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Carter leads talks on anti-terror plan

BY JON HARPER

Stars and Stripes

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — As Iraqi troops fight to recapture the Iraqi town of al-Baghdadi from the Islamic State group, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter met Monday with U.S. troops and high-ranking officials in neighboring Kuwait to discuss the fight against the terrorist group.

Seated around a large, T-shaped table for the hourslong, closed-door session were 25 military and diplomatic officials Carter called his “Team America.”

Kuwait is home to nearly 10,000 American troops, as well as the headquarters of Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve, which is managing the campaign against Islamic State militants.

Carter, who stepped into his new job last week, traveled to Camp Arifjan to confer with senior military and diplomatic experts and to develop his own

assessment of the U.S. war strategy in the region.

There are about 3,000 American troops in Iraq training and advising Iraqi forces and providing force protection.

During a troop talk before the closed-door meeting, Carter was asked if the cap on the number of U.S. troops in Iraq, set at 3,100 by President Barack Obama, should be raised.

“I don’t have a good answer for you right now,” Carter acknowledged, saying, “that’s one of the things I want to climb on top of” during the meeting with senior experts.

When asked what it would take for him to recommend sending American ground troops into direct combat with the Islamic State, an option that Obama so far has ruled out, Carter sounded a note of caution.

“We need to be convinced that any use of our forces is necessary, is going to be sufficient, [and] that we’ve thought through not just the first step but the second step and the

third step,” he said, “so that we if we do ask you to do something, we’re asking you to do something that is going to succeed and it makes sense and ... it is necessary to take the risk that you’re taking. That’s my responsibility.”

Carter said he would discuss the potential follow-on effects of various policy options during the high-level meeting.

The Pentagon chief assured the troops that “we’ll do what it takes to defeat ISIL,” using a common acronym to refer to the Islamic State.

“We will deliver lasting defeat, make no doubt. And when that happens ... [it] will be your achievement,” he told them.

After the meeting, Carter told reporters that the anti-Islamic State coalition has “the ingredients of the strategy” right, but there are some things that can be done better.

He also suggested that some nations in the coalition need to be doing more, saying there was a “need to leverage further the individual contributions of

each” member.

Carter did not identify specific countries he believes are not contributing enough, but he made it clear that he expects the coalition to win the fight.

“The discussion indicated clearly to me that this group is hardly invincible,” he told reporters. “Our efforts to date have already been having some important impacts. Our global coalition is up to the task, and so is American leadership.”

Carter said he will host more consultations like Monday’s meeting in the future, and will bring in outside experts to contribute to the discussions.

The commander of the combined joint task force offered an upbeat assessment of the war effort, especially the situation within Iraq. Lt. Gen. James Terry told reporters traveling with Carter that the Islamic State is “on the defensive” and its ability to move is increasingly limited by U.S. airstrikes and Iraqi military efforts.

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New defense chief open to retirement reconsideration

BY JON HARPER

Stars and Stripes

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter said Sunday he is open to altering the military retirement system but would not want changes forced on current or former servicemembers.

The congressionally chartered Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission submitted proposals last month to lower personnel costs in the Defense Department. It recommended changes to entice troops to opt out of the current pension system, which

gives substantial retirement pay to those who serve 20 years or more but none to those who serve less time.

The panel suggested all troops be automatically given a savings plan account that would sock away 3 percent of pay along with a contribution from the military.

The panel also recommended that Tricare health insurance be replaced with a range of private provider options.

When a servicemember asked Carter at a troop talk at Kandahar Air Field about potential changes, he said: “I’m of course open to reconsidering the military retirement system.

It’s been around for a long time; it makes sense to take a look at it.”

Carter said he is studying the commission’s report and would not comment on specific recommendations.

“What’s critical here is that we have a system ... that will keep the all-volunteer force healthy in the future,” he said.

He said the retirement system should be attractive to potential recruits and give servicemembers appropriate incentives to either stay in the military or retire at a time that is best for them and the DOD.

“That’s the criterion that I will principally apply when con-

sidering these things,” Carter said.

He said he believes any mandated changes should apply only to those who join the military in the future.

“Any change we make [should] be one that those who are in service don’t have to [accept] if they don’t want to, because I don’t want to breach our understanding with you at the time you joined. That’s not fair,” Carter said. “But we can make other alternatives available to those who may join in the future and also to those who are in now.”

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Phased deal on Iran nukes taking shape

The Associated Press

GENEVA — The United States and Iran are shaping the contours of a deal that would initially freeze Tehran's nuclear program but would allow it to slowly ramp up activities that could be used to make nuclear arms over the last years of the agreement's duration.

Officials from some of the six-power talks with Iran said details still needed to be agreed on, with U.S. and Iranian officials meeting Monday for the third straight day ahead of an end-of-March deadline for a framework agreement. Secretary of State John Kerry joined the negotiations after arriving Sunday.

A breakthrough was not expected before Kerry returns to Washington later Monday. But Western officials familiar with the talks cited long-awaited progress on some elements that would have to go into a comprehensive deal. They described the discussions as a moving target, meaning changes in any one area would have repercussions for other parts of the negotiation.

The idea would be to reward Iran for good behavior over the last years of any agreement by gradually lifting constraints on its uranium enrichment program imposed as part of a deal that would also slowly ease sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

Iran says it does not want nuclear arms and needs enrichment only for energy, medical and scientific purposes, but the U.S. fears Tehran could re-engineer the program to its other potential use—producing the fissile core of a nuclear weapon.

The U.S. initially sought restrictions lasting for up to 20 years; Iran had pushed for less than a decade.

Iran could be allowed to operate significantly more centrifuges than the U.S. administration first demanded, though at lower capacity than they currently run. Several officials spoke of 6,500 centrifuges as a potential point of compromise.

VA call center film wins Oscar

The HBO documentary "Crisis Hotline: Veterans Press 1," about the Department of Veterans Affairs' 24-hour call center for troubled veterans and servicemembers, won the Academy Award on Sunday for best short-subject documentary.

The 40-minute film follows hotline responders, capturing private moments in

Marine who vanished in Iraq found guilty of desertion

The Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — A U.S. Marine who vanished a decade ago in Iraq has been found guilty of desertion charges related to his disappearances there and in Lebanon.

The judge, Marine Maj. Nicholas Martz, gave his verdict Monday in the bench trial of Cpl. Wassef Hassoun.

Martz found that Hassoun was guilty of deserting in Iraq in 2004 and then deserting again in 2005 by fleeing to Lebanon after a brief return to the U.S.

Hassoun also was found guilty of causing the loss of his service pistol.

Sentencing is expected later this week.

Prosecutors argued during trial that Hassoun made preparations to flee his

base in Fallujah in 2004 and foreshadowed his actions by threatening to leave for Lebanon.

Defense attorneys maintained Hassoun was kidnapped by insurgents in 2004.

The Army still has not issued a ruling in the case of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the only American prisoner of war from the Afghanistan, was released from Taliban captivity in May.

In January, the Army described several media reports that a decision in the Bergdahl case was due within days as "patently false," and that Army Gen. Mark Milley, the command authority in the Bergdahl case, had not publicly released his findings.

Stars and Stripes contributed to this report.

'Birdman' tops Oscars defined by advocacy, original artistry

The Associated Press

Hollywood is smarter than you thought. Whether by design or chance, the 87th Academy Awards on Sunday elegantly and subtly shifted the tone of the season from a reductive fixation on snubs and fact-checking to a positive celebration of original filmmaking and purposeful advocacy for causes as diverse as immigration, suicide and equal rights.

The self-obsessed industry might have given its best picture and director prizes to Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu's "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)," a trenchant examination of actorly narcissism, but the vanity seemed to stop with the opening of the envelopes. Even in their moments of singular glory, most of the winners chose to talk about something other than themselves.

The Mexican-born Iñárritu, whose

which they react to complex calls and discuss the challenges of their work.

"We are pleased that this film has highlighted the challenges our veterans can face and the work of our dedicated Veterans Crisis Line staff to save lives and get veterans into care," said VA Secretary Robert McDonald in a statement Monday. "We are hopeful that this documentary will help raise awareness of this important issue with

"Birdman" also won for cinematography and original screenplay, said he prays his native country finds "a government we deserve" and that immigrants to the U.S. "can be treated with the same dignity and the respect of the ones who came before and (built) this incredible immigrant nation."

Patricia Arquette, who won the supporting actress award for her portrayal of a mother finding herself in Richard Linklater's "Boyhood," also took a stand for equal rights and pay to the public delight of fellow nominee Meryl Streep.

Best actress winner Julianne Moore ("Still Alice") and best actor Eddie Redmayne ("The Theory of Everything") followed suit, using their speeches to discuss the afflictions of their characters — Alzheimer's and ALS, respectively.

J.K. Simmons won best supporting actor win for his role in "Whiplash."

the American public. Our veterans in crisis need to know that there is hope, and asking for help makes them stronger."

Directors Ellen Goosenberg Kent and Dana Perry accepted the award. Perry thanked suicide hotline workers and mentioned her 15-year-old son who committed suicide, closing with, "We should talk about suicide out loud."

From staff reports

Logano races to Daytona win

The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Joey Logano had a shot to win the NASCAR championship last year. A flawed late pit stop cost him the chance, and he went into the off-season determined to get back into contention again.

A win in the season-opening Daytona 500 on Sunday gave Logano the head start he wanted. His victory earned him an automatic berth into the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship, and put him at the front of the field after a week dominated by the biggest names in NASCAR.

He was motivated by a sign in the Team Penske gymnasium that reads, "Effort equals results." That one phrase inspired Logano to put in countless hours watching video of past superspeedway races with his crew chief and his spotter.

"We did everything we possibly could to prepare ourselves for this race," Logano said. "It's so cool to see that phrase come to life: Effort equals results."

More than two years after nearly washing out of one of NASCAR's top rides, Logano won the biggest race of his career by outlasting the field over a white-knuckle final 50 miles of three-wide racing.

The victory, which came under caution as a late wreck froze the field and allowed Logano to coast across the finish line, was another nod to the job Roger Penske has done with the driver he hired for the start of the 2013 season. Nicknamed "Sliced Bread" when he broke into the Sprint Cup Series at 18 because so many predicted him to be the next big thing, Logano found himself searching for a new job after four underwhelming

seasons at Joe Gibbs Racing.

Penske snatched him up, jump-started his career and got his second Daytona 500 victory via Logano. One of the most respected team owners in motorsports, "The Captain" also has a record 15 Indianapolis 500 wins.

Logano reflected after the win on the end of his run with Gibbs and the uncertainty he had about his future at just 22 years old.

"Some of the emotions you go through, you start to think, 'Man, am I going to have a job next year?' That's kind of hard as a race car driver," Logano said. "I poured all my eggs in one basket. You don't know what's going to happen."

"Who would ever guess three years down the road we'd be sitting here saying we're Daytona 500 champions? That's crazy. Life is a roller-coaster."

Logano became the second-youngest Daytona 500 winner behind Trevor Bayne, who was 20 when he pulled off an upset in 2011.

The win ended a week that began with all the attention on Jeff Gordon in his final Daytona 500, the suspension of Kurt Busch and the injury to Kyle Busch in Saturday's Xfinity Series race.

Here's a look at some of the other things that happened in the Daytona 500:

Repeat denied. Dale Earnhardt Jr. lost his chance to become the first repeat Daytona 500 winner since Sterling Marlin in 1995. Earnhardt stalked the leaders late until a strategic error on a restart with 19 laps left dumped him from contention. Earnhardt rallied for a third-place finish in his first race with new crew chief Greg Ives. "We had a really fast car, maybe the best car here," Earnhardt said.

Up in Smoke. Tony Stewart's Daytona drought continues. Stewart was involved in a five-car accident early in the 500, ruining his chances of winning the race. Stewart is winless in 17 tries in NASCAR'S premier event. "Well, it's just part of it," Stewart said. "It's not what we had planned." Stewart was hoping to end the losing streak after two tumultuous years, but he ended up with a 42nd-place finish.

The replacements. Regan Smith and Matt Crafton were in the spotlight and out of contention. It was about what should have been expected from two guys who got little or no practice time leading into the race. Smith, filling in for suspended Kurt Busch of Stewart-Haas Racing, finished 16th. Crafton, a last-minute sub for injured Kyle Busch of Joe Gibbs Racing, was 18th. Neither was a factor. "It's a pretty gnarly learning curve," said Crafton, a two-time Truck Series champion making his 500 debut.

Ford fiesta. Ford swept every points race at Daytona, culminating with Logano's victory. It was the first time the automaker has accomplished the feat. Tyler Reddick won the Truck Series opener. Ryan Reed followed with a victory in the Xfinity Series opener. Throw in Chip Ganassi Racing's win in the Rolex 24 at Daytona last month, which came in a Ford Riley Prototype, and it was a Ford fiesta at the famed track. "(We) deserve a high-five or something," Logano said.

Gordon's last Daytona comes to crushing end

The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Jeff Gordon was mobbed as he weaved his way from pit road through the Daytona garage and back to his hauler.

Fans in No. 24 apparel pleaded with Gordon for an autograph, a picture. Most of all, they begged for his return.

"Thank you, Jeff!"

"One more time!"

"Jeff, come back!"

Gordon briefly paused for a few signatures before retreating inside. But if the four-time NASCAR champion had a sliver of thought of a return next season to the superspeedway, the scene above reminded him why he walked away — his battered Chevy slowly lifted into the car bay.

Gordon wrecked on the last lap of his final Daytona 500, a crushing end to the start of his final season.

"I'm a little bit sad this is my final Daytona 500," Gordon said, "but I'm more upset we didn't have a shot at winning there at the end."

Austin Dillon turned Gordon in the middle of a huge pack vying for position in the closing two miles at Daytona International Speedway.

Gordon spun, banged into other cars and then eventually sputtered across the finish line in 33rd place.

Gordon started on the pole for the "Great American Race" and showed plenty of speed early, leading 77 of the first 100 laps. He was at the front of the field at the midway point, a bad omen for everyone at Daytona.

The last halfway leader to end up in victory lane was Davey Allison in 1992.

"I'm not going to miss those final laps," Gordon said. "That was just crazy."

He savored the start so much more.

Gordon walked hand-in-hand with his two young children during race introductions as the packed Daytona grandstands roared for him in February for the final time. He led his daughter, Ella, to the No. 24 that had been swallowed by fans and journalists on pit road. His wife, Ingrid Vandebosch, was mic'd up on her canary yellow dress for the big day. Gordon hugged team owner Rick Hendrick.

Gordon called his family one major reason why he'll step away from full-time racing. As he watched Daytona 500 champion Joey Logano celebrate nearby with his family, Gordon appreciated the moment.

"That moment you saw there with his dad that is what it's all about," Gordon said. "These types of moments, such a big race it means so much to all of us. You want to share that with the people that you are closest to that have been there along the way."

Gordon won the Daytona 500 in 1997, 1999 and 2005. He finished fourth last season, snapping a string of lackluster finishes for the Hendrick Motorsports star. He finished no better than 20th from 2010 to 2013.

Miami: Louisville doctor cleared player hit in face

The Associated Press

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Upset by the notion they would use a concussed player, Miami officials said Monday that Tonye Jekiri returned to the Hurricanes' game against Louisville over the weekend only after being cleared by a Cardinals team doctor.

Jekiri was shaken up after Louisville's Montrezl Harrell threw a ball in his face late in the first half of what became the Cardinals' 55-53 victory on Saturday. A Miami trainer suspected Jekiri might have been concussed, and the Hurricanes said Louisville's doctor then checked him.

After the game, Louisville coach Rick Pitino questioned why "that Miami doctor" would have allowed Jekiri to return if a concussion was suspected. That comment and others in Pitino's postgame news conference raised Miami's ire, and prompted Hurricanes athletic director Blake James to say so on Monday.

"Our medical team and trainers at the University of Miami are among the very best in the country and any suggestion otherwise is way off base," James said.

"We are not permitted to provide any medical information on another institution or its participants," Louisville spokesman Kenny Klein said Monday.

"Coach Pitino's comments were based on information he received from the game officials."

Jekiri was "cleared to return to play after being examined not only by our trainer but by a team doctor for the University of Louisville," James said. "Ultimately, it was the Louisville team doctor who cleared our student-athlete to return to competition."

In other college basketball news:

■ Florida will be without second-leading scorer Dorian Finney-Smith for the third consecutive game Tuesday night at Missouri.

Coach Billy Donovan says Finney-Smith remains suspended for an undisclosed violation of team rules. Donovan says he will re-evaluate Finney-Smith's status before Saturday's home game against Tennessee.

Finney-Smith is Florida's most versatile player. He's averaging 12.9 points and 5.8 rebounds this season.

Hahn wins Riviera on third hole of playoff

LOS ANGELES — James Hahn won the Northern Trust Open on Sunday in a three-man playoff with a 25-foot birdie putt on

the third extra hole for his first PGA Tour title and a trip to the Masters.

In a wild finish just as the Academy Awards was getting started, Hahn saved par on the 18th in regulation for a 2-under 69 that got him into a playoff with Dustin Johnson (69) and Paul Casey (68).

Casey was eliminated on the second extra hole — No. 10 — when Hahn and Johnson hit dangerous flop shots over the back bunker and converted birdie putts.

On the par-3 14th, Hahn made his birdie and then kept his head down as Johnson missed a 12-footer.

Giants' Bochy returns after heart procedure

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Bruce Bochy watched Giants pitchers and catchers while a song by Waylon Jennings wafted over the sound system at Scottsdale Stadium.

All was OK for the San Francisco manager.

Bochy rejoined the World Series champions Sunday, three days after having a heart procedure.

The 59-year-old Bochy had two stents placed near his heart on Thursday night.



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Oregon upsets No. 9 Utah

The Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — Dillon Brooks scored 11 straight points for Oregon late in the second half and finished with 19 to help the Ducks beat No. 9 Utah 69-58 on Sunday.

Joseph Young added 14 points and Elgin Cook had 12 for the Ducks (20-8, 10-5 Pac-12). They improved their NCAA tournament chances with their first victory over a Top 10 team since beating then-No. 3 Arizona last year in the regular-season finale.

Delon Wright scored 20 points for Utah (21-5, 11-3). The Utes dropped a game behind Arizona in the conference race with a showdown against the No. 7 Wildcats set for next Saturday in Salt Lake City.

Brooks, a freshman, scored seven consecutive points to put the Ducks up by 10 with 4:58 to play. After Utah had a 5-0 run to pull within three again, Brooks added four more points — the last two on a driving dunk — to give the Ducks a 59-52 cushion.

Oregon sealed the win by hitting seven of eight free throws in the final 1:09. The Ducks were 15 of 18 overall from the foul line.

No. 2 Virginia 51, Florida State 41: Anthony Gill scored 13 points, Darion Atkins had 11 and No. 2 Virginia overcame a hard collision between two of its players to beat visiting Florida State.

The game took a frightening turn for Virginia (25-1, 13-1 Atlantic Coast

Conference) with just under 15 minutes to play when Malcolm Brogdon and London Perrantes, the starting backcourt, collided on defense.

Perrantes stayed on the floor for a few minutes with a gash on his face as he and Brogdon were both attended to on the court. They both eventually left the court and headed to the locker room for further attention. Brogdon returned a short time later, running into the bench area to wild applause with a bandage over his left eye. He quickly checked back in, while Perrantes' return to the bench came several minutes later. He did not return to the game.

The Cavaliers led 31-28 at the time of the collision, and fell behind at 37-36 with 10:33 left on a basket by Jarquez Smith. But seldom-used guard Devon Hall, in the game in place of Perrantes, put Virginia back ahead with a reverse layup on the Cavaliers' next possession and while the game stayed close, Virginia didn't trail again.

No. 13 Wichita State 62, Evansville 43: Fred VanVleet scored 18 of his 22 points in the first half to lead host Wichita State past Evansville.

Michigan 64, No. 24 Ohio State 57: Spike Albrecht scored 16 points in Michigan's victory over visiting Ohio State.

Michigan State 60, Illinois 53: Travis Trice scored 18 points off

the bench, including a pair of late free throws, to help Michigan State seal a win over host Illinois.

Tulsa 55, Temple 39: James Woodard scored 16 points and Rashad Smith added 13 points and 13 rebounds as host Tulsa rolled over Temple.

Indiana 84, Rutgers 54: Yogi Ferrell and James Blackmon Jr. scored 17 points apiece while Hanner Mosquera-Perea had a career-high 13 points to lead Indiana past host Rutgers.

Iowa 74, Nebraska 46: Aaron White had 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Iowa rode a 21-2 run to end the first half to a victory over host Nebraska.

Navy 84, Holy Cross 70: Brandon Venturini had 17 points, six rebounds and six assists to lead Navy over visiting Holy Cross.

Navy (11-17, 7-9 Patriot) pushed a six-point lead to 78-66 with a 10-4 run capped by Shawn Anderson's basket with 2:18 left.

Army 72, American 63: Kevin Ferguson had career highs of 23 points and 12 rebounds to help Army beat visiting American University.

Ferguson, a junior, had previous bests of 20 points and 11 boards. He made 9 of 11 field goals to record his second double-double of the season.

Bruins trounce Chicago, snap skid

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Patrice Bergeron was happier that the Boston Bruins ended their losing streak than he was about reaching a personal milestone.

Bergeron opened the scoring with his 200th goal, then added two assists in Boston's four-goal second period and the Bruins snapped a season-high six-game losing streak with a 6-2 rout of the Chicago Blackhawks on Sunday.

Reilly Smith had a goal and assist for the Bruins, who were 0-4-2 during the slide, their longest winless stretch since 2010. Loui Eriksson, Milan Lucic, Gregory Campbell and Dougie Hamilton also scored for Boston, which pulled away in the finale of a five-game road trip.

The 29-year-old Bergeron said he wasn't aware of scoring his 200th until he was told on the bench after he scored at 3:00 of the first period.

Boston's Tuukka Rask made 26 saves and coasted to the win, but he took two penalties late in the first period that allowed Chicago to trim a 2-0 Boston lead to 2-1.

Flyers 3, Capitals 2: Michael Del Zotto scored late in the third period to lift Philadelphia over visiting Washington.

Claude Giroux and Wayne Simmonds also had goals for Philadelphia.

Predators 2, Sabres 1 (SO): Rookie forward Filip Forsberg scored the decisive goal in the fourth round of a shootout to lead Nashville over host Buffalo.

Backup goalie Carter Hutton stopped 16 shots through overtime and allowed just one shootout goal.

Avalanche 5, Lightning 4: Teenage center Nathan MacKinnon had the first hat trick of his young career, and Matt Duchene also scored in Colorado's victory over visiting Tampa Bay.

MacKinnon, at 19 years and 5 months, became the youngest player in Avalanche history to score three goals in a game. It was Colorado's first hat trick since Duchene did it Nov. 4, 2011, at Dallas, a span of 258 games.

Wild 6, Stars 2: Zach Parise scored twice as host Minnesota set a team record with six goals in the third period against Dallas.

Penguins 5, Panthers 1: Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 34 shots, and Patric Hornqvist and Evgeni Malkin each had two goals and an assist as Pittsburgh beat visiting Florida.

Canucks 4, Islanders 0: Eddie Lack made 27 saves in relief of an injured Ryan Miller as Vancouver defeated host New York.

The 34-year-old Miller, in his first season with the Canucks, left with an apparent leg injury early in the second after he was run into by teammate Jannik Hansen.

Rangers 4, Blue Jackets 3 (SO): Martin St. Louis scored two goals and added one in the shootout as host New York blew a three-goal lead but won for the ninth time in 12 games by beating Columbus.

St. Louis appears to have broken out of his slump. After going 15 games without a goal, the veteran forward has four goals and two assists in the past four games.

Lakers top Celtics in OT

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — No matter how poorly the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston Celtics have played this season, they showed they can still produce a thriller no matter who is wearing the uniforms.

Jeremy Lin had a season-high 25 points, and the Lakers snapped a seven-game losing streak with a 118-111 overtime victory against their old rivals Sunday night.

Wesley Johnson added a season-high 22 points and Nick Young finished with 19, helping Los Angeles win for only the second time in 18 games.

Isaiah Thomas, making his Celtics debut after Thursday's trade from Phoenix, scored 21 points in 25 minutes before he was ejected with 5:03 left in regulation and Boston trailing 91-87.

Celtics guard Avery Bradley got eight of his 20 points in the final 27 seconds of the fourth quarter, including a buzzer-beating three-pointer that sent the game to overtime. But the Lakers outscored the Celtics 12-5 in the extra period.

Jae Crowder led Boston with 22 points off the bench.

Cavaliers 101, Knicks 83: LeBron James and Kyrie Irving each scored 18 points, J.R. Smith had 17 and hooked up with Iman Shumpert on a dazzling dunk in their triumphant return to New York on Sunday.

James moved past Allen Iverson into 22nd place on the career scoring list, and added seven rebounds and seven assists. Kevin Love finished with 16 points and 16 boards, combining with James and Irving to outscore the inept Knicks in the first half.

Cleveland won for the 16th time in 18 games and got good performances from

Smith and Shumpert, who were acquired by the Cavs on Jan. 5 and have helped solidify a team that was still below .500 shortly after the trade.

Pacers 104, Warriors 98: Rodney Stuckey scored 30 points to help host Indiana beat NBA-leading Golden State.

The Warriors played without star guard Stephen Curry for the first time this season. He sat out because of soreness in his right ankle.

Klay Thompson scored 39 points for Golden State. Andre Iguodala added 14.

Thunder 119, Nuggets 94: Russell Westbrook had 21 points and a career-high 17 assists as Oklahoma City beat visiting Denver without Kevin Durant.

Durant was out after a procedure Sunday to replace a screw that was causing soreness in his surgically repaired right foot. The reigning NBA MVP is expected to return this season.

Enes Kanter had 20 points and 12 rebounds for the Thunder, who have won six straight.

Grizzlies 98, Trail Blazers 92: Marc Gasol scored 21 points as Memphis overcame a 13-point deficit in the fourth quarter to beat host Portland.

LaMarcus Aldridge was a late scratch for the Blazers because of a right thumb sprain. It was unclear how the four-time All-Star injured the thumb; he was out warming up with the team before the game.

Damian Lillard had 18 points for Portland.

Mavericks 92, Hornets 81: Monta Ellis scored 15 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and Amare Stoudemire

had 14 points in 11 minutes in his Dallas debut in the Mavericks' victory over visiting Charlotte.

Stoudemire made his first appearance in an NBA game since Feb. 11. He was signed by Dallas during the All-Star break after his contract was bought out by the New York Knicks.

Hawks 97, Bucks 86: Paul Millsap had 23 points and 16 rebounds, and Kyle Korver added 12 points as Atlanta beat host Milwaukee to avoid its first three-game losing streak of the season.

Giannis Antetokounmpo and Khris Middleton each had 19 points for Milwaukee. The Bucks had won four straight.

Pistons 106, Wizards 89: Kentavious Caldwell-Pope had 26 points, and Andre Drummond added 18 points and 16 rebounds as new-look Detroit beat visiting Washington.

The Pistons are 2-0 since coach and president Stan Van Gundy traded four players to get Reggie Jackson and Tayshaun Prince at the trading deadline Thursday. Greg Monroe had 15 points and 15 rebounds, and Jackson finished with 17 points as Detroit put seven players in double figures.

Marcin Gortat had 24 points and 10 rebounds for the Wizards.

Magic 103, 76ers 98: Nik Vucevic had 31 points and 14 rebounds as Orlando beat Philadelphia for its first three-game winning streak of the season.

Victor Oladipo scored 17 points for the Magic, who nearly squandered a 12-point lead in the final five minutes. Willie Green had 16 points, and Channing Frye finished with 15.