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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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F-22 fighters arrive at Osan Air Base

BY PAUL ALEXANDER

Stars and Stripes

Four U.S. F-22 stealth fighter jets arrived Wednesday in South Korea in the latest salvo of what appears to be a joint strategy with Seoul to pressure North Korea to halt its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

Making another show of force — a B-52 bomber flew over Osan Air Base on Jan. 10 — the U.S. dispatched the jets from Okinawa to Osan, where they were escorted by other U.S. and South Korean fighters before landing. U.S. officials would not say how long they would be there.

On Tuesday, South Korean President Park Geun-hye announced a toughened policy toward Pyongyang, two days after the U.S. deployed an extra Patriot anti-missile system in the country.

Pyongyang, which refers to U.S. and South Korea as warmongers plotting to topple the communist regime, is certain to see the series of moves as a threat. In addition, Park's speech came during birthday celebrations for leader Kim Jong Un's late father and predecessor, Kim Jong Il, and referred to the country's leadership as "merciless" while employing an "extreme reign of terror."

There has been speculation, fueled by media reports citing South Korean government sources, that the North could be preparing for yet another nuclear test after conducting its fourth underground blast on Jan. 6, followed by a rocket launch on Feb. 7 that was widely seen

as a test of ballistic missile technology aimed at being able to reach the continental U.S.

The website 38 North, which is run by Johns Hopkins University and monitors North Korea, said although there has been little sign of preparations for another blast at the North's underground test site, the country has made changes aimed at making satellite monitoring of such activities more difficult and it might be able to "conduct another detonation with little or no warning."

The tit-for-tat escalation of the latest crisis on the peninsula also has seen the resumption of loudspeaker propaganda broadcasts by both Koreas across the Demilitarized Zone, the low-level flight over Osan by an American B-52 from Guam, and the closure of the Kaesong industrial park that had been the last remaining symbol of inter-Korean cooperation.

The U.S. and South Korea also are discussing deployment of the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system. Seoul has resisted hosting the system out of concern that it will anger China, a major trade partner, and Russia, who say the system could be used against them.

In a nationally televised address to Parliament, Park spoke for the first time of "regime collapse" if the North doesn't give up its nuclear weapons program. Pyongyang has demanded that it be accepted as a nuclear power, something that Washington has said it will never do.

Park also mentioned unspecified "stronger and more effective" measures. The goal so far has seemed to be to

hit the impoverished North hard financially. In announcing the closure of Kaesong, where South Korean factories produced goods with cheap North Korean labor, the goal was to deprive the North of its major source of hard currency. Park said Pyongyang had been directly siphoning off the workers' salaries.

Seoul has gone so far as to ask South Koreans to avoid North Korean restaurants abroad, citing concerns that the proceeds go to the regime and finance its local embassies.

That is expected to be broadened soon in a push to cut North Korea's growing exports of labor. South Korea's Yonhap News cited a government official as saying the North's overseas workers have increased to around 50,000-60,000 in recent years from some 20,000 in 2010.

The U.N. Security Council has been trying to work out new sanctions against the North over the nuclear test and rocket launch, but there are concerns that China is resisting anything with real teeth out of concerns its neighbor could collapse under too much pressure, sparking a flood of refugees and raising the prospect of a pro-U.S. government rising on its doorstep.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters Wednesday that the North should "pay the necessary price" for its recent provocations but also said negotiations are key to resolving the situation.

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China deploys missiles in South China Sea

The Washington Post

BEIJING — China has deployed surface-to-air missile batteries on a disputed island in the South China Sea, Taiwan and U.S. officials said, even as President Barack Obama met rival claimants to maritime territory in the region.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense said in a statement that it had "grasped that Communist China had deployed" missiles on Woody Island in the Paracel group, and urged "relevant parties to refrain from any unilateral measure that would increase tensions."

Taiwan's statement followed an earlier report on Fox News that was based on satellite images. A U.S. defense official also confirmed the "apparent deployment" of the missiles, Reuters reported.

Woody Island is part of the Paracels chain, which has been under Chinese control for more than 40 years but is also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam.

The Chinese move also followed a U.S. naval operation that saw a missile destroyer sailing close to another Chinese-controlled island in the Paracels last month.

At a news conference Wednesday, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said he had only just been told of the reports but suggested they were an attempt by "certain Western media to create news stories."

He also drew attention to lighthouses, meteorological stations and facilities for shelter and rescue that China has built on some islands.

"As for the limited and necessary self defense facilities China has built on islands and reefs stationed by Chinese personnel, that is consistent with the

self defense and self preservation China is entitled to under international law," he said, at an event with his Australian counterpart Julie Bishop.

China has sparked concern around the region by building seven artificial islands in the Spratly chain in the South China Sea, and constructing airstrips on three of those islands. But it argues other claimants have also built airstrips and reclaimed land in the past.

"Non-militarization is certainly in the interest of all parties but non-militarization should not be just about one single country," Wang said.

Fox News, showing civilian satellite images from ImageSat International, said two batteries of eight surface-to-air missile launchers, as well as a radar system, had been deployed on Woody Island at some point between Feb. 3 and Feb. 14.

A U.S. official told Fox News the images appeared to show an HQ-9 air defense system, which has a range of 125 miles and would pose a threat to airplanes flying close by.

Adm. Harry B. Harris Jr., the head of the U.S. Pacific Command, said the deployment of missiles to the Paracels would not be a surprise but would be a concern, and be contrary to China's pledge not to militarize the region, Reuters reported.

"We will conduct more, and more complex, freedom of navigation operations as time goes on in the South China Sea," Harris told a briefing in Tokyo. "We have no intention of stopping."

Called Yongxingdao by China, Woody Island boasts an artificial harbor, an airport, roads, army posts and other buildings. Recent satellite imagery appears to show China is conducting dredging and landfilling operations at two other islands

on the Paracels, while adding a helicopter base on Duncan Island that could be used for anti-submarine warfare missions, the Diplomat reported.

The news broke just as Obama was wrapping up two days of talks with 10 leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, at the Sunnylands retreat in California.

Present were leaders of Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and the Philippines, which all have overlapping claims with China for various parts of the South China Sea.

"We discussed the need for tangible steps in the South China Sea to lower tensions, including a halt to further reclamation, new construction and militarization of disputed areas," Obama said.

During a state visit to the United States in September, China's leader Xi Jinping pledged not to militarize the contested Spratly Islands, which lie to the south of the Paracels.

But the foreign ministry in Beijing later acknowledged China was constructing "a limited amount of necessary military facilities for defense purposes only."

In Sunnylands, Obama also pledged the United States would continue to conduct "freedom of navigation" exercises in the South China Sea. He said that maritime disputes must be resolved by legal means, including through a case brought by the Philippines challenging China's claims over vast swaths of the South China Sea. The White House also announced that Obama had accepted an invitation to visit Vietnam in May, a move that reflects a growing rapport between Washington and Hanoi that also irks Beijing.

China has accused the United States of damaging peace and stability, and infringing on its sovereignty, by sailing

naval vessels near some of the disputed islands in the South China Sea.

Just last month, a U.S. missile destroyer passed close to Triton Island in the Paracels, in what the U.S. military said was a response to "excessive maritime claims," that restrict the rights and freedoms of the United States and other nations. China said that action "severely violated the law."

Beijing has also refused to take part in an arbitration case brought by the Philippines in The Hague, arguing that the two countries should settle their dispute bilaterally. But Obama said all parties to the U.N. law of the sea are obligated to respect the ruling.

On Monday, China's nationalist tabloid, the Global Times, argued that Sunnylands was the wrong place to discuss the South China Sea dispute, which had to be settled bilaterally between China and other claimants. "ASEAN will not be taken in by the US if the US tries to turn the South China Sea disputes into a row between China and ASEAN," it wrote in an editorial.

Ian Storey, a senior fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, said China had been building up its military facilities on the Paracels for some years. He said it was unclear if this latest move was a direct reaction to the recent U.S. naval operation in Paracels, but Beijing would probably try to justify it as a "reaction to U.S. military moves in the South China Sea."

It could, he said, be a precursor to China eventually declaring some kind of Air Defense Identification Zone in the northern part of the South China Sea, which could eventually be extended further south as military facilities are built up on the Spratly islands.

Apple to fight order to hack shooter's cell

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook says his company will fight a federal magistrate's order to help the FBI hack into an encrypted iPhone belonging to one of the San Bernardino, Calif., shooters. The company said that could potentially undermine encryption for millions of other users.

Cook's response, posted early Wednesday on the company's website, set the stage for a legal fight between the federal government and Silicon Valley with

broad implications for conflicts over digital privacy and national security.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym had ordered Apple to help the FBI break into an iPhone belonging to Syed Farook, one of the shooters in the Dec. 2 attack that killed 14 people. Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, died in a gunbattle with police.

The ruling by Pym, a former federal prosecutor, requires Apple to supply software the FBI can load onto Farook's county-owned work iPhone to bypass a self-destruct feature that erases

the phone's data after too many unsuccessful attempts to unlock it. The FBI wants to be able to try different combinations in rapid sequence until it finds the right one.

The Obama administration has embraced stronger encryption as a way to keep consumers safe on the Internet but has struggled to find a compelling example to make its case.

Cook said "this moment calls for public discussion, and we want our customers and people around the country to understand what is at stake." He

argued that the order "has implications far beyond the legal case at hand."

He said it could undermine encryption by using specialized software to create an essential back door akin to a "master key, capable of opening hundreds of millions of locks."

Federal prosecutors told Pym that they can't access Farook's work phone because they don't know his passcode and Apple has not cooperated. Under U.S. law, a work phone is generally the property of a person's employer.

Merkel renews call for Syria no-fly zone

Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday reiterated her proposal for a no-fly zone in Syria where civilians would be protected, a suggestion that was promptly rebuffed by Moscow, which said it can only be done with the Syrian government's consent.

In Damascus, over 100 trucks loaded with humanitarian aid were expected to head out to five besieged areas in the country, part of an effort described by a Russian official as a first step toward implementation of an agreement reached among world powers in Munich last week.

U.N. envoy Staffan de Mistura has been trying to secure aid deliveries to improve the chances of restarting peace talks before the end of February. But those efforts have been clouded by the intense fighting north of Aleppo, where various forces backed by regional and international rivals are clashing over a crucial strip of land linking Syria's largest city to the border with Turkey.

The violence in Aleppo and lack of improvement on the humanitarian front led to the

collapse of indirect talks in Geneva between the Syrian government and its opponents earlier this month.

It appears also to have revived a long-standing proposal to establish a no-fly zone in northern Syria — an idea that has been repeatedly floated by Turkey and other opponents of Syrian President Bashar Assad throughout the 5-year-old war.

A no-fly zone could create a safe haven for tens of thousands of displaced Syrians. But Washington has long rejected the idea, fearing it would draw U.S. forces further into the civil war.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan criticized the United States for not backing his country's proposals, adding that a no-fly zone would have prevented Russia's air campaign in the region and thwarted thousands of civilian deaths.

"Oh America! You did not say 'yes' to 'no-fly zone.' Now the Russian planes are running wild over there, and thousands and tens of thousands of victims are dying," Erdogan said. "Weren't we coalition forces? Weren't we to act together?"

Obama: GOP has a duty to vote on court nominee

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is challenging Republicans to live up to their avowed adherence to the Constitution and agree to vote on his nominee to replace the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. A key Republican is leaving the door open to taking the first step.

Despite widespread GOP insistence that he leave the decision to the next president, Obama said Tuesday he had no intention of abdicating his responsibilities before leaving office early next year. He chidingly told the Senate he expects "them to do their job as well."

"The Constitution is pretty clear about what's supposed to happen now," Obama said before returning to Washington from California.

Fallout from Scalia's unexpected death overshadowed Obama's two days of summitry with Southeast Asian leaders. Obama pledged to nominate a candidate "indisputably" qualified, but Republican leaders have threatened to refuse to hold hearings or a vote on his pick to replace the conservative Scalia.

There were hints that at least some Republicans might

come around. Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said he would wait "until the nominee is made before I would make any decision" about holding hearings, boosting White House hopes for getting a third justice confirmed on Obama's watch.

With the looming nomination creating ripples in the presidential campaign, Obama sought to broaden his argument by calling the dispute emblematic of years of escalating partisan hostilities over judicial nominations.

He lamented a new normal in which "everything is blocked" even when there's no ideological or substantive disagreement — and conceded that Democrats are not blameless.

Court officials said Scalia's body will lie in repose on Friday in the Supreme Court's Great Hall, after a private ceremony. The funeral mass Saturday will take place at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

The pace of judicial confirmations always slows in presidential election years, thanks to reluctance by the party out of power in the White House to give lifetime tenure to their opponents' picks.

Warriors chase history in stretch run

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Golden State Warriors are chasing history. Everyone else in the NBA is chasing the Warriors.

The defending champions have been so dominant that they could already be a 50-win team this weekend. And unless opponents start figuring out a way to slow Stephen Curry and the league's most potent offense, they could be the best team ever by the time they're done.

Curry and fellow All-Stars Klay Thompson and Draymond Green took time out for fun in the first All-Star Game held outside the U.S., where Curry tossed in the final points in the highest-scoring game ever with a 42-footer to give the West a 196-173 victory.

It won't be long before they get serious again.

"Yeah, obviously, Thursday, Friday, when games start up, put our game face back on and figure out how we're going to try to finish out the season strong and go after another championship," Curry said.

They are 48-4 and will bring an 11-game winning streak into Portland on Friday when their season resumes. Golden State could reach 50 wins — for many clubs, the mark of a very good regular season — with a victory Saturday against the Los Angeles Clippers in what's become perhaps the league's testiest rivalry.

The NBA record of 72 wins, set 20 years ago by Michael

Jordan's Chicago Bulls, could be in reach.

"If it's there for us we want to get it, but at the end of the day we're trying to win a championship," Thompson said.

There are a couple of teams in the West, and a front-runner in the East that could pose the toughest challenges to the Warriors.

San Antonio, Oklahoma City and Cleveland seem to have the best chances to prevent Golden State from repeating, though the Warriors blew out the Spurs and Cavaliers last time they met.

Business comes before basketball this week, as the trade deadline is Thursday afternoon, a few hours before the season resumes. Contenders will try to load up and disappointments can break up.

From there, there's less than two months before the playoffs begin.

LeBron James dismissed a report this week that the Cavaliers were discussing trading Kevin Love, saying they had enough to win after a turbulent first half that included the firing of coach David Blatt not long after Kyrie Irving had returned from knee surgery.

"Every piece that we have means a lot to the process," James said. "Obviously with myself, Kyrie and Kev, we spearhead the whole thing. We're focused on the main thing and knowing what the main thing is every day, we're going to have a great chance."

So will the Spurs, who are just 3½ games behind Golden State at 45-8, and like the Warriors are unbeaten at home. They have won six in a row even while Manu Ginobili is recovering from surgery, as star offseason acquisition LaMarcus Aldridge looks more comfortable playing for his new team.

"We've been winning and we're putting ourselves in a position to be special," Aldridge said. "So that's what it's about."

There's plenty more to watch down the stretch, from Kobe Bryant's final games before retirement to the rookie of the year race between Minnesota's Karl-Anthony Towns and New York's Kristaps Porzingis.

But the focus will never be too far from the Warriors and Curry, who seems headed for a second straight MVP award. Their record-setting start to the season brought unusually high attention to the NBA's pre-Christmas schedule, and a strong finish and a chance at 73 wins would do the same during March Madness.

The record would be nice. The Warriors would prefer another ring.

"I think we just want more. We're not satisfied with winning the championship," Green said. "We think we have something special and it only lasts so long, so we want to take advantage of that and not get complacent. Let's continue to try to get more."

Bosh on blood thinners

MIAMI — Chris Bosh is back on blood thinners to treat a clot that formed in his leg, the second straight year the Miami Heat forward has dealt with such a situation over the All-Star break.

Bosh began the medication regimen in recent days after the clot was diagnosed and has hopes that he can continue playing at some point this season, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Bosh has told the team that he will spend at least a few more days reviewing options and collecting information, said the person who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because neither the Heat nor the All-Star forward have yet to publicly reveal details of Bosh's condition.

A year ago at this time, the clot had traveled from Bosh's leg to his lung and he had a wave of other problems — including fluid in his lungs.

Patriots LB Mayo retiring

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — New England Patriots linebacker Jerod Mayo said Tuesday he is going to retire.

Mayo posted a 90-word statement on Instagram with the caption "Retiring a Patriot." The 29-year-old former first-round draft pick said being a member of the Patriots for eight years was a "life-changing event."

"As my family and I prepare for the future, be sure that the Pats memories will always hold a special place in our hearts," he wrote.

Mayo also thanked the Kraft family, coach Bill Belichick and someone named "Thundercat."

Mayo, 29, was the 10th overall pick in the 2008 draft.

— Associated Press

Pistons get F Harris from Magic

Associated Press

DETROIT — With a playoff spot within reach this year, the Detroit Pistons made a trade they hope will benefit them both now and in the future.

The Pistons acquired forward Tobias Harris from Orlando on Tuesday in a deal that sent guard Brandon Jennings and forward Ersan Ilyasova to the Magic. The 23-year-old Harris gives Detroit another athletic young player, and he'll be under team control for a while. Harris signed a \$64 million, four-year deal to stay with the Magic last summer, when he was a restricted free agent.

"This is a move that can be looked at as a long-term move, as one that will fit with our core group of players, and we'll be able to keep them together," Detroit general manager Jeff Bower said.

Detroit, which is a half-game out of the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, gave up its starting power forward in Ilyasova. Jennings was the Pistons' backup point guard, and they could afford to part with him after making a long-term commitment to starter Reggie Jackson.

Detroit hasn't made the postseason since 2009. Bower said the Pistons were interested in Harris when he was a free agent, but his restricted status made acquiring him hard.

The 6-foot-9 Harris is averaging 13.7 points per game this season, down from 17.1 in 2014-15. His three-point accuracy is down to 31 percent after he shot a career-high 36 percent a season ago.

Harris thanked the city of Orlando, coach Scott Skiles and his teammates in a post on Instagram.

"Though this is not the easiest time it's part of life and part of the business of being a professional," he posted.

The Magic are also hoping to make a

playoffs push, but they have lost 16 of 20 and are now in 11th place in the East.

"We felt like we needed to shuffle the deck a little bit. We needed to try to shake things up ... we felt like the roster needed to be balanced in certain ways," Orlando GM Rob Hennigan said. "I don't think it's been a secret that we've been looking for more veteran stability on the roster."

The 28-year-old Ilyasova is averaging 11.3 points. The Pistons acquired him last offseason in a trade with Milwaukee. Jennings is averaging 6.8 points in 18.1 minutes a game. He returned in late December from an Achilles tendon injury that kept him out for 11 months.

Jennings is in the last year of his contract. He now joins an Orlando team that has been going with second-year man Elfrid Payton at point guard.

"He was playing the best ball of his career probably, the month prior to getting injured," Bower said. "His long-term outlook was probably one that he was going to examine other situations that would probably offer him a different role for the future. So those are all real parts of the decision."

In other trade news, the Charlotte Hornets acquired veteran swingman Courtney Lee from the Grizzlies in a three-team trade that will help bolster the team's perimeter shooting and defense after losing Michael Kidd-Gilchrist for the season to a shoulder injury.

The Grizzlies got forward P.J. Hairston from Charlotte and big man Chris Andersen and two second-round draft picks from the Heat, who will get guard Brian Roberts from Charlotte.

The three teams confirmed the trade Tuesday night.

"He brings a lot of experience," Hornets general manager Rich Cho said in a conference call. "He is a vet that is a true pro. He's a great shooter and plays great

defense."

Hornets coach Steve Clifford coached Lee before in Orlando.

The Hornets went into the All-Star break in the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, just ahead of the Detroit Pistons, who bolstered their roster on Tuesday by adding Tobias Harris from the Magic. Just seven games after Kidd-Gilchrist made a surprisingly early return from a serious shoulder injury, he suffered another shoulder injury, dealing a difficult blow to Charlotte's defense.

Lee is in his eighth NBA season and has established a reputation as a coveted "three and D guy," a player who can knock down open three-point shots while also serving as a capable defender on the wing.

"There are not a lot of those three and D guys around," Cho said.

Cho said it's unclear if Lee will start right away, but he expects him to play a lot of minutes.

The Grizzlies were in the market for help because of a serious injury themselves. Center Marc Gasol broke his right foot not long before the All-Star break, so Memphis is bringing Andersen in from the Heat to try to bolster its frontcourt depth. Andersen was a valuable role player during the Heat's run to a championship in 2012-13 and back to the NBA Finals the following season. But he has played in only seven games this season.

The trade also gives the Grizzlies a chance to look at Hairston, a second-year forward who has shown potential but has also dealt with off-the-court issues. He has started 43 games for the Hornets this season, averaging 6.0 points and 2.7 rebounds in 19.7 minutes per game.

The Hornets announced Kidd-Gilchrist would have surgery Wednesday on his right shoulder after tearing his labrum on Feb. 10.



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Longhorns top No. 10 W.Va.

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — After two straight losses, Texas coach Shaka Smart pleaded for his players to show more emotion and swagger heading into the key stretch of the season.

They delivered both in a big way Tuesday night.

Isaiah Taylor scored 23 points and Eric Davis Jr. added 15 and led a flurry of three-pointers that sparked the 24th-ranked Longhorns to an 85-78 victory over No. 10 West Virginia.

"We do a great job of responding," Taylor said. "Coach Smart lit a fire under all of us."

Davis made four three-pointers in the first half and Texas (17-9, 8-5 Big 12) had 10 in the game in capping a regular-season sweep of the Mountaineers. For Davis, it was a huge turnaround after he scored a total of seven points in the previous four games.

"Swagger is basically energy, that's all it is," Davis said. "Isaiah has been a great teammate, telling me I'd be needed down

the stretch. It's target practice when you've got a great guard like him."

Tarik Phillip scored 19 points for West Virginia (20-6, 9-4), which dropped one game behind No. 2 Kansas in the Big 12.

Jaysean Paige, the Mountaineers' leading scorer at 14 points per game, injured an ankle in the first half and never returned. He missed two shots and did not score.

"What was deflating was Jaysean on the bench with his ankle on ice. He's been as good as anybody in the league the last few weeks," West Virginia coach Bob Huggins said.

West Virginia, which trailed by as many as 16 in the second half, pulled within 77-71 on a three-point play by Jonathan Holton with 38 seconds left. Texas put the game away with eight straight free throws.

The win is another big result on the NCAA Tournament résumé of first-year coach Smart, who still hasn't lost three straight with the Longhorns. Texas is 5-3 against ranked opponents this season and three of its last five games will come

against No. 25 Baylor, Kansas and No. 3 Oklahoma.

Just like its first win over the Mountaineers in January, Texas expertly handled West Virginia's pressing defense, turning the ball over just seven times. West Virginia attacked Texas ball-handlers early and produced three quick turnovers in the opening minutes that fueled a 12-4 Mountaineers lead.

But Texas cleaned up the sloppy play and quickly fought back before Davis took over the last 6 minutes of the first half with a slew of 3-pointers. Davis made three as the teams traded seven straight 3-pointers, and his fourth pushed the Longhorns to a 45-36 halftime lead.

"That was huge," Smart said. "It won us the game."

The Longhorns kept up the barrage in the second half. Connor Lammert's 3-pointer followed by a three-point play by Taylor quickly pushed Texas to a 12-point lead in the opening minutes.

Even when Texas' scoring slowed down, the Mountaineers couldn't make the run they needed to rally.

Late goal boosts Capitals

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Not long after assisting on the go-ahead goal with 2:02 remaining in a victory over his former team, Washington Capitals forward Justin Williams stood in a hallway near the visitor's locker room and caught up with a couple of members of the Los Angeles Kings.

The reason the Capitals signed Williams as a free agent last offseason was to provide a late-game push in the sort of play-off-type atmosphere felt by both sides in NHL-leading Washington's 3-1 comeback victory over Los Angeles on Tuesday night. He used to do that sort of thing for the Kings.

Williams gathered the puck behind the net and slid it to Evgeny Kuznetsov for a goal that withstood a coach's challenge for goalie interference and broke a 1-all tie.

Kuznetsov's 16th goal, but first in a month, gave him 20 points in his past 14 games.

Andre Burakovsky got a secondary assist on that score, after tying the game with 48.1 seconds left in the second period. Jason Chimera added an empty-netter with 8.6 seconds left.

Washington goalie Philipp Grubauer, getting a rare start in place of Braden Holtby, made 39 saves.

Kings goalie Jonathan Quick, back after missing three games with a lower-body injury, finished with 29 stops.

Blues 2, Stars 1 (OT): Kevin Shattenkirk scored a power-play goal at 1:11 of overtime and Brian Elliott had another strong game in net for his team as host St. Louis halted Dallas' four-game winning streak.

Mattias Janmark tied it late in regulation for Dallas to force overtime.

Sharks 4, Lightning 2: Matt Nieto and Joel Ward each had a goal and an assist as San Jose beat host Tampa Bay.

Joe Pavelski and Melker Karlsson also scored for the Sharks and Martin Jones made 28 saves.

Flyers 6, Devils 3: Wayne Simmonds and Nick Cousins scored 50 seconds apart in a four-goal third period and visiting Philadelphia got a big game from its special teams in snapping New Jersey's three-game winning streak.

Bruins 2, Blue Jackets 1 (OT): Loui Eriksson scored 33 seconds into overtime to lift Boston over host Columbus.

Hurricanes 2, Jets 1: Jordan Staal and Riley Nash scored power-play goals, and host Carolina earned a victory over Winnipeg.

The win snapped Winnipeg's four-game road winning streak. The Jets had not lost on the road since Jan. 7 against Dallas.

Senators 2, Sabres 1 (SO): Bobby Ryan and Kyle Turris scored in the shootout and Ottawa topped visiting Buffalo to snap its three-game losing streak.

Craig Anderson, who stopped 38 shots, made a huge save on Sabres rookie Jack Eichel with 15 seconds remaining in overtime to force the shootout.

Ducks 5, Oilers 3: Andrew Cogliano scored a short-handed empty-net goal to help visiting Anaheim beat host Edmonton.

The win moved the Ducks into second place in the Pacific Division, three points behind the rival Los Angeles Kings.

Baylor knocks off Iowa State in OT

Associated Press

WACO, Texas — Maybe Baylor coach Scott Drew can figure out a way for Johnathan Motley to feel like he's facing Iowa State all the time.

Motley scored seven of his 27 points in overtime, matching his career high set last month against the same 13th-ranked Cyclones, and the 25th-ranked Bears ended a three-game Big 12 home losing streak with a 100-91 victory Tuesday night.

Playing without big man Rico Gathers, who missed his second game in the last three because of illness, the team that has been so good on the road in the Big 12 (league best-matching 4-2) won again in the Ferrell Center. The Bears had last won a home conference game in double overtime against Kansas State on Jan. 20, 10 days before beating Georgia in the Big 12-SEC Challenge.

Baylor (19-7, 8-5 Big 12) never trailed in overtime and went ahead to stay with 3:19 left in overtime when Lester Medford hit a tiebreaking three-pointer from the left wing to make it 87-84. After Deonte Burton missed badly on a three-pointer, Prince had a bounce pass to Motley for an emphatic two-handed dunk.

Terry Maston had 15 points for Baylor, while Medford, Prince and Al Freeman all had 14. Motley had 10 rebounds.

The Cyclones (18-8, 7-6) had three 20-point scorers: Abdel Nader with 26, Georges Niang with 24 and Monte Morris with 20.

Iowa State just missed winning the game at the end of regulation, but instead suffered its third overtime loss on the road in the Big 12.

"We played hard, put ourselves in position to win on the road," coach Steve Prohm said. "Frustrating thing is you look at our road losses in this league, which is a terrific league — lost three games in overtime and we lost one we had the ball down two and missed a shot. That part is frustrating."

After Burton blocked Motley's shot with 10 seconds left in regulation, the Cyclones took off the other way.

Morris missed a three-pointer with 2 seconds left and came up with his own rebound. He took another shot that went into the basket, but officials immediately

ruled that it came after the buzzer — and replay confirmed that.

No. 17 Purdue 71, Northwestern 61: A.J. Hammons had 18 points and 12 rebounds, and Johnny Hill added a season-high 15 points for the host Boilermakers (21-6, 9-5 Big Ten) in their victory over the Wildcats (17-10, 5-9).

Northwestern was led by Tre Demps with 16 points and Bryant McIntosh, who had 14 points and four assists. The Wildcats have lost seven of nine overall and five straight on the road.

Northwestern got as close as 39-35 in the second half, but Purdue got consecutive three-pointers from Ryan Cline and Hill to spur a 10-2 run that made it 64-50 with 4:39 left. After that, Northwestern couldn't get closer than seven.

VCU 83, Rhode Island 67: Mo Alie-Cox scored 21 points, Melvin Johnson added 19 and host Virginia Commonwealth (19-7, 11-2 Atlantic 10) rolled over Rhode Island (14-12, 6-7).

VCU has won 14 of its last 16 games and pulled a half-game back of conference leader Dayton (21-3, 11-1).

Alie-Cox was 10 of 12 from the floor and Johnson finished on 7 of 14 shooting with four three-pointers. Corey Billbury added 14 points for VCU, which shot 53 percent from the field.

Butler 88, Creighton 75: Kelan Martin had 21 points and eight rebounds, senior Austin Etherington scored a career-high 17 and the host Bulldogs (18-8, 7-7 Big East) beat the Bluejays (17-10, 8-6).

Martin and Etherington each hit four of Butler's 13 three-pointers as the Bulldogs made 48 percent from distance.

Creighton was within 63-58 with 8:13 left but the Bluejays did not make another field goal for nearly three minutes and trailed 71-60 after Butler's 8-2 run.

Missouri 72, South Carolina 67: Ryan Rosburg scored 18 points to lead the host Tigers (10-16, 3-10 SEC) past the Gamecocks (21-5, 8-5).

Missouri has won two straight while South Carolina, which lost to No. 22 Kentucky on Saturday, has lost back-to-back games for the first time this season.

Terrence Phillips scored 15 points and Namon Wright added 11 for Missouri.

Ohio State 76, Michigan 66: Jae'Sean Tate scored 13 points as the host Buckeyes

(17-10, 9-5 Big Ten) beat the Wolverines (19-8, 9-5).

The Buckeyes led nearly the whole way in a game they likely needed to win to keep alive hopes of receiving an NCAA tournament bid next month.

Trevor Thompson and Jaquan Lyle scored 12 points apiece for Ohio State while Kam Williams added 10.

Marc Loving tallied 13 points and 10 rebounds for the Buckeyes, notching his fifth double-double of the season.

Valparaiso 66, Cleveland State 43: Alec Peters scored 15 with 10 rebounds, and Tevonn Walker scored 13 to help the visiting Crusaders (22-5, 12-2 Horizon League) beat the Vikings (8-19, 3-11).

Cleveland State made a season-low 14 field goals and shot just 28.6 percent overall en route to its lowest scoring output since a 53-43 loss at West Virginia on Dec. 6, 2008.

Valparaiso took a 29-17 lead into the break and led by double figures throughout the second half.

Texas A&M 71, Mississippi 56: Danuel House scored 13 points to lead three teammates in double figures, and the host Aggies (19-7, 8-5 SEC) snapped a four-game skid by beating the Rebels (16-10, 6-7).

The Aggies trailed by double digits in the first half before rallying to take the lead.

They led by 5 at halftime and were still up by that amount before scoring the next eight points to extend their advantage to 53-40 with about 15½ minutes remaining.

Air Force 79, UNLV 74: Zach Kocur scored six of his 19 points in the final 1:54, and CJ Siples added 17 points — including two free throws with five seconds left — to help the Falcons (13-14, 4-10 MWC) hold off the Runnin' Rebels (15-12, 6-8).

Jacob Van added 21 points on 8-for-12 shooting, while Frank Toohey had 14 points and nine rebounds for Air Force.

Jerome Seagears' three-pointer with 53 seconds left trimmed the Runnin' Rebels' deficit to 73-72.

Toohey made a layup 21 seconds later and, after a missed three on the other end, two free throws by Kocur made it 77-72 with 19 seconds to go.

UNLV's Dwayne Morgan hit two foul shots 12 seconds later, but Siples' free throws sealed it.