefield challenges as varied — and dangerous — as clearing minefields, building bridges under fire or destroying structures to block the enemy's advance.

Such an opportunity comes with responsibility, Anderson said.

"It's time to step up and not hide in the shadows," she said.

The U.S. military has been grappling for years with how best to integrate women in the services into combat. Gradually over the last several decades, more and more military roles once reserved for men have been opened to women.

On Thursday, Defense Secretary Ash Carter ordered the services to open all combat jobs to servicewomen.

Stabbing in London may be terrorism

The Washington Post

LONDON — British police were investigating a stabbing at an east London subway station Saturday evening as a "terrorist incident" after the attacker reportedly claimed he had acted "for Syria."

The stabbing, which came just three days after the British Parliament approved airstrikes in Syria against Islamic State targets, left three people injured — one seriously. British media outlets reported that the seriously wounded victim had been stabbed in the throat. Two other people were treated for minor injuries.

A video circulating online that purportedly shows the aftermath of the attack depicts a gruesome scene, with a large pool of blood smeared on the floor near the ticket turnstiles at the Leytonstone Underground station.

The video shows police officers using a stun gun on a man who shouted and lunged at them before being subdued and arrested. Passengers shout and run for cover as the confrontation unfolds.

Police confirmed that they had taken a suspect into custody, but did not identify him.

Wife in rampage became fervently devout

Associated Press

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — In the final few years of Tashfeen Malik's life, the people around the young woman saw her dress ever more conservatively and urge people ever more ardently to live a devout life.

For an aunt in Malik's old hometown in Pakistan, Malik's growing religious focus was one of the last things she heard about her 29-year-old niece — before last week, when she learned that her niece and her niece's husband had donned masks, hoisted assault rifles and

killed 14 people in a rampage in Southern California.

"I recently heard it from relatives that she has become a religious person, and she often tells people to live according to the teachings of Islam," recalled aunt Hifza Batool.

Batool spoke in the town of Karor Lal Esan, the home of Malik's family, 280 miles southwest of the Pakistani capital of Islamabad.

Malik's path from Pakistan to the bloody events of last week — when she and her husband slaughtered people gathered for a training session and a holiday luncheon — remains a mystery.

FBI officials, family lawyers and others said they know little about the housewife and mother, apart from what came to light on Friday: that Malik had pledged allegiance on Facebook to the Islamic State group as she and her American-born husband, Syed Farook, 28, launched the massacre.

The husband and wife were killed in a furious shootout with police hours after they opened fire on a gathering of Farook's colleagues from the San Bernardino County public health department, where he worked as a restaurant inspector.

League champs set for semis

Associated Press

ATLANTA — The confetti fell on another Alabama championship, just not the one the Crimson Tide really wants.

Next up: the College Football Playoffs.

With a Heisman-worthy performance from Derrick Henry and another dose of dominating defense, No. 2 Alabama cruised into the four-team playoff with a 29-15 victory over No. 18 Florida in the Southeastern Conference championship game Saturday.

The Tide became the first team since Tennessee in 1998 to win two straight SEC titles — an impressive achievement indeed.

The only way this season will be considered a true success is Alabama claiming another national title.

That's the standard Nick Saban has set in Tuscaloosa.

"As tight as this group is and how hard we play together and how we have each other's backs, I'm real confident in this team," quarterback Jake Coker said. "I think we can do whatever we want to do,

based on how we practice and prepare. It's going to be an exciting playoff."

Alabama's title hopes were on the ropes in mid-September when five turnovers allowed Mississippi to pull off a 43-37 upset at Bryant-Denny Stadium. The Tide (12-1, No. 2 CFP) bounced back to win 10 straight games, earning a spot in the national semifinals at either the Cotton or Orange Bowl on New Year's Eve.

A year ago, the Tide played in the inaugural playoff but was upset by eventual national champion Ohio State in the Sugar Bowl.

Saban, who said he even had questions about his team after the Ole Miss loss, gushed over how the Crimson Tide rebounded.

"I'm very proud of this team," said Saban, who already has three national titles as the Tide's coach and needs two more wins for his fourth. "They wanted to do something special. And probably more than any other time I've ever coached, I wanted to see these guys succeed."

Henry capped his Heisman campaign with a flourish, rushing for 189 bruising

yards on a staggering 44 carries against one of the nation's top defenses. Coker turned in just the sort of performance that the Tide needed out of its quarterback — 18-for-26 for 204 yards, including a pair of touchdowns. The defense was too much for Florida's maligned offense, which managed only 3 yards of offense in the second and third quarters.

Florida, an 18-point underdog, briefly grabbed a 7-2 lead on Antonio Callaway's 85-yard punt return for a touchdown early in the second quarter.

Alabama dominated from there. Henry came into the game as a Heisman favorite and certainly did nothing to hurt his chances with an MVP showing. He put Alabama ahead to stay on a 2-yard run late in the first half, and looked as fresh at the end of the game as he did at the beginning.

Henry tied the SEC record for touchdowns in a season (23) and eclipsed Herschel Walker's 34-year-old conference mark for rushing yards in a year, pushing his total to 1,986 with at least one more game still to come.

Clemson holds off Carolina

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Deshaun Watson did everything in his power to ensure Clemson's perfect season continued. But the unbeaten Tigers might have gotten a little help from the officials, too.

The Heisman Trophy hopeful threw for three touchdowns and ran for two more as No. 1 Clemson stayed unbeaten by holding off eighth-ranked North Carolina 45-37 Saturday night in the ACC championship game.

Watson's 420 total yards and five total touchdowns set ACC championship game records and assures the Tigers (13-0) a spot in the College Football Playoff.

"I wanted to prove that we were one of the best teams in the country and that we deserved to be in the top four," Watson said.

The win didn't come without controversy.

North Carolina's Ryan Switzer hauled in his second TD catch of the game with 1:13 left to cut Clemson's lead to eight.

The Tar Heels appeared to recover the onside kick, but were called for being offside — although replays didn't show any player in a blue jersey being offside — and had to kick again. North Carolina attempted another onside kick and this time Clemson recovered and ran out the clock.

"I had a chance to look at it and they missed it. They were wrong. That's all I'm going to say about it. They were wrong," UNC coach Larry Fedora said.

Fedora said with three timeouts and the ball near midfield with 1:08 left on the clock he was confident North Carolina could have scored and had a chance at a 2-point conversion to send the game into overtime.

"It isn't going to change," Fedora said. "It doesn't matter one way or the other, so I'm going to have to swallow it like a man and just take it."

Clemson was in the top spot when the playoff pairings were revealed Sunday. They will face No. 4 Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl on Dec. 31.

"We've got three top 10 wins. Anybody else got that? And we're 13-0," Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said after the game.

Clemson racked up a conference championship game record 608 yards, eclipsing the 500-yard mark for the ninth consecutive game.

Wayne Gallman ran for 185 yards on 27 carries and scored two touchdowns and Artavis Scott had seven catches for 96 yards and a score.

"They stretch you with their receivers, horizontally, and created seams in the defense," Fedora said. "And if you don't fit exactly where you're supposed to or you miss a tackle, they're going to have a big play, and that's what happened."

Marquise Williams threw for 224 yards and three touchdowns and also ran for 81 yards and a score for the Tar Heels (11-2, No. 10 CFP), who were trying to win their first ACC title in 35 years.

Tide sinks Gators, now awaits playoffs

Associated Press

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Michigan State surprises Iowa

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — L.J. Scott's late lunge did more than put the ball across the goal line — it all but certainly put No. 5 Michigan State into the College Football Playoff.

No matter how many times he got hit, the freshman kept powering forward. And with one final stretch, he reached the ball into the end zone for a touchdown with 27 seconds left that sent the Spartans past No. 4 Iowa 16-13 Saturday night in the Big Ten championship game.

"I was just trying to make a big play for my brothers," Scott said. "We knew what we had at stake."

Quarterback Connor Cook led the Spartans (12-1) on a 22-play drive that set up Scott's 1-yard run on third down. A half-dozen Iowa defenders tried to stop Scott and pushed him backward, but he wouldn't be denied.

In all, it took six seconds for the 233-pound running back to travel that final, season-saving yard.

Iowa (12-1) saw its unbeaten season end, inches short of perfection.

The win earned the Spartans the No. 2 seed in the College Football Playoffs, a matchup against No. 2 Alabama in the Cotton Bowl on Dec. 31.

By winning his second Big Ten crown in three years — both against previously unbeaten teams — and giving the senior class a record-breaking 43rd career win, Connor Cook and his teammates can turn now their focus to their season-long goal, winning the school's first outright national title since 1952.

"We wanted to come back and win a championship," Cook said. "It's awesome, man."

Cook finished 16-for-32 with 191 yards, no touchdowns and one interception. He still became the first player chosen the title game MVP twice — largely because of the poise he demonstrated on a methodical 82-yard drive that consumed 9 minutes, 4 seconds and essentially sealed Iowa's fate.

Michigan State heads into the postseason with lots of confidence after winning four straight, with two coming against top 10 teams.

"Our football team knows how to win. We can play it out," coach Mark Dantonio said.



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Warriors improve to 21-0

Associated Press

TORONTO — Stephen Curry made nine three-pointers and scored 44 points, leading the undefeated Golden State Warriors to a 112-109 victory over the Toronto Raptors on Saturday.

Curry was 14-for-24 from the field and 9-for-15 from beyond the arc as Golden State pushed its NBA-record start to 21-0. Klay Thompson scored 26 points, and Draymond Green had 16 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the win moved Golden State past the St. Louis Maroons of the Union Association, a predecessor to Major League Baseball, for the best start to a season by a professional sports team.

Kyle Lowry made six three-pointers and scored a career-high 41 points for Toronto, which has dropped three of four. DeMar DeRozan recovered from an ugly 1-for-10 shooting performance in the first half, finishing with 16 points.

Lowry found Lucas Nogueira for an alley-oop dunk with 2:03 to go, tying it at 102. Green responded with two foul shots for Golden State. After DeRozan went 1 for 2 at the line, Curry hit two more free throws.

Curry and Thompson then combined to go 6 for 6 at the line in the final 18.2 seconds to help Golden State hang on.

At 25 consecutive regular-season wins,

the Warriors possess the third-longest streak in NBA history, behind only the 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers (33) and the 2012-13 Miami Heat (25).

The game turned into something of 3-point shooting contest between Curry and Lowry, with the reigning NBA MVP taking the personal duel and the game. Each star also had seven assists.

Golden State led 59-49 at the break, but Lowry scored 13 in the third to help Toronto slice its deficit to four heading into the final period.

Golden State suffered a scare in the second quarter when Curry left the court clutching his face following a collision with DeMarre Carroll's shoulder after hitting a layup, forcing the Warriors to burn a 20-second timeout. But he returned less than a minute later.

Fresh off his 40-point effort in Charlotte on Wednesday, Curry connected on his first five shots, including four 3-pointers, for 14 points as Golden State jumped to an 11-point lead after 12 minutes.

Heat 99, Cavaliers 84: Dwyane Wade and Tyler Johnson scored 19 points apiece, and host Miami took advantage of Cleveland's decision to hold out LeBron James.

Jazz 122, Pacers 119 (OT): Derrick Favors scored a career-high 35 points, and host Utah rallied for the win.

Indiana wasted career-high 48 points from Paul George, who carried the offen-

sive load for much of the night. But two missed jumpers down the stretch of regulation helped Utah come back.

Spurs 108, Celtics 105: LaMarcus Aldridge scored 17 points, and San Antonio improved to 11-0 at home.

Clippers 103, Magic 101: Jamal Crawford scored 16 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter, helping host Los Angeles halt Orlando's five-game winning streak.

Hornets 102, Bulls 96: Nicolas Batum scored 12 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter, leading visiting Charlotte to the win.

Rockets 120, Kings 113: James Harden scored 31 points, Dwight Howard had 22 and Houston beat visiting Sacramento for its third straight win.

Nuggets 108, 76ers 105: Danilo Gallinari scored 24 points for visiting Denver, including the go-ahead slam dunk with under a minute remaining.

Bucks 106, Knicks 91: Michael Carter-Williams had 20 points, and host Milwaukee used a 21-4 run in the third quarter to pull away for the win.

Trail Blazers 109, Timberwolves 103: Damian Lillard overcame a slow start to finish with 19 points and seven assists, and visiting Portland rallied from 17 points down in the third quarter to beat Minnesota.

Red Wings rally twice, win in OT

Associated Press

DETROIT — The Detroit Red Wings were down by two goals twice. Rookie center Dylan Larkin still liked his team's chances against the Nashville Predators on Saturday night.

"We didn't get rattled and just kept playing," he said.

Gustav Nyquist scored 1:41 into overtime and the Red Wings came back to beat the Predators 5-4.

Shea Weber had a hat trick with three power-play goals and put Nashville up 4-2 with his third score 8:03 into the third period.

Larkin scored for Detroit about a minute later, and then Justin Abdelkader tied it with a power-play goal with 2:23 left.

Brad Richards and Tomas Tatar scored the Red Wings' other goals. Nyquist, Larkin and Tatar also had an assist each.

Petr Mrazek stopped 28 shots for Detroit.

Nashville's Pekka Rinne had 31 saves, but was frustrated on Nyquist's game-winner.

"Just a breakaway shot and he put it in," Rinne said. "It's a fast situation and you try to read and react. He beat me, game over."

Senators 3, Islanders 2 (OT): Erik Karlsson scored in overtime to finish off host Ottawa's comeback from two goals down in the third period.

Karlsson finished off a cross-ice pass from Bobby Ryan at 3:34 of the extra period after Mike Hoffman forced overtime with 37 seconds left in regulation.

Bruins 4, Canucks 0: Tukka Rask stopped 17 shots for his third shutout of the season and the 29th of his career to lead visiting Boston over Vancouver.

Kings 5, Penguins 3: Jake Muzzin had a goal and two assists during Los Angeles' four-goal second period and the Kings won their third consecutive game.

Milan Lucic scored twice in the Kings' fifth straight home win and Jonathan Quick made 17 saves.

Wild 3, Avalanche 0: Darcy Kuemper stopped all nine shots he faced in relief of injured Devan Dubnyk and host Minnesota beat Colorado.

Dubnyk left a scoreless game with a lower-body injury midway through the second period after making 11 saves.

Jets 2, Capitals 1 (OT): Mark Scheifele scored with 20 seconds left in overtime to end visiting Washington's season-high six-game winning streak.

Jets rookie Connor Hellebuyck made 37 saves in his third NHL game to remain undefeated.

Hurricanes 3, Canadiens 2: Jeff Skinner's second goal of the game late in the third period lifted host Carolina over Montreal.

Blue Jackets 4, Flyers 1: Nick Foligno scored twice, Scott Hartnell had a goal and two assists and Columbus beat host Philadelphia.

Maple Leafs 4, Blues 1: Nazem Kadri scored twice and Roman Polak had two assists to lead visiting Toronto past his former team.

Garret Sparks stopped 27 shots for his second career victory.

Lightning 4, Sharks 3: Nikita Kucherov scored twice to lead visiting Tampa Bay to its fifth win in seven games.

Erik Condra and Brian Boyle also scored for the Lightning.

Hoyas stop No. 14 Orange

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A white piece of tape ran down the back of a black folding chair on the Syracuse sideline Saturday, with the words "COACH" and "BOEHEIM" written in black ink. That seat remained empty throughout the game.

And instead of the suspended Hall of Fame coach yelling at his players or pleading with officials, assistant Mike Hopkins was in charge of the Orange for the first time.

With Jim Boeheim beginning his nine-game NCAA ban, and Hopkins filling in, No. 14 Syracuse lost 79-72 to old rival Georgetown, thanks in large part to senior center Bradley Hayes' career-high 21 points.

"He's always with us, at the end of the day. He built us. Built the program," Hopkins said about his boss, then paused, eyes red and welling with tears. "I wanted this one for him tonight."

Michael Gbinije scored 23 points for Syracuse (6-2), which has dropped two straight games, including being beaten at home by Wisconsin on Wednesday. The Orange trailed by as many as 21 points against Georgetown (4-3) in the schools' first meeting since Syracuse left the Big East for the Atlantic Coast Conference after the 2012-13 season — and Boeheim, as associated with his team as any coach in college basketball, was nowhere to be found.

The game was played two days after the NCAA Infractions Appeals Committee upheld the suspension of Boeheim but decided he would begin serving it immediately — during non-conference action. A March ruling said the suspension should be served during ACC play.

The 71-year-old Boeheim will miss six non-conference games and three ACC games, returning to coach the Orange

against North Carolina on Jan. 9. He cannot be around his team during the suspension.

"Imagine, all of a sudden, someone came and said that you can't talk to your father for a month. And they lived down the street. ... That's tough," said Hopkins, who played for Boeheim, has been his assistant coach for 20 years, and in June was designated as his successor.

Other than Hopkins' role, not much looked different about Syracuse. There was the familiar 2-3 zone, for example, except when some full-court pressure helped trim the deficit as low as six points in the final minute.

"We're not looking to change anything," Gbinije said. "We're just going to keep doing what we were doing before Coach Hop was basically the head coach. We still run the same sets. Same defense. Same players."

No. 3 Michigan State 76, Binghamton 33: Denzel Valentine had 13 points and 12 rebounds and Bryn Forbes scored 14 points as the host Spartans (9-0) rolled over Binghamton.

No. 4 Kansas 75, Harvard 69: Frank Mason III scored 21 points and Perry Ellis added 12 for host Kansas (6-1).

No. 5 Duke 82, Buffalo 59: Freshman Brandon Ingram scored 23 points and Grayson Allen finished with 22 points and a career-best 11 rebounds for host Duke (8-1).

No. 10 Virginia 67, William & Mary 52: Anthony Gill and Malcolm Brogdon scored 16 points each and host Virginia (7-1) won its sixth straight. Darius Thompson added 12 points.

No. 11 Purdue 70, New Mexico 58: Seven-foot-two Isaac Haas scored 21 points and 7-footer A.J. Hammons added 16 for host Purdue (8-0).

No. 12 Xavier 95, Western Kentucky

64: Trevon Bluiett matched his career high with 21 points and host Xavier (8-0) extended its best start in four years.

No. 19 Arizona 68, No. 13 Gonzaga 63: Gabe York scored 14 of his 18 points in the second half and Allonzo Trier added 14 as visiting Arizona rallied from a 10-point halftime deficit.

The Wildcats (7-1) rallied to hand Gonzaga (5-2) its first non-conference home loss since falling to Illinois in 2012.

Arizona State 67, No. 18 Texas A&M 54: Willie Atwood had 15 points to lead Arizona State's balanced offense and the host Sun Devils held off a late charge to beat Texas A&M.

Arizona State (6-2) passed its first big test by beating the Aggies, the third ranked nonconference team to play at Wells Fargo Arena in 32 years.

No. 20 West Virginia 87, Kennesaw St. 54: Devin Williams had 26 points and nine rebounds and Jonathan Holton had 17 points and nine rebounds for host West Virginia (7-0).

No. 21 Miami 88, Charlotte 60: Seven reserves combined for 35 points to help host Miami (7-1).

No. 22 SMU 98, New Hampshire 44: Keith Frazier scored 20 of his 23 points in the first half to lead host SMU (6-0).

No. 23 Providence 74, Rhode Island 72: Ben Bentil tipped in Kris Dunn's missed shot at the buzzer to lift visiting Providence (8-1).

No. 24 Louisville 111, Grand Canyon 63: Damion Lee matched his season-high with 24 points and Trey Lewis added 16 as host Louisville (6-10) used a 26-3 first-half run to pull away.

Air Force 61, Denver 59: Zach Moer scored 15 points and Air Force survived a frantic finish. Moer's jumper with 5:36 to play gave Air Force (6-2) the lead for good at 51-50.