

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## US, Iraq develop plan to take back Mosul

BY JON HARPER

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — American military officials and their Iraqi counterparts have developed a detailed battle plan to recapture Iraq's second-largest city, and a brutal urban fight could kick off as early as April, according to U.S. Central Command.

Mosul fell to Islamic State militants last year as they swept across the country and routed much of the Iraqi army that the U.S. helped train during the Iraq War.

The "main attack force" that will try to retake the city will consist of five Iraqi army brigades, according to a CENTCOM official, who agreed to outline the battle plan for reporters on condition of anonymity. The rest of the force involved in the operation will include:

- Three Kurdish peshmerga brigades to help contain Islamic State forces from the north and to isolate them from the west.

- A "Mosul fighting force" that will comprise largely police and tribal forces as well as a brigade of counterterrorism forces.

- A reserve force of three smaller brigades.

In total, 20,000 to 25,000 Iraqi troops and associated forces will be involved in the fight, according to the official.

U.S. military officials want the Iraqis to launch the operation in April or May.

"We want them to go in that time frame, because as you get into Ramadan and the summer and the heat, it becomes problematic if it goes much later than that," the official said.

"The shaping for Mosul and the isolation of Mosul is going on now. The preparation for the forces that will participate in Mosul is ongoing right now."

### Militants may lose supply route

*The Washington Post*

BAGHDAD — For weeks, U.S.-backed forces have been fighting to oust the Islamic State from key areas of northern Iraq in a series of small-scale battles that could have an enormous impact on the group's "caliphate."

A major prize in the clashes is a highway that serves as a lifeline for the Islamic State. It runs from the group's Iraq stronghold in Mosul to its enclaves in northeastern Syria, including its self-styled capital, Raqqa, 300 miles away.

The battles are occurring as Islamic State is causing growing alarm internationally over its brutal actions, which have included the murder of a captured Jordanian pilot and the beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians by Libya-based adherents of the extremist group.

In late January, however, Islamic State fighters suffered a setback as Iraqi Kurdish forces seized a stretch of the key highway at the town of Kiske, west of Mosul.

The Iraqis have identified the units that will take part in the attack, but the official declined to name them.

Although plans are moving forward, the official acknowledged that much remains to be done before the attack can happen.

The U.S. and its coalition partners still have to train and equip the five Iraqi brigades that will constitute the main attack force. That process normally takes four to six weeks

The Islamic State is still using the highway, detouring onto back roads to get around Kiske. But if the Iraqi Kurdish fighters can maintain and expand their hold on the road, the Islamist extremists "will be under a kind of siege in the area. It will be very hard for them" logistically, said Hisham al-Hashemi, an Iraqi researcher who is an expert on the radical group.

Blocking the highway would pressure the Sunni fighters to rely on lengthier and potentially riskier routes to transport people, cash and weapons, analysts say.

The loss of the highway between Mosul and Raqqa would be not just a logistical defeat for Islamic State but also a psychological one, analysts say.

"The integrity of the caliphate — it's built on continuous military victory," said Jessica Lewis McFate, research director at the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

once they are in the training pipeline, according to the official. Then, the forces will have to be postured and positioned correctly before they move in.

The attack on Mosul will be postponed if it looks as though the Iraqis aren't up to the task.

"If they're not ready, if the conditions are not set, if all the equipment that they need is not physically there and they are [not] trained to a degree in which they will be successful, we have not closed the door on

continuing to slide that [timeline] to the right," the official said, but "they are moving forward as if they will execute in the [April-May] time frame."

Although there is no intention of committing large numbers of U.S. ground forces to the fight, CENTCOM will assist with equipment, logistics, air support, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, according to the official.

A more risky option under consideration is sending in American special operators to call in airstrikes to aid the Iraqi army.

"It's a matter of whether we take it one level higher and we actually accompany with [special operations forces] and [joint tactical air controller] teams to provide just a little bit more precise fires," the official said. "We are looking at all the things that are out there; what is the final enemy disposition in Mosul, how precise will the fires need to be in relationship to the forward line of troops ... and those types of things."

The official said that military leaders will weigh those issues, but the ultimate decision about sending in forward air controllers will be made by President Barack Obama.

When asked why CENTCOM had agreed to reveal so many details of the campaign plan to reporters, the official said that the command wanted to demonstrate "the level of commitment that [the Iraqis] have to this and the significance of this upcoming operation."

Officials estimate that the Islamic State has 1,000 to 2,000 fighters in Mosul, and they have had plenty of time to build up their defenses.

"Mosul will not be easy," another CENTCOM official told reporters. "It's going to be a difficult fight."

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## Defense rests in 'Sniper' trial; prosecution rebuts

The Associated Press

STEPHENVILLE, Texas — The ex-Marine charged with shooting "American Sniper" author Chris Kyle and another man was not legally insane, a prosecution expert said, suggesting the man may have gotten some of his ideas from the television show "Seinfeld."

Prosecutors called rebuttal witnesses Friday in the trial of Eddie Ray Routh, 27, who is charged with killing Kyle and his friend Chad Littlefield.

Routh's attorneys, who are pursuing an insanity defense, rested their case Thursday.

Dr. Randall Price, a forensic psychologist, testified Friday that Routh had a paranoid disorder made worse by his use of alcohol and marijuana.

"In my opinion, he did know what he was doing was wrong, and he did it anyway," Price said.

A defense witness, Dr. Mitchell H. Dunn, testified Thursday that Routh had schizophrenia and showed signs of the illness for as long as two years before the February 2013 shootings. Dunn said Routh described seeing neighbors and friends as turning into pig-human hybrids.

Price argued Routh may have gotten the idea from "Seinfeld" or the TV show "Boss Hog." In a "Seinfeld" episode, one character, Kramer, believes he has discovered a "pig-man."

"I don't know for a fact that he saw that episode of 'Seinfeld,' but I do know that he's watched 'Boss Hog,'" Price said. "For a long time, he's talked a lot about pigs to a lot of people. So it's suspicious."

He said Routh's actions do not meet the legal definition of insanity under state criminal law.

### Victim's neighbor held in Nev. road-rage slaying

LAS VEGAS — Police took an important step toward solving the mystery surrounding the killing of a Las Vegas mother outside her home, arresting a teenage neighbor who had a history with the family that reached a boiling point the night of the shooting.

Erich Nowsch, 19, was arrested on suspicion of murder Thursday after SWAT teams surrounded his home a block away from the residence of victim Tammy Meyers. Las Vegas police Capt. Chris Tomaino said detectives believe Nowsch was

the gunman. He was arrested on a murder warrant, but has not been formally charged.

Tomaino said police are seeking a second suspect.

Police and the family of the victim have characterized the case as a road-rage altercation that escalated into the deadly encounter a week ago. The exact circumstances of the fight remained unclear, but the family knew the suspect, said Robert Meyers, the victim's husband.

He said Tammy Meyers took on a nurturing role for Nowsch, giving him money and food and urging him to dress properly.

From The Associated Press

## Iwo Jima vets mark anniversary of battle

By MARTIN KUZ

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Capt. Larry Snowden led a company of 230 Marines that landed on the beach of a small Japanese island Feb. 19, 1945. Five weeks later, when Iwo Jima fell to U.S. forces after one of the bloodiest battles in the Pacific during World War II, his unit's losses reflected the steep cost of an historic victory.

"When we walked off the island, 99 of us remained," said Snowden, 93, the senior ranking survivor of the invasion, who retired from the Marines as a lieutenant general in 1979. "That's a pretty high casualty rate."

Snowden spoke Thursday in Washington at a gathering of Iwo Jima survivors who marked the 70th anniversary of the start of the siege. Over the decades, the battle's prominence has persisted, owing to a photograph that shows five Marines and a Navy corpsman raising an American flag on Mount Suribachi, the island's highest point.

Yet it is the ferocity of the fighting that lingers in the memories of the men sent to Iwo Jima.

Snowden's company belonged to the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment of the 4th Marine Division. His unit went ashore the first day, part of the initial push of 30,000 U.S. troops, most of whom were

Marines.

An additional 40,000 men later joined the struggle against 22,000 Japanese soldiers, who hid among an intricate network of tunnels and caves spanning the volcanic island 750 miles from mainland Japan.

By the time combat ended on March 26, 1945, nearly 7,000 American troops had been killed and more than 19,000 wounded. Almost 19,000 Japanese soldiers were killed as they followed the orders of Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi to fight to the death.

U.S. commanders realized only after the battle that they had overrated the strategic importance of the 8-square-mile island and its three airstrips. Iwo Jima nonetheless produced an incalculable morale boost to the American war effort when the photo of the six men raising the flag appeared in newspapers across the country.

Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal captured the moment Feb. 23, 1945, the battle's fourth day, and his image endures as a symbol of American resolve in wartime. Gen. Joseph Dunford, commandant of the Marine Corps, told the survivors that their triumph has reverberated across the generations.

"The battle of Iwo Jima has become part of the very ethos of the Marine Corps," he said.

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## Ukraine: Separatists' attacks continue despite cease-fire

The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Separatist rebels fired on Ukrainian positions nearly 50 times in the past 24 hours, and Russia is sending more tanks into Ukraine despite a cease-fire that was

supposed to take effect five days ago, a Ukrainian military spokesman said Friday.

The report, which came a day after the Russian-backed rebels captured the key rail hub of Debaltseve, raises the question of whether weeks of high-level

diplomacy aimed at producing a cease-fire and a peace plan for eastern Ukraine simply allowed the rebels to redouble efforts to grab more territory.

The village of Kurakhovo, west of the rebel stronghold of

Donetsk, was hit by fire from Grad rockets, and the village of Berdyansk, near the key port city of Mariupol, was hit overnight by artillery and mortar fire, Lt. Col. Anatoliy Stelmakh said Friday.



# Junior, Johnson take Duels

The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Jimmie Johnson swept the Budweiser Duel races Thursday to give Hendrick Motorsports a 1-2-3 start for Sunday's Daytona 500, while Danica Patrick and Denny Hamlin were involved in altercations on the track and off.

With Jeff Gordon having already won the pole for the opening race of the NASCAR Sprint Cup series, the rest of the field was decided through two qualifying races of 150 miles.

Patrick was in the second race and needed to finish 15th or better to guarantee a spot Sunday. She looked like she'd make it until a crash with Hamlin damaged her car and put her in danger of missing the field.

Her Stewart-Haas Racing team worked frantically on rapid repairs and she restarted 18th with two laps to go. She was pushed all the way around Daytona International Speedway by teammate Kurt Busch to finish 10th and make the 500.

"There's a lot of stressing out. For my team and everybody, but mostly for (sponsor) GoDaddy, it made me nervous, too," she said. "This is the biggest race of the year and they need to be in it."

The tension spilled over after the race when she confronted Hamlin. The two had been involved in an incident in Wednesday's practice, and she be-

lieved he was to blame for spinning her Thursday.

It led to a heated argument, with Hamlin at times appearing to try to calm Patrick, and he finally seemed exasperated when he covered his face with his hands.

"He cut across my rear bumper and pulls the back end around," Patrick said. "I don't want to have these issues, but if we're going to have these issues then we're going to have to deal with them. We can't be putting ourselves out of our race at someone else's expense and nothing's happened to him."

Tony Stewart, her team co-owner, entered the fray and instructed Hamlin to watch the video.

"What do you want me to do, Tony? Not race close," replied Hamlin, adamant that Patrick's car was too loose and he didn't make contact. He maintained the spin was caused by aerodynamics, not contact.

"I try to treat everyone as equal," Hamlin said. "If you're in this Cup series, you deserved your way here and you can handle a lot of situations. I just got close to her and her car got loose again. I just tried to explain that, 'Danica, oh, it's you, I've got to stay away two feet because your car is loose?'"

"I guess I just have to give more room because once I get close enough to her, her car just gets out of control."

When Hamlin and Patrick were finally separated, teammate Kurt Busch was

waiting to congratulate her. He did it by cupping her face with both hands; Busch has been accused by an ex-girlfriend of domestic assault, and he has maintained he merely cupped her face.

"It shouldn't go unsaid, Kurt was there for me," Patrick said. "Without Kurt, I wouldn't have finished where I did."

Meanwhile, the Earnhardt and Johnson wins were anticlimactic.

Gordon and Johnson swept the front row Sunday in the first round of qualifying. Then Earnhardt won the first duel to take the third starting spot.

"We've had a great car all week," Earnhardt said. "I'm so glad to get through the duel in one piece because I know how good this car is. We're going to have a fun day on Sunday."

Gordon, the four-time NASCAR champion, finished second in the duel and was followed by Joey Logano, Stewart and Clint Bowyer.

Johnson easily won the second duel, leading Kyle Busch, Carl Edwards and Greg Biffle across the finish line.

Racing their way into the Daytona 500 through the two duels were: Cole Whitt, Michael Annett, JJ Yeley, Michael McDowell, Ty Dillon, Landon Cassill, Ryan Blaney, Reed Sorenson, and Mike Wallace.

Dillon, the grandson of team owner Richard Childress, and Blaney, son of former Cup driver Dave Blaney, will be making their Daytona 500 debuts.

# Combine spotlight on Mariota

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Marcus Mariota looked comfortable on center stage Thursday.

He had the deliberate walk, the calm demeanor and the perfect answers. All the Oregon quarterback has to do now is prove he can thrive in the NFL.

The reigning Heisman Trophy winner spent roughly 15 minutes answering questions Thursday at the NFL's annual scouting combine, using a no-frills approach to show why he should be the No. 1 pick in the draft.

"As a competitor, any person would tell you that they're the best," Mariota said. "I truly believe that in myself. We'll see whatever decision is made. I've got to go in with that mentality."

His sterling résumé is not the issue.

Mariota threw for 4,454 yards with 42 touchdowns and had four interceptions in 2014, leading Oregon to the national championship game. He won the Heisman Trophy, was voted The Associated Press and Walter Camp player of the year and took home the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award, the Maxwell Award and the Dave O'Brien Award.

In December, he earned his college degree from Oregon. Add a virtually spotless background check and it appears Mariota is the right fit as a franchise quarterback.

But there are concerns about how well quarterbacks in spread offenses fare when they move to the NFL. When asked about reading more complex defenses and the perception that he can't make NFL throws, Mariota responded by simply saying that's somebody's opinion.

Those who really have questions could get an up-close look Saturday when Mariota intends to throw during quarterback workouts at Lucas Oil Stadium.

Of course, even Mariota acknowledges things will be different in the NFL.

"I haven't huddled in a while," he said. "It seems like a little detail, but that is kind of a big thing. There are other things as well: Three, five, seven-step drops under center. That's all stuff I've been able to work on the last month."

Mariota was supposed to share the big stage Thursday with Jameis Winston.

Instead, because of a longer-than-anticipated medical exam, Winston's appearance was delayed until Friday. That's when the 2013 Heisman winner from Florida State is expected to take questions.

In previous years, some of the top college quarterbacks tried to put a personal spin on the combine.

Robert Griffin III wore Superman socks, Tim Tebow embraced the attention about his faith and 2012 Heisman winner Johnny Manziel even tried to change his playful public image by taking a more business-like approach.

Mariota, in contrast, played it safe with short answers that reinforced his commitment to the sport without raising any potential red flags among his future employer.

# Islanders end Predators' six-game streak

The Associated Press

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — The New York Islanders didn't let the NHL-leading Nashville Predators push them around in their last visit to Long Island.

The last one in the regular season, at least.

No, the Predators won't be back at Nassau Coliseum again unless these surprising upstart clubs march their way to a Stanley Cup finals matchup. As far-fetched as that might have seemed in October, it is hardly out of the question now.

Nick Leddy had a goal and two assists, Jaroslav Halak tied the team record for wins in a season, and the Islanders cooled off the Predators with a 5-2 win on Thursday night.

Brian Strait, John Tavares and Johnny Boychuk scored in the first period for the Islanders, who snapped Nashville's six-game winning streak with their sixth victory in seven games. Tavares has at least one goal in four straight games.

No thoughts yet of the finals, though. "We know we have a good hockey team, and we believe we can beat any team in this league, and we expect to," Tavares said. "We have so many games, and we are so in the moment of still trying to get to the playoffs. It's important we focus on the here and now."

"If we eventually get to that point, it would be a heck of an opportunity."

The Islanders (39-19-1) lead the Metropolitan Division and are one point behind Eastern Conference-leading Montreal.

Leddy and Josh Bailey scored 1:39 apart in the third period to break open a one-goal nail biter. Halak made 30 saves.

"We beat a good team," Halak said. "They are the No. 1 team in the whole NHL the whole season. Beating them is always nice, and getting two points is more important right now."

**Blue Jackets 2, Penguins 1:** Brandon Dubinsky poked a pass from Matt Calvert past a sprawled Marc-Andre Fleury with 2:17 remaining, sending Columbus to the road win.

Pittsburgh's Blake Comeau turned it over and the Blue Jackets quickly pounced. Calvert fed Dubinsky as Pittsburgh's Steve Downie ran over Fleury. Dubinsky had little trouble tapping in his seventh goal of the season.

**Sharks 5, Stars 2:** Andrew Desjardins scored two second-period goals, and visiting San Jose held on for the win.

Antti Niemi made 37 saves for the Sharks, who had lost two straight. The victory vaulted them into a tie for seventh place in the Western Conference with Calgary, tied for third in the Pacific Division.

**Capitals 5, Jets 1:** Nicklas

Backstrom scored two second-period goals and had an assist, and host Washington won for the fourth time in five games.

Capitals star Alex Ovechkin added his league-leading 38th goal and an assist. Troy Brouwer had an empty-net goal and an assist, and John Carlson also scored.

**Canucks 5, Rangers 4 (SO):** Alexandre Burrows and Radim Vrbata scored in the shootout, and visiting Vancouver stopped New York's four-game winning streak.

Henrik Sedin scored twice for the Canucks, including a tying tally on a rebound with 2:00 left in regulation after Vancouver pulled goaltender Ryan Miller.

**Panthers 3, Canadiens 2 (SO):** Dave Bolland scored in the sixth round of the shootout, lifting Florida to the road victory.

Tomas Fleischmann and Steven Kampfer scored in regulation for the Panthers (26-19-12), who won their second game in a row to start a five-game trip.

**Sabres 3, Flyers 2 (SO):** Brian Flynn scored the clinching goal in the shootout, leading visiting Buffalo to a rare win.

Nicolas Deslauriers and Brian Gionta scored in regulation for Buffalo, which won for just the fourth time in the last 27 games. The Sabres improved to 7-2 in shootouts.



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# Clippers' center Jordan makes Spurs pay for hacking strategy

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — DeAndre Jordan gets tired of teams playing Hack-a-D.J. Tim Duncan doesn't like it, either, although he knows it's a useful strategy against a mediocre free-throw shooter like Jordan.

It just backfired on the Spurs.

Jordan had 26 points and 18 rebounds, Jamal Crawford added 26 points and the Los Angeles Clippers won 119-115 Thursday night, increasing their lead over the Spurs by 1½ games in the West.

"I'm big, I have feelings, too," Jordan said jokingly before turning serious. "I just hate that we can't just run and play."

Jordan was 10-for-28 from the line, getting in plenty of practice to go with his work outside of games. He and Duncan even chatted about the Spurs' hacking strategy.

"Unless it gets outlawed, it's part of basketball," Duncan said. "He's going to shoot 50 (percent) or below. When he starts shooting better, people will stop doing it."

Chris Paul had 22 points and 16 assists, and the Clippers outscored the Spurs 56-46 in the paint despite the absence of Blake Griffin, who is recovering from right elbow surgery. They improved to 3-1 without their All-Star forward.

"Everybody has had to step up," Paul said. "Blake is a guy that no one person can replace."

Duncan had 30 points and 11 rebounds and Tony Parker had 21 points and 13

assists for the Spurs, who had their two-game winning streak end in their first game since the All-Star break. Kawhi Leonard, who came in averaging 15.4 points, went 1-for-11 from the floor and missed all six of his three-point attempts.

Crawford and Paul came up with huge baskets in the final 32 seconds, with the Clippers clinging to one-point leads both times. Crawford took a pass from Paul and made a 3-pointer from the right corner.

"That's making the right play," Paul said. "I got the utmost confidence in my teammates, especially Mal. Jamal is made for those shots."

Marco Belinelli answered with a 3 that drew the Spurs to 115-114.

Paul hit a 16-footer with 8 seconds to go that kept the Clippers ahead by three. J.J. Redick made a pair of free throws to close out the win. Los Angeles was 27 of 52 from the line, with its attempts a season high.

"It seemed like we had the game," Parker said, "but we made some bad plays and big mistakes that hurt us in the fourth quarter."

Paul helped engineer a Clippers rally late in the third quarter. His three-pointer triggered a run of four straight threes, with two by Crawford and one from Redick, before Glen Davis' driving layup tied the game at 76. Davis got fouled and made the free throw for the Clippers' first lead of the second half, 77-76.

From there, neither team led by more than four points the rest of the quarter,

with Jordan's layup giving the Clippers a 90-88 lead going into the fourth.

Los Angeles opened the fourth on a 10-5 run that extended its lead to 100-93. Jordan made 4 of 6 free throws to keep the Clippers narrowly ahead.

Duncan scored six points in a row, bringing the Spurs within two. They got within one twice in the final 1:32, but the defending NBA champions could never take the lead in the fourth quarter.

The Clippers sure gave the Spurs a chance. Jordan was 5 of 14 on free throws in the final period, with the Spurs hacking him away from plays knowing the big man is vulnerable at the line.

There were 15 lead changes in the first half, including 10 in the opening quarter, before the Spurs moved to a nine-point lead in the third.

**Thunder 104, Mavericks 89:** Russell Westbrook had 34 points and 10 assists for host Oklahoma City.

Serge Ibaka had 21 points and a career-high 22 rebounds and reserve guard Anthony Morrow added 16 points for the Thunder, who won for the sixth time in seven games. They moved into a tie with Phoenix for eighth place in the Western Conference.

Oklahoma City rolled, despite getting just 12 points from Kevin Durant.

Dirk Nowitzki had 14 points and Tyson Chandler added 10 points and 13 rebounds for the Mavericks, who shot a season-low 36.3 percent from the field.

# NBA teams wheel & deal at deadline

The Associated Press

The No. 8 seeds suddenly look like more than first-round fodder.

Oklahoma City and Miami were two of the biggest winners on trade deadline day, making themselves not only strong enough to hold off the teams behind them, but perhaps challenge the ones way ahead.

Even the powerful ones they could meet to open the postseason.

The Heat were certainly talking big after acquiring Goran Dragic from Phoenix.

"We are incredibly pleased to take another step in getting the Miami Heat back to real championship prominence with the acquisition of Goran Dragic," Heat President Pat Riley said. "Goran is an All-NBA player, including the Most Improved Player last season, and we felt that once he became available, we would do all that we could to acquire him."

Dragic had made it clear he wasn't planning to re-sign in Phoenix, just as Reggie Jackson had made it known he wasn't long for Oklahoma City. But rather than risk losing Jackson for nothing, the Thunder used him as one of the pieces to fill out their roster.

He went to Detroit in a three-way trade with Utah that brought center Enes Kanter and forward Steve Novak from the Jazz, along with guard D.J. Augustin, forward Kyle Singler and a second-round pick from the Pistons.

The Thunder are tied with Phoenix at 29-25, though would earn the No. 8 spot via season-series tiebreaker at the moment. Still, the Suns felt they couldn't take a chance of keeping Dragic for a playoff push when he said this week he no longer trusted the organization.

The Heat jumped in, giving up two first-round picks in the package to get him.

"I did feel it was time to find a better fit," Dragic wrote on Twitter, adding "NOW it's #heatnation time and I'm excited to bring the Dragon's fire to Miami!!"

The Suns will replace Dragic with Brandon Knight, one of the many point guards moving so quickly it made the trade deadline a transition game. He was acquired from Milwaukee, which will fill his spot with last season's Rookie of the Year, Michael Carter-Williams of Philadelphia.

There were 12 trades involving 39 players. So many were on the move in deals agreed to shortly before the 3 p.m. EST deadline that most of the transactions took hours for the NBA to approve.

Even backup point guards seemed in demand, with players such as Isaiah Thomas (Boston), Ramon Sessions (Washington), Andre Miller (Sacramento), Norris Cole (New Orleans) and Pablo Prigioni (Houston) getting new homes.

Kevin Garnett got an old one, waiving his no-trade clause so Brooklyn could send him to Minnesota, where he spent the first 12 seasons of his career and led the Timberwolves to their only eight playoff appearances.

Portland got Arron Afflalo from Denver in the first completed deal of the day, adding his 14.5 points per game to strengthen its bench.

Seventeen teams made trades Thursday, though some felt no deal was necessary.

The East-leading Hawks sat it out, and asked by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution if they needed a trade, All-Star Paul Millsap had a simple response — his team's record, saying "43-11."

# Wiltjer scores 45 in win for No. 3 Gonzaga

The Associated Press

STOCKTON, Calif. — Gonzaga prides itself on having a balanced offense with many different options to beat an opponent. Against Pacific, Kyle Wiltjer was the only option needed.

Wiltjer had 45 points in Gonzaga's highest-scoring game in 54 years and the third-ranked Bulldogs tied a school record with their 20th straight win, 86-74 over Pacific on Thursday night.

"He started early and finished late," coach Mark Few said. "There are some days he starts late. This was one where he was on it all night. His teammates did a great job of finding him and looking for him and understanding that."

Gary Bell Jr. added 12 points as the Bulldogs (27-1, 15-0 West Coast Conference) used another strong shooting night to roll to a victory. Gonzaga, which leads the nation in shooting at 52.7 percent, made 60 percent of its shots, keyed by a 15-for-22 night by Wiltjer.

Wiltjer had the third-highest scoring game in school history and the most points since Frank Burgess scored a school-record 52 on Jan. 26, 1961.

"I was just in the zone," he said. "My teammates just got me the ball. I wasn't thinking of it and it just happened."

T.J. Wallace scored 19 points, David Taylor added 18 and Ray Bowles had 13 for the Tigers (10-17, 2-13), who have lost eight straight games.

The Bulldogs struggled to pull away from the last-place Tigers after opening up a double-digit lead midway through the first half. Taylor hit three of his five three-pointers early in the second half and Pacific got the deficit down to seven

with just under 7 minutes left.

But Wiltjer hit a three-pointer and a pair of layups to build the lead back to 11, as the Bulldogs cruised to maintain their perfect conference record.

**No. 7 Arizona 87, USC 57:** Kaleb Tarczewski scored 15 points, Stanley Johnson added 13 in another strong all-around game and the host Wildcats jumped on Southern California early in the rout.

Arizona (23-3, 11-2 Pac-12) did what it was supposed to at home against the conference's last-place team, overwhelming the Trojans with a slew of dunks and easy baskets at the rim. The Wildcats led by 18 at halftime and didn't let up to win their 35th straight home game.

Johnson had seven rebounds and six assists, and Tarczewski finished with 10 rebounds.

USC (10-16, 2-12) held its own through the opening 10 minutes. Once the Wildcats hit the throttle, the Trojans stood no chance.

Malik Martin had 15 points to lead USC.

**No. 9 Utah 47, Oregon State 37:** Dakarai Tucker scored 11 points as the visiting Utes handed the Beavers their first home loss in 15 games.

Delon Wright added nine points, nine rebounds and five assists for Utah (21-4, 11-2 Pac-12).

Malcom Duvivier scored 12 points for Oregon State (16-10, 7-7).

Both teams scrambled and scrapped on defense, making for a low-scoring affair.

Utah shot 42.5 percent for the game, while Oregon State shot 33.3 percent.

Seven minutes in, Utah was up 5-4. The Utes had five shots and four turnovers at that point, while the Beavers were shooting only 2-for-9.

**No. 16 Maryland 69, Nebraska 65:** Melo Trimble scored 26 points, including a pair of pivotal three-pointers down the stretch, and the host Terrapins squeezed past the Cornhuskers in the first-ever meeting between the teams.

Dez Wells and Jake Layman each scored 14 for the Terrapins (22-5, 10-4 Big Ten), who were locked in a tie game with 5:38 left before Trimble took over.

After Wells made two free throws, Trimble beat the shot clock with a jump shot from atop the key. The freshman guard connected again from beyond the arc with 2:18 remaining for a 62-54 lead.

That was just enough to provide Maryland with another close win. The Terrapins have won their last three games by a total of 11 points and are 8-0 in games decided by six points or fewer.

**No. 21 SMU 67, Temple 58:** Nic Moore scored 18 points, and the host Mustangs rallied from 10 points down in the second half to snap the Owls' seven-game winning streak.

Ryan Manuel hit a tying three-pointer and added another to cap a 7-0 run that broke a 52-52 tie and sent the American Athletic Conference-leading Mustangs (22-5, 13-2 AAC) to their 20th win in 22 games.

Will Cummings had 14 points to lead Temple (19-8, 10-4), which was trying to answer a home loss to SMU last month but instead shot 35 percent after half-time to lose its lead.