

Israel resumes Gaza strikes as truce ends

Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip — Israel's war with Hamas erupted again Friday, as air-strikes hit houses and buildings in the Gaza Strip minutes after a weeklong truce expired.

Black smoke billowed from the besieged territory, where health authorities reported dozens of Palestinians killed and Israel dropped leaflets over Gaza City and southern parts of the enclave, urging civilians to flee to avoid the fighting.

Militants in Gaza resumed firing rockets into Israel, and fighting broke out between Israel and Hezbollah militants operating along its northern border with Lebanon.

The resumption of the war threatens to compound the suffering in Gaza. Some 2 million people — almost its entire population — are crammed into the territory's south, where Israel urged people to relocate at the war's start and has since vowed to extend its ground assault. Unable to go into north Gaza or neighboring Egypt, their only

escape is to move around within the 85-square-mile area.

Renewed hostilities also heighten concerns for about 140 hostages still held captive by Hamas and other militants, after more than 100 were freed during the truce.

Qatar, which has served as a mediator along with Egypt, said negotiators were still trying to reach an agreement on restarting the cease-fire.

Israel and Hamas traded blame for ending the truce, but Qatar's Foreign Ministry singled out Israel's role in the resumption of fighting, saying it "complicates mediation efforts and exacerbates the humanitarian catastrophe."

A day earlier, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli officials and urged them to do more to protect Palestinian civilians as they seek to destroy Hamas. Blinken was to meet Friday with Arab foreign ministers at global climate talks in Dubai.

It was not clear to what extent Israeli Prime Minister Benja-

min Netanyahu will heed the appeals of the United States, Israel's most important ally.

Netanyahu's office said Friday that Israel "is committed to achieving the goals of the war," including releasing the hostages and eliminating Hamas, which has ruled Gaza since 2007.

In response to the U.S. calls, the Israeli military released a map dividing the Gaza Strip into hundreds of numbered, haphazardly drawn parcels. It asked residents to learn the number associated with their location in case of an eventual evacuation. It was not immediately clear where Palestinians would go, with no safe areas designated on the map.

Hours into the renewed bombardment, Gaza's Health Ministry said 109 people had been killed and dozens wounded. Israel said it struck more than 200 Hamas targets.

Since the war began, more than 13,300 Palestinians have died, roughly two-thirds of them women and minors, according

to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not differentiate between civilians and combatants.

The toll is likely much higher, as officials have only sporadically updated the count since Nov. 11.

The ministry says thousands more people are feared dead under the rubble.

The war began after the Oct. 7 attack by Hamas and other Palestinian militants, who killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in southern Israel and took around 240 people captive.

The New York Times reported that Israel's military was aware of Hamas' plan to launch an attack on Israeli soil over a year before the devastating operation.

About an hour before the cease-fire was to expire early Friday, Israel said it intercepted a volley of rockets fired from Gaza.

Minutes after the deadline, the military announced a resumption of combat operations and soon after gave word of new strikes.

Philippines opens monitoring base in South China Sea

Associated Press

THITU ISLAND, South China Sea — The Philippines inaugurated a new coast guard monitoring base Friday on an island occupied by Filipino forces in the disputed South China Sea and plans to expand joint patrols with the United States and Australia to counter China's "pure bullying" in the strategic waterway, a Philippine security official said.

High-seas faceoffs between Chinese and Philippine ships have intensified this year in the contested waters, fueling fears

of a larger conflict that could involve the United States. The U.S. has repeatedly warned that it's obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

China has accused the U.S. of meddling in an Asian dispute and sowing discord in the region.

National Security Adviser Eduardo Ano and other Philippine officials flew to Thitu Island on an air force plane Fri-

day and led a ceremony to open the newly constructed, two-story center that will have radar, ship-tracking and other monitoring equipment to monitor China's actions in the hotly disputed waters and other problems, including sea accidents.

"It's no longer gray zone. It's pure bullying," Ano told reporters after the seaside ceremony, describing the actions of Chinese ships as openly flouting international law.

Dwarfed by China's military might, the Philippines decided this year to allow an expansion

of the U.S. military presence in its local camps under a 2014 defense pact. It also recently launched joint sea and air patrols with the United States and Australia in a new deterrence strategy that puts the two allied powers on a collision course with Beijing.

Ano said the separate joint patrols involving the U.S. and Australia would continue and could expand to include other nations like Japan once a security agreement being negotiated by Tokyo and Manila was concluded.

Ospreys fly in Japan as search continues

By HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Ospreys will continue to fly in Japan, the Pentagon said, as search-and-rescue efforts entered a third day for an Air Force tiltrotor that crashed near an island in Kagoshima prefecture.

The CV-22B, assigned to the 353rd Special Operations Wing at Yokota, was on a routine training mission when it went down off Yakushima on Wednesday afternoon, according to Air Force Special Operations Command.

One of the Osprey's eight crewmembers — recovered unconscious soon after the crash alongside an empty 20-person life raft and aircraft wreckage — has been confirmed dead, a Kyushu-based spokesman for Japan's Ministry of Defense said Thursday. The body was returned to the U.S. military that afternoon, according to Japan's 10th Regional Coast Guard Headquarters.

The Japan Ground Self-Defense Force has grounded its fleet of 14 Ospreys, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters Thursday. Tokyo has asked the U.S. military to confirm that all its tiltrotors are safe before flying them in Japan, he said.

U.S. Ospreys are still operating in Japan, Pentagon spokesman Sabrina Singh told reporters at a news briefing Thursday in Washington.

"Right now, our focus on what just happened earlier this week remains on search-and-rescue efforts," she said. "It's currently under investigation to see exactly what happened."

Asked if the Defense Department has concerns about the Ospreys, Singh said she would not get ahead of the investigation.

"If the investigation concludes that there needs to be additional steps taken, we'll certainly do that, but at this time the investigation is underway on what happened," she

said.

Singh couldn't provide a significant update on the multiday search, which so far has included vessels and aircraft from the U.S. military, Japan Self-Defense Forces and Japanese coast guard.

Japanese Defense Minister Minoru Kihara said he met with the commander of U.S. Forces Japan, Air Force Lt. Gen. Ricky Rupp, Thursday afternoon at the ministry's Tokyo headquarters.

"Given that Ospreys continued flights at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, I once again requested him to provide specific information on the measure that U.S. forces are currently taking and plan to take in order to ensure flight safety," Kihara said at a news conference after their meeting.

Kihara said he told Rupp that saving lives is Japan's highest priority and they will continue to put strong effort into the search-and-rescue operation.

USFJ did not immediately

respond Friday to emails and phone calls requesting comment about the meeting.

Matsuno, speaking at a news conference Friday, said Tokyo will continue to urge the U.S. to take measures to ensure safety.

"We have concerns that they are conducting flights when sufficient explanation on flight safety confirmation has not been given to the Japanese government, although we have been making similar requests," he said.

Japan's coast guard confirmed in a news release Friday morning that search efforts are moving forward with vessels, aircraft and teams from multiple agencies, though not much progress has been made so far.

Searches using side-scan sonar have captured unusual echo images of the seafloor, the coast guard said both Thursday and Friday, but dives made on both those days offered no clues about the missing crewmembers.

Russia's Lavrov insists goals in Ukraine unchanged

Associated Press

SKOPJE, North Macedonia — Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Friday his government was not prepared to "review its goals" in Ukraine — delivering a blunt and confrontational message to Western leaders on a rare trip to a NATO member state.

"We aren't seeing any signals from Kyiv or its masters about their readiness to seek any kind of political settlement," Lavrov told reporters while attending a security conference in North Macedonia.

"We see no reason to review our goals," he said.

North Macedonia, which

joined NATO in 2020, waived a flight ban on Russian officials so that Lavrov could attend the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, prompting the foreign ministers of Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to skip the meeting in protest.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken made a brief stop in North Macedonia's capital of Skopje before Lavrov arrived.

Participants at the two-day conference accused Moscow of undermining the OSCE. The Vienna, Austria-based organization — originally created to ease Cold War tensions — includes countries from North

America, Europe and the former Soviet Union.

"It is Russia that is waging an unprovoked and unlawful war against Ukraine, and it is Russia that is obstructing the OSCE agenda," Katrina Kaktina, Latvia's representative at the organization, said Friday.

"Russia is continuing violations of human rights: deliberate killings of civilians, including children, forced deportations, tactics of torture and sexual violence. Those are war crimes being committed by Russia in Ukraine," she said.

Speaking at a news conference in Skopje, Lavrov accused Western countries of showing

cowardice by refusing to meet with him.

"They probably want to emphasize their intention to isolate Russia but I think they just chickened out," Lavrov said during the briefing that lasted over an hour.

"They're afraid of any honest conversation," he said. "It's cowardice, simple cowardice."

While in Skopje, Lavrov held several bilateral meetings including talks with the foreign ministers of Armenia and North Macedonia as well as with Peter Szijjarto, the foreign minister of Hungary which has maintained close ties with Moscow despite European Union sanctions.

House expels Santos over ethics allegations

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House voted on Friday to expel Republican Rep. George Santos of New York after a critical ethics report on his conduct that accused him of converting campaign donations for his own use. He was just the sixth member in the chamber's history to be ousted by colleagues.

The vote to expel was 311-114. Expulsion requires support from two-thirds of the House, a purposefully high bar, but a blistering House Ethics Committee report that accused Santos of breaking federal law proved decisive.

Santos fought the expulsion effort leading up to the vote, leading his own defense during House floor debate and in conducting a press conference and interviews.

"I will not stand by quietly," Santos declared as lawmakers debated his removal the evening before the vote. "The people of the Third District of New

York sent me here. If they want me out, you're going to have to go silence those people and go take the hard vote."

Of the previous expulsions in the House, three were for disloyalty to the Union during the Civil War. The remaining two occurred after the lawmakers were convicted of crimes in federal court. Santos made his case for remaining in office by appealing directly to lawmakers who worry they are setting a new precedent that could make expulsions more common.

House Speaker Mike Johnson was among those who voiced concerns about removing Santos, though he has told members to vote their conscience. Others in leadership agreed with his reasoning and opposed expulsion. But some Republicans, including Santos' colleagues from New York, said voters will welcome lawmakers being held to a higher standard.

"I'm pretty confident the American people would ap-

plaud that. I'm pretty confident that the American people expect that, and I hope that tomorrow, in this great chamber, we set that precedent," said Republican Rep. Anthony D'Esposito, whose district adjoins Santos.'

Santos warned lawmakers they would regret removing a member before they have had their day in court.

"This will haunt them in the future where mere allegations are sufficient to have members removed from office when duly elected by their people in their respective states and districts," Santos said.

The expulsion push is just the latest chapter in what has been a spectacular fall from grace for Santos, a first-term lawmaker initially celebrated as an up-and-comer after he flipped a district from Democrats last year and helped Republicans win control of the House. But, soon after, troubles began. Reports began to emerge that San-

tos had lied about having Jewish ancestry, a career at top Wall Street firms and a college degree. His presence in the House quickly became a distraction and an embarrassment to the party.

In early March, the House Ethics Committee announced it was launching an investigation into Santos. Then in May, the U.S. attorney's office for the Eastern District of New York indicted Santos, accusing him of duping donors, stealing from his campaign and lying to Congress. Prosecutors would later add more charges in an updated 23-count indictment.

The indictment alleges he stole the identities of campaign donors and then used their credit cards to make tens of thousands of dollars in unauthorized charges. Federal prosecutors say Santos, who has pleaded not guilty, wired some of the money to his personal bank account and used the rest to pad his campaign coffers.

DeSantis, Newsom lob insults and talk some policy

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In an alternate reality, the prime-time showdown between California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom and Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis on Thursday could have been a preview of a 2024 general election debate.

Instead, it was a hard-to-explain 90-minute clash that pitted one struggling Republican presidential hopeful against a Democratic rival who may or may not seek the presidency in four years.

But for a night, at least, the big-state governors were eager to represent their parties on the national stage as they battled over the economy, pandemic restrictions and President Joe Biden's leadership in a Fox News faceoff peppered with fi-

ery policy disputes and personal insults.

"This is a slick, slippery politician whose state is failing," DeSantis said of Newsom.

The California Democrat defended his state, but was equally eager to shift the discussion to DeSantis' stagnant 2024 presidential bid.

"How's that going for you, Ron? You're down 41 points in your own home state," said Newsom, who is backing Biden for president. "Neither of us will be the nominee for a party in 2024."

The host, Fox News Channel, billed the event hosted by Sean Hannity as "The Great Red vs. Blue State Debate." Yet it was held in a television studio with no audience in Georgia, a location chosen for its key swing-state implications in national

politics. And it played out in the heart of presidential primary season with voters in both parties paying closer attention to their 2024 options heading into next fall's general election.

As leaders of two of the three most populous states, DeSantis and Newsom have spent much of the past year poking each other's policy choices and leadership style from afar. But on Thursday night, they got their first chance to challenge each other on the same national stage.

It was hard to watch at times.

The two participants, standing at podiums alone onstage, accused each other of lying repeatedly and talked over each other throughout. And while they largely focused on policy differences, the debate was also deeply personal at times.

DeSantis called Newsom "a liberal bully." Of DeSantis, Newsom said, "I don't like the way you demean and humiliate people you disagree with."

Hannity struggled to control the action. Over and over, he encouraged the men to give each other "breathing room."

DeSantis, a 45-year-old Republican governor elected to his second and final term last fall, is grasping for momentum in a 2024 campaign plagued by missteps in his bid to defeat former President Donald Trump, who remains the overwhelming front-runner in the GOP primary.

Newsom, California's 56-year-old term-limited Democratic governor, has positioned himself to seek the presidency someday, but has declined to challenge Biden in 2024.

Retired Justice O'Connor dies at age 93

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, an unwavering voice of moderate conservatism and the first woman to serve on the nation's highest court, died Friday. She was 93.

O'Connor died in Phoenix, of complications related to advanced dementia and a respiratory illness, the Supreme Court said in a news release.

Chief Justice John Roberts mourned her death. "A daughter of the American Southwest, Sandra Day O'Connor blazed an historic trail as our Nation's first female Justice," Roberts said in statement issued by the court. "She met that challenge with undaunted determination, indisputable ability, and engaging candor."

In 2018, she announced that she had been diagnosed with "the beginning stages of dementia, probably Alzheimer's disease." Her husband, John O'Connor, died of complications of Alzheimer's in 2009.

O'Connor's nomination in 1981 by President Ronald Re-

agan and subsequent confirmation by the Senate ended 191 years of male exclusivity on the high court. A native of Arizona who grew up on her family's sprawling ranch, O'Connor wasted little time building a reputation as a hard worker who wielded considerable political clout on the nine-member court.

The granddaughter of a pioneer who traveled west from Vermont and founded the family ranch some three decades before Arizona became a state, O'Connor had a tenacious, independent spirit that came naturally. As a child growing up in the remote outback, she learned early to ride horses, round up cattle and drive trucks and tractors.

"I didn't do all the things the boys did," she said in a 1981 Time magazine interview, "but I fixed windmills and repaired fences."

On the bench, her influence could best be seen, and her legal thinking most closely scrutinized, in the court's rulings on abortion, perhaps the most con-

tentious and divisive issue the justices faced.

O'Connor balked at letting states outlaw most abortions, refusing in 1989 to join four other justices who were ready to reverse the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that said women have a constitutional right to abortion.

Then, in 1992, she helped forge and lead a five-justice majority that reaffirmed the core holding of the 1973 ruling.

"Some of us as individuals find abortion offensive to our most basic principles of morality, but that can't control our decision," O'Connor said in court, reading a summary of the decision in Planned Parenthood v. Casey. "Our obligation is to define the liberty of all, not to mandate our own moral code."

Thirty years after that decision, a more conservative court did overturn Roe and Casey, and the opinion was written by the man who took her high court seat, Justice Samuel Alito. He joined the court upon O'Connor's retirement in 2006, chosen by President George W.

Bush.

In 2000, O'Connor was part of the 5-4 majority that effectively resolved the disputed 2000 presidential election in favor of Bush, over Democrat Al Gore.

O'Connor was regarded with great fondness by many of her colleagues. When she retired, Justice Clarence Thomas, a consistent conservative, called her "an outstanding colleague, civil in dissent and gracious when in the majority."

She could, nonetheless, express her views tartly.

In one of her final actions as a justice, a dissent to a 5-4 ruling to allow local governments to condemn and seize personal property to allow private developers to build shopping plazas, office buildings and other facilities, she warned that the majority had unwisely ceded yet more power to the powerful.

"The specter of condemnation hangs over all property," O'Connor wrote. "Nothing is to prevent the state from replacing ... any home with a shopping mall, or any farm with a factory."

Myanmar's military losing land in nationwide attacks

Associated Press

BANGKOK — About two weeks into a major offensive against Myanmar's military-run government by an alliance of three well-armed militias of ethnic minorities, an army captain, fighting in a jungle area near the northeastern border with China, lamented that he'd never seen such intense action.

His commander in Myanmar's 99th Light Infantry Division had been killed in fighting in Shan state the week before and the 35-year-old career soldier said army outposts were in disarray and being hit from all sides.

The coordinated offensive in

the northeast has inspired resistance forces around the country to attack, and Myanmar's military is falling back on almost every front. The army says it's regrouping and will regain the initiative, but hope is rising among opponents that this could be a turning point in the struggle to oust the army leaders who toppled democratically elected Aung San Suu Kyi almost three years ago.

Caught by surprise by the attack dubbed Operation 1027, the military has lost more than 180 outposts and strongpoints, including four major bases and four economically important border crossings with China.

70-year-old Ugandan gives birth following treatment

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda — A 70-year-old woman in Uganda has given birth to twins after receiving fertility treatment, making her one of the world's oldest new mothers.

Safina Namukwaya gave birth to a boy and a girl on Wednesday via cesarean section at the hospital in the capital Kampala where she had been receiving in vitro fertilization treatment, said Arthur Matsiko, spokesman for the Women's Hospital International Facility Center.

"She's healthy. She's talking. She's walking around if they tell her to walk around the hospi-

tal," Matsiko said Friday, speaking of Namukwaya, who had a daughter at the same facility in 2020 following IVF treatment.

Namukwaya is the oldest woman to deliver a baby at the hospital, whose proprietor is a prominent gynecologist in the East African region. The hospital specializes in helping couples who struggle to have children.

Breakthroughs in research are improving success rates in IVF treatment. Notably, media reported that a 73-year-old woman in southern India gave birth to twin girls in 2019 after getting IVF care.

Cowboys extend home win streak to 14

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Trailing Seattle in the fourth quarter, Dak Prescott and the Dallas Cowboys knew there was no way they could extend their NFL record of five consecutive 20-point wins at home to start the season.

They kept alive the bigger streak at AT&T Stadium.

Prescott threw three touchdown passes and the Cowboys won their 14th consecutive home game, rallying to beat the Seahawks 41-35 on Thursday night.

Prescott's 12-yard pass to Jake Ferguson put Dallas in front with 4½ minutes remaining as the Cowboys (9-3) set up a rematch with NFC East rival Philadelphia by escaping for a fourth consecutive victory since falling to the Eagles 28-23 to start November.

"I told the team after the game we need games like this," coach Mike McCarthy said. "To get to where you want to go, you

have to win these kind of games."

Geno Smith threw three touchdown passes to D.K. Metcalf, including a 73-yarder, as the Seahawks (6-6) got their offense going. But Seattle couldn't avoid a third consecutive loss to drop to .500 for the first time since splitting its first two games of the season.

"There's no concession to losing, but we will definitely build on this," coach Pete Carroll said. "The story is not told what's going to happen."

Dallas' Brandon Aubrey kicked four field goals to extend the 28-year-old rookie's NFL record to 26 consecutive makes to start a career.

Neither team punted, the fifth time in NFL history that's happened. But the Dallas defense, ranked third in the league coming in, got fourth-down stops on the Seahawks' final three possessions. And DaRon Bland made his NFL-leading eighth interception late in the third

quarter after he was burned several times earlier in the game.

The Cowboys kept alive their best home winning streak since an 18-game run at old Texas Stadium from 1979-81.

Dallas trailed 35-30 when Zach Charbonnet was stopped on fourth-and-1 near midfield. Seven plays later, Ferguson scored, and Prescott hit Brandin Cooks for the 2-point conversion. Cooks also had a TD catch in the second quarter.

CeeDee Lamb had the other touchdown catch while finishing with 12 catches for 116 yards, and his 24-yard run on a jet sweep helped set up Aubrey's final field goal to put Dallas ahead by six. That came after Smith threw incomplete on fourth down near midfield with 3:11 to go.

Dallas had a double-digit lead entering the fourth quarter in each of the first five breezy home victories. This time, it trailed for the first 25-plus min-

utes after halftime before beating a team with a winning record for the first time this season.

"This was a big one to get," Prescott said. "The first one with a winning record, but more importantly in the fashion that we did. Tough game, down at halftime, down in the fourth quarter. The guys and the team just making plays when plays were needed."

The Seahawks reached midfield with 1:11 left, but Micah Parsons' pressure on fourth down forced Smith to throw the ball into the ground, sealing the victory.

Metcalf had a season-high 134 yards on six catches in his second career three-TD game as the Seahawks scored touchdowns on five of their first seven drives after coming in with 20 consecutive possessions without an offensive TD.

Smith also ran for a score while throwing for 334 yards with an interception.

Jets' Rodgers still focused on playing again this season

Associated Press

FLORHAM PARK, N.J. — Aaron Rodgers was leaned back in a chair at a board room table in the New York Jets' facility surrounded by a dozen local reporters when a simple question jumpstarted the conversation.

Why even attempt to come back this season?

"Why?" the quarterback asked incredulously. "Do you know my history? It's never been a 'why try?' It's why not?"

Rodgers fully intends to play again this season and he hasn't ruled out being back in a few weeks. The four-time NFL MVP has been making a remarkably quick recovery since tearing his left Achilles tendon four snaps into his debut with the Jets on Sept. 11.

He said he cried for most of the 24 hours after getting hurt, but quickly pivoted to plotting his return.

"From Sept. 12 on, my goal was to come back to the prac-

tice field and try to play," Rodgers said Thursday. "Obviously, that was contingent on my health and also our team being in position to make a run."

Rodgers returned to practice Wednesday — the three-month anniversary of his surgery — but sat out Thursday, a light day in his rehabilitation. The Jets have 21 days to activate Rodgers from the injured reserve list or he'll be sidelined the rest of the season.

The latter is not an option in

Rodgers' mind right now.

"Nobody said, 'You can do this,'" he said. "And I basically just said, 'Stop me from hurting myself, but I'm going to push this as far as I can and when we push it to the edge, we'll stop.'"

He said he's not yet close to being able to play and acknowledged he won't be 100% healthy if he returns less than four months after surgery. He added it "wouldn't make sense" to rush his return if the Jets (4-7) are out of the playoff hunt.

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Knicks hand Pistons 16th straight loss

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Jalen Brunson scored 42 points, Julius Randle had 29 points and 10 rebounds, and the New York Knicks sent the Detroit Pistons to their franchise-record 16th consecutive loss with a 118-112 victory Thursday night.

The Pistons (2-17) completed a winless November, having not won a game since a victory over Chicago on Oct. 28 left them 2-1.

RJ Barrett had 15 points and Donte DiVincenzo added 12, including two crucial 3-pointers down the stretch for the Knicks, who have won their past two games.

Cade Cunningham scored 31 points and Killian Hayes chipped 23 in for the Pistons. They have also lost 13 in a row against the Knicks.

Hawks 137, Spurs 135: Trae Young scored a season-high 45 points and drew a charge from Jeremy Sochan with 2.7 seconds left as visiting Atlanta handed San Antonio its 13th straight loss.

Sochan matched his career high with 33 points and Victor Wembanyama had 21 points, 12 rebounds and four blocks for San Antonio, but the Spurs remained without a win since Nov. 2.

Atlanta guard Dejounte Murray had 24 points and five steals in his third game against his former team. Bogdan Bogdanovic added 14 points as Atlanta snapped a two-game skid.

Devin Vassell added 25 points and Keldon Johnson had 22. Sochan was 11 for 13 from the field but wouldn't lead the Spurs to their first win since consecutive victories over Phoenix on Oct. 31 and Nov. 2.

Heat 142, Pacers 132: Jimmy Butler scored 24 of his 36 points in the second half, and host Miami overcame a career-high 44 points from Indiana's Tyrese Haliburton.

Rookie Jaime Jaquez Jr. scored 24 for the Heat, who

trailed by 13 early and didn't take the lead for the first time until early in the fourth. Butler added 10 rebounds, Josh Richardson scored 19 points and Duncan Robinson added 16 for Miami, which snapped a three-game slide.

The Heat used a 28-6 run in the fourth to take control in the opener of a two-game series. They host the Pacers again Saturday.

Haliburton scored 28 points in the first half for the Pacers, who had 73 points at intermission — then gave up 78 in the second half. Haliburton also had 10 assists, the NBA's first game of at least 44 points and that many assists since Donovan Mitchell's 71-point, 11-assist night for Cleveland on Jan. 2.

Bulls 120, Bucks 113 (OT): Nikola Vucevic scored 29 points, Coby White added 23 and short-handed Chicago beat visiting Milwaukee.

Alex Caruso nailed a buzzer-beating 3 at the end of regulation, and Chicago pulled off a surprise without Zach LaVine (sore right foot) and DeMar DeRozan (sprained left ankle) because of injuries.

The Bulls trailed 110-109 in overtime when Vucevic cut for a dunk with 2:28 remaining, sparking an eight-point run. Patrick Williams finished the decisive spurt when he dunked with 31 seconds remaining, and Chicago hung on from there.

Giannis Antetokounmpo led Milwaukee with 26 points and 14 rebounds. Brook Lopez scored 20, and Malik Beasley added 19 points. Damian Lillard scored 18, but the Bucks came up short after winning eight of nine.

Warriors 120, Clippers 114: Stephen Curry had 26 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and undermanned Golden State held off visiting Los Angeles.

Klay Thompson scored 10

straight during a key fourth-quarter stretch and finished with 22 points for the Warriors, who lost guards Chris Paul and Gary Payton II to injuries during a 124-123 loss Tuesday night at Sacramento, when they blew a 24-point lead in the In-Season Tournament to miss advancing out of Group C. Forward Andrew Wiggins slammed his right index finger in a car door earlier Thursday and also couldn't play.

Golden State led by as many as 18 in the first half of this one and held onto it this time despite Paul George's hot hand late.

Kawhi Leonard had 23 points and seven rebounds to lead Los Angeles, while James Harden scored 18 with seven assists. George contributed 15 points and 10 assists.

Thunder 133, Lakers 110: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 33 points and visiting Oklahoma City beat LeBron James and Los Angeles.

Gilgeous-Alexander made 11 of 18 field goals and 10 of 10 free throws. Jalen Williams scored 21 points and Chet Holmgren added 18 for the Thunder, who were coming off close losses to Philadelphia and Minnesota.

Anthony Davis led Los Angeles with 31 points and 14 rebounds. James had 21 points, 12 rebounds and six assists for the Lakers. He was a game-time decision with a left calf contusion.

Oklahoma City shot 53.2% from the field and committed only nine turnovers.

Timberwolves 101, Jazz 90: Karl-Anthony Towns had 32 points and 11 rebounds, and host Minnesota weathered the absence of leading scorer Anthony Edwards to beat Utah.

The Wolves moved into a tie with Boston for the best record in the league (14-4).

Nickeil Alexander-Walker scored a season-high 20 points and Rudy Gobert had 15 points,

13 rebounds and three blocks for Minnesota.

Simone Fontecchio led Utah with 16 points and five assists. Ochai Agbaji had in 13 points and six rebounds for the Jazz, who also lost Wednesday at Memphis.

Hornets 129, Nets 128: Terry Rozier had 37 points and 13 assists, and short-handed Charlotte beat host Brooklyn.

Miles Bridges added 23 points, Gordon Hayward chipped in 22 and Mark Williams had 12 points and 12 rebounds. The Hornets snapped their two-game losing streak despite playing without star guard LaMelo Ball and No. 2 pick Brandon Miller.

Cam Thomas scored 26 points in his return from a sprained ankle and Mikal Bridges had 22 points and nine rebounds as Brooklyn's three-game winning streak was snapped. Cam Johnson missed a 3-pointer that would have won it.

Trail Blazers 103, Cavaliers 95: Shaedon Sharpe scored 29 points, rookie Duop Reath added a season-high 13 and Portland got its second straight impressive road win this week, beating Cleveland.

The Blazers came in just 5-12 overall and 3-7 away from home before rallying to stun the Cavs, who had a massive let-down following a solid 23-point win over Atlanta on Tuesday in the NBA's In-Season Tournament.

Sharpe went 11 of 15 from the field and added 10 rebounds for the Blazers, who scored 12 straight points in the fourth quarter to separate from the Cavs. Cleveland went more than five minutes without a field goal.

Donovan Mitchell scored 23 and Evan Mobley 20 for the Cavs. Darius Garland had 15 points, but the All-Star point guard was sloppy with the ball, committing eight turnovers.

No. 15 Creighton tops Oklahoma State

Associated Press

STILLWATER, Okla. — Baylor Scheierman scored 21 points and Oklahoma City native Trey Alexander added 20 as No. 15 Creighton rebounded from its first loss of the season with a 79-65 victory over Oklahoma State on Thursday night.

Steven Ashworth scored 17 points and went 4 of 5 on 3-pointers, while Ryan Kalkbrenner had 16 points and 12 rebounds. The Bluejays (6-1) shot 53% from the field in a Big East-Big 12 Battle game that was tied 23-all after 11 minutes.

Javon Small scored 24 points to lead Oklahoma State (3-4), which shot 40% for the game and was outscored 17-0 during a decisive Creighton run in the first half.

No. 13 Florida Atlantic 83,

Liberty 58: Alijah Martin scored 20 points and Vlad Goldin added 18 points and seven rebounds as Florida Atlantic cruised past Liberty in the opening game of the Field of 68 Tipoff Classic in Boco Raton, Fla.

The Owls extended a 15-point halftime lead to 29 and handed Liberty (6-1) its first loss of the season. FAU (6-1) was playing at home for the first time since its Nov. 18 upset loss to Bryant.

Colin Porter paced Liberty with 16 points.

No. 16 Texas 77, Texas State 58: In Austin, Max Abmas scored a season-best 26 points and Texas beat Texas State in a game the Longhorns dominated early before falling behind.

Abmas made a season-high

five 3-pointers, one of them completing a 13-0 push that gave the Longhorns a 12-point lead with 8:18 left after they trailed by four earlier in the half. He also had a season-high six assists.

Abmas has made 10 of 23 3-pointers in his last three games.

Ithiel Horton added 12 points for Texas (6-1). Tyrese Hunter, Kadin Shedrick and Dillon Mitchell scored 11 apiece.

Mitchell and Kadin Shedrick each grabbed 11 rebounds for the Longhorns. Mitchell had four blocks and Shedrick three.

Dylan Dawson led Texas State (3-5) with 15 points.

No. 25 Oklahoma 107, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 86: Otega Oweh scored 20 points to lead Oklahoma over Arkansas-Pine Bluff at 95-year-old McCasland

Field House.

Jalen Moore had 19 points and eight rebounds for the Sooners. John Hugley IV added 15 points and 10 boards. Javian McCollum also scored 15, and Le'Tre Darthard had 14.

The Sooners (7-0) returned to the AP Top 25 this week for the first time since the 2020-21 season and for the first time under third-year coach Porter Moser. They hosted a game at McCasland Field House for the first time since the 2012-13 season.

The venue, adjacent to Memorial Stadium, was the team's home from 1928-75. Oklahoma students comprised the overwhelming majority of fans in the 3,059-seat building.

Kyle Milton led the Golden Lions (4-5) with 24 points, and Rashad Williams scored 20.

USC's Bronny James gets cleared for return to court

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Bronny James has been cleared by doctors for a full return to basketball four months after suffering a cardiac arrest, and the Southern California freshman is expected to make his collegiate debut soon — with his father saying he wouldn't miss it.

A James family spokesperson said in a statement Thursday that the 19-year-old will have a final evaluation this week and resume practice next week. He will be able to play in games "soon after," it said.

"The heart specialists have cleared him, which is great," coach Andy Enfield said Thursday after practice, "and now it's a matter of getting him back on the court next week hopefully to begin working out with the team full contact."

LeBron James said after the Los Angeles Lakers' game Thursday night at Oklahoma

City that he'd skip a game to attend his son's college debut.

"I already told my teammates that if they play on the same day we're playing, I'm going to have to catch them the next game," James said. "Family over everything. Definitely got to see Bronny's first game whenever he's cleared and ready to go."

LeBron said Bronny handled rehab well.

"We had great doctors along the way the whole time telling us that they believe things will work out for us in our favor, so Bronny took care of his business," LeBron said. "He did everything and didn't have any setbacks. Didn't try to rush the process of his rehab. He took every step accordingly to plan."

Bronny didn't participate in pregame warmups Wednesday night and he didn't join his teammates on the bench until late in the first half of their 106-78 rout of Eastern Washington.

Bills' Miller surrenders on domestic violence charge

Associated Press

DALLAS — Buffalo Bills linebacker Von Miller turned himself in to police in a Dallas suburb on Thursday after he was charged in a warrant with domestic violence against the mother of his children, who is pregnant, police said.

Dallas police confirmed that the 34-year-old Miller surrendered to police in the suburb of Glenn Heights to face a charge of third-degree felony assault on a pregnant woman, which is punishable by 2 to 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

The alleged assault occurred on Wednesday, according to a police affidavit in which officers wrote that Miller twice put his hands on the neck of the woman, pulled out a chunk of her hair and threw her onto a couch. The woman was treated for minor injuries, including bruising on her neck, police said.

Miller was free after posting \$5,000 bond at the DeSoto Regional Jail in his hometown, Glenn Heights police said. Miller did not return a text message from The Associated Press seeking comment.

The woman and Miller have been in a relationship for seven years and have children together, police wrote in an affidavit supporting the arrest warrant.

According to the document, police were called Wednesday to the couple's apartment in Dallas after they got into an argument. Police wrote that Miller became "visibly angry" when the woman went into the office in the apartment and slammed the door behind her.

Miller then told her to "get out," police wrote, and when she tried to collect her laptop and cellphone, Miller began pushing her. She repeatedly yelled, "Stop. I'm pregnant," the affidavit said.

Penguins rally for win over Lightning

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Goalie Tristan Jarry scored an empty-net goal and made 39 saves in the Pittsburgh Penguins' 4-2 comeback victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning 4-2 on Thursday.

Jarry stopped a dump-in and sent the puck end-to-end into the net with 1:08 left.

Jeff Carter scored the go-ahead goal in the third period for the Penguins, who also got goals from Sidney Crosby and Drew O'Connor.

Steven Stamkos and Tanner Jeannot scored for the Lightning.

Lightning goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 25 shots.

Golden Knights 4, Canucks 1: Jack Eichel had a goal and two assists in his 500th regular-season NHL game and visiting Vegas beat Vancouver.

Ivan Barbashev, William Karlsson and Brett Howden also scored to help the defending Stanley Cup champions stop a three-game slide in improving to 15-5-4.

Andrei Kuzmenko scored for the Canucks.

Wild 6, Predators 1: Connor Dewar had a hat trick and added an assist, Filip Gustavsson made 26 saves and visiting Minnesota ended Nashville's winning streak at six games.

Kirill Kaprizov had a goal and an assist, and Jake Middleton and Pat Maroon also scored for the Wild. They have won both games under new coach John Hynes.

Juuso Parssinen scored for Nashville.

Bruins 3, Sharks 0: Pavel Zacha had a goal and an assist and host Boston beat San Jose to end a three-game losing streak.

Danton Heinen and Jake DeBrusk also scored.

David Pastrnak added two assists for the Bruins, who beat the NHL-worst Sharks for the 13th straight time. MacKenzie Blackwood made 32 saves for San Jose.

Maple Leafs 4, Kraken 3 (SO): Mitch Marner had his second career hat trick and added the shootout winner in host Toronto's victory over Seattle.

Auston Matthews also scored in the shootout and had two assists to help Toronto improve to 12-6-3. Joseph Woll made 37 saves.

Jared McCann scored twice for Seattle. Eeli Tolvanen added a goal and Philipp Grubauer stopped 25 shots.

Capitals 5, Ducks 4: Tom Wilson scored with 5:38 left to complete his first career hat trick in his 700th game and visiting Washington extended Anaheim's losing streak to eight.

Wilson scored twice during Washington's four-goal first period. He added a late power-play goal after Anaheim trimmed it to 4-3 on Brock McGinn's goal with 8:15 to play.

Frank Vatrano added a goal for the Ducks with 27 seconds to go, but the Caps hung on.

Coyotes 4, Avalanche 3 (OT): Nick Bjugstad scored 4:39 into overtime and host Arizona outlasted Colorado for its season-high third straight victory.

Michael Carcone, Travis Boyd and Nick Schmaltz also scored for Arizona, and Connor Ingram had 28 saves.

Nathan MacKinnon, Cale Makar and Miles Wood scored for the Avalanche, who had won seven of eight and were attempting to tie the New York Rangers for the league lead in victories at 16.

Islanders 5, Hurricanes 4 (OT): Mathew Barzal scored at 2:46 of overtime to lift New York past Carolina after the Hurricanes' Sebastian Aho tied it with 2.5 seconds left in regulation.

Barzal added three assists and Semyon Varlamov stopped 39 shots as the Islanders won for the fourth time in six games.

Aho scored with goalie Pyotr Kochetkov off for an extra skater.

Kyle Palmieri, Pierre Engvall, Bo Horvat and Simon Holmstrom also scored for New York. Jalen Chatfield, Jordan Staal and Jack Drury added goals for Carolina.

Oilers 3, Jets 1: Leon Draisaitl broke a tie on a power play with 2:13 left and visiting Edmonton beat Winnipeg for its fourth straight victory.

Oilers defenseman Darnell Nurse tied at 1 with 6:49 to go with a straight-on shot from just inside the blue line that hit goalie Connor Hellebuyck's glove and bounced into the net.

Ryan McLeod capped the scoring with an empty-netter with 20 seconds left. Stuart Skinner made 25 saves to help Edmonton improve to 9-12-1.

Cole Perfetti scored on a first-period power play for Winnipeg.

Panthers 5, Canadiens 1: Sergei Bobrovsky made 21 saves for his 11th victory of the season in visiting Florida's win over Montreal.

Aleksander Barkov, Evan Rodrigues and Carter Verhaeghe each had a goal and an assist and Sam Bennett and Oliver Ekman-Larsson also scored. The Panthers improved to 14-7-2, earning five out of six points in a three-game Canadian swing.

Johnathan Kovacevic scored for Montreal, coming off a 4-2 victory in Columbus on Wednesday night. The Canadiens have lost four straight at home.

Flames 4, Stars 3: Nazem Kadri scored at 1:01 of overtime to lift host Calgary past Dallas.

The puck deflected off Kadri as he drove toward the net on a play that was reviewed for goaltender interference.

Calgary tied it with 2:41 remaining in regulation when defenseman MacKenzie Weegar lofted a shot from the blue line past screened goalie Scott Wedgewood.

Fellow defensemen Noah Hanifin and Chris Tanev also

scored for Calgary and Jacob Markstrom assisted on the winner and made 13 saves.

Mason Marchment scored twice for Dallas, the second on a penalty shot to give the Stars a 3-2 lead early in the third period. Thomas Harley also scored for Dallas.

Devils 4, Flyers 3 (OT): Luke Hughes scored 28 seconds into overtime and Alexander Holtz, Jack Hughes and Tyler Toffoli scored in regulation, leading visiting New Jersey past Philadelphia.

The Devils closed it out on a quick rebound in OT after they coughed up a 3-1 lead over the final five minutes of regulation. Sean Walker cut it to 3-2, and Tyson Foerster tied it with 50.9 seconds left.

Morgan Frost also scored for Philadelphia.

Carter Hart stopped 31 shots for the Flyers.

Red Wings 5, Blackhawks 1: J.T. Compher and Robby Fabbrì each scored twice to help host Detroit beat Chicago.

Connor Bedard set up Lukas Reichel for a tying goal early in the first period, giving the rookie center a team-high 18 points in 21 games, but the Blackhawks couldn't keep up at either end of the ice as they lost for the seventh time in nine games.

Ben Chiarot also scored and Alex Lyon stopped 34 shots for the Red Wings. They have won four of five games to build momentum ahead of Patrick Kane's expected debut next week.

Blues 6, Sabres 4: Brayden Schenn and Jake Neighbours each scored twice and host St. Louis beat Buffalo for its fourth victory in six games.

Kevin Hayes had a goal and an assist, Brandon Saad also scored and Jordan Binnington made 41 saves.

Rasmus Dahlin, Peyton Krebs and Zach Benson each had a goal and an assist for Buffalo. JJ Peterka also scored.