

STARS AND STRIPES®

Friday, January 23, 2015

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Yemen upheaval is bad for US strategy

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The White House's strategy for fighting al-Qaida in Yemen — repeatedly presented as a model by President Barack Obama — was left in tatters Thursday by the resignation of the man who personally approved U.S. drone strikes in the country and the collapse of its central government.

U.S. officials struggled to sort out reports about who, if anyone, is in charge in Yemen. The prospect of continued chaos cast doubt on the viability of the Obama administration's counterterrorism policy for Yemen and whether it can still count on local help against al-Qaida.

"A dangerous situation just went from bad to worse with grave implications for our counterterrorism efforts," said Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., a mem-

ber of the House Intelligence Committee. "Our relationship with the Yemen government has been vital in confronting [al-Qaida] and keeping the pressure on its leadership, and every effort must be made to continue that partnership."

As recently as September, Obama had cited his Yemen strategy as a template for confronting jihadi threats in other places, including Iraq and Syria. Instead of sending large numbers of troops to fight al-Qaida's affiliate in the country directly, the Pentagon has limited its presence to a small number of trainers to teach and equip Yemen's security forces.

The other foundation of the U.S. strategy has been to rely on drones to provide surveillance over Yemen and to launch scores of airstrikes against suspected al-Qaida in the Arabian

Peninsula targets. Flown by the CIA and the military's Joint Special Operations Command, the drones are based outside Yemen, but U.S. officials have relied until now on the Yemeni government's authorization to conduct the airstrikes.

If order and a friendly regime are not restored soon in Yemen, the White House may be confronted with a difficult choice: keep flying the drones even if they violate Yemeni sovereignty, or halt the operations and ease up on al-Qaida. The dilemma is exacerbated by the fact that the CIA and U.S. military's targeting decisions are largely dependent on Yemeni government intelligence collected from sources on the ground.

Despite widespread anger among Yemenis about the drones, the Obama administration had received a green light

for the airstrikes from Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who took power in 2012 with Washington's backing and quickly became a firm ally against AQAP.

In an interview with *The Washington Post* several months after taking office, Hadi said he personally approved every drone strike and praised their effectiveness.

On Thursday, Hadi submitted his resignation, along with the rest of his Cabinet, under pressure from Houthi rebel forces who have taken increasing control of the capital, Sanaa. Although the Houthis are hostile toward AQAP, they have been just as hostile toward the U.S.

The Pentagon has never fully disclosed how many military personnel have been deployed to Yemen as trainers or liaison officers.

Saudi king's death adds to uncertainty in Middle East

The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Arabia's newly enthroned King Salman moved quickly Friday to name a future successor to the crown in his oil-rich kingdom, an appointment that puts the kingdom's future squarely in the hands of a new generation.

King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud's actions came as the Sunni-ruled kingdom mourned King Abdullah, who died Friday at 90 after nearly two decades in power.

He was buried Friday afternoon in an unmarked grave, his body shrouded in a simple beige cloth without a coffin. The austere, subdued burial was in line with Islamic tradition that all people, even kings, are equal in death before God.

The king's death adds yet

more uncertainty in a region already overwhelmed by crises and as Saudi Arabia is itself in a struggle with Iran for regional dominance.

In addition to the long-running Sunni-Shiite divisions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the "Arab Spring" uprisings have plunged several governments into chaos, and resulted in violence and crackdowns in Egypt, Libya, Syria and other nations.

But a more immediate threat are militants from the Islamic State group. As the group spread across Iraq last summer and fall, Saudi Arabia started building a 600-mile fence aimed at keeping militants out. The Saudis are adding razor wire fencing, silent alarms, watchtowers armed with video, along with thermal and night vision surveillance.

Work on the wall started in September but plans for the project were initially drafted in 2006 at the height of the Iraqi civil war. But the Islamic State's advances prompted fear in Riyadh of a violent overspill and the project was given the go ahead.

State television aired images of the funeral prayer ahead of Abdullah's burial in Riyadh's al-Oud cemetery in an area reserved for royals. Hundreds gathered outside the cemetery, which was guarded by security officials.

In his first speech as king, Salman also made an oblique reference to the chaos gripping the greater Middle East as the extremist Islamic State group now holds a third of both Iraq and Syria.

"The Arab and the Islamic nations are in dire need of soli-

darity and cohesion," the king said.

A royal decree affirmed Crown Prince Muqrin, 69, as Salman's successor. After Muqrin, Salman named Interior Minister Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, 55, as deputy crown prince, making him second-in-line to the throne. Mohammed is the first grandson of Saudi Arabia's founder, King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, to be named as a future heir.

The new king, in a departure from past monarchs, used his Twitter account to send a message to his 1.3 million followers.

"I ask God to ensure my success to serve our dear people and realize their hopes, and to preserve our nation and society's security and stability, and to protect it from all evil," the message read.

Report: No signs preceded Fort Hood attack

BY JON HARPER

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — An accumulation of stressors that could not have been used to predict violent behavior drove Spc. Ivan Lopez to kill other soldiers on Fort Hood in April 2014, according to Army investigators.

A combination of frustrations — financial, professional and personal — apparently culminated on April 2, 2014, after Lopez argued with fellow soldiers at Fort Hood about his request for time off and how that request was being processed. Minutes later, he drew a semi-

automatic handgun and opened fire, killing one soldier and wounding others in his unit's administrative office.

He then drove around the base and continued shooting at various locations. By the time his rampage was over, he had killed three soldiers and wounded 12 before taking his own life after being confronted by a military police officer.

The service released its official report on the incident, known as a 15-6, on Friday.

"From the available evidence, we find that the cumulative effect of these stressors

overwhelmed [Lopez's] ability to effectively cope with them, and led to his irrational, violent outburst," the report said.

Army status reports at the time put the number of wounded at 16.

After interviewing 169 witnesses and reviewing materials gathered during an earlier criminal investigation, Army investigators said they found no indication in Lopez's medical and personnel records suggesting that he was likely to commit a violent act.

The soldier wasn't well known at the base, having recently arrived from a previous as-

signment. A number of factors limited commanders' ability to spend time interacting with Lopez before the shooting, according to the report, including "significant turnover" in leadership, high operational tempo, and manning shortages.

"There were no clear warning signs," the investigation team concluded in the report. "Because the unit was unaware and unable to address the variety of stressors in [Lopez's] life, Fort Hood was not able to prevent the shooting."

harper.jon@stripes.com
Twitter: @JHarperStripes

Ship still grounded in water near Okinawa

BY ERIK SLAVIN

Stars and Stripes

YOKOHAMA, Japan — The USNS Sgt. Matej Kocak remained grounded for a second day Friday in waters near Okinawa as divers and other personnel determine the best way to free the stranded cargo ship.

Preliminary reports indicate the ship sustained some hull damage, though the extent is still being evaluated, Navy 7th fleet spokesman Lt. Charles Banks said.

A "manageable" level of water is leaking into the ship, Banks said. Kocak's 131 crewmembers remain aboard, although a landing craft utility ship remains on scene if evacuation is needed.

The crew of the ship, which is operated by the Military Sealift Command, includes 38 civilians, 26 Marines and 67 soldiers.

High tide Thursday night did not refloat Kocak naturally, Banks said, so planners must find another way to remove the ship. Military experts on groundings were headed Friday to the scene, about six miles from the Uruma coastline, and divers were assessing the situa-

tion, officials said.

Tugboats were keeping the ship stable.

"We cannot make attempt to float the vessel with tugs before the assessment is completed," Banks said.

Floating a grounded ship depends on many factors and can be as simple as towing the ship off a ledge; or, as in the extreme case of the USS Guardian in 2013 when it struck a coral reef in the Philippines, it can mean systematically dismantling a ship at sea.

It was unclear Friday afternoon whether the 821-foot ship was transiting in shallow waters, or whether it was moving within generally deep waters and struck an outcropping. It was also unknown whether any live coral was affected, and there were no reports of fuel leaking into the water, Banks added.

Okinawa, an island of about 1.4 million people, is home to the bulk of U.S. forces in Japan and considered strategically valuable because of its proximity to several potential flashpoints in the Asia-Pacific region.

slavin.erik@stripes.com
Twitter: @eslavin_stripes

Air Force nuke officer dismissed for drug use

The Associated Press

GREAT FALLS, Mont. — A nuclear missile launch officer who pleaded guilty to illegal drug use was dismissed from the Air Force and was sentenced to a month of confinement in a Montana jail.

The officer, 2nd Lt. Nicole Dalmazzi of the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base, said she took Ecstasy pills five times between January 2013 and February 2014, in part because she was going through a divorce.

Base officials said there was no indication she had used drugs while on duty.

Lt. Col. Lyndell Powell of Joint Lewis-McChord Air Force Base sentenced Dalmazzi on Wednesday.

The drug investigation began in August 2013 at Edwards Air Force Base in California. Investigators examined the cellphones of two airmen and found text messages to or from 11 other Air Force officers at several air bases.

The messages detailed "specific illegal drug use that included synthetic drugs, Ecstasy and amphetamines," according to a report released in March

2014 that looked mainly at missileers' exam cheating and also traced a connection between the drug and cheating issues.

Two of the 11 officers were assigned to Malmstrom, and investigators determined both had used personal cellphones to discuss illegal drug activity as well as answers to routine proficiency tests taken by all missileers.

The cheating scandal implicated nearly 100 nuclear officers at Malmstrom, near Great Falls.

The Air Force fired nine midlevel nuclear commanders and supervisors, allowed a senior commander to resign, and said it would discipline dozens of junior officers in response to the exam-cheating scandal at Malmstrom.

In November, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered top-to-bottom changes in how the U.S. nuclear force is operated and managed.

The 341st Missile Wing operates 150 of the Air Force's 450 Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs. Minot Air Force Base, N.D., and F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo., also have 150 missiles each.

Irvin key contributor for Seattle

The Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — Every now and then, even during games sometimes, Bruce Irvin will be overwhelmed by gratitude.

He'll remember the two weeks he spent in an Atlanta jail as a teenager. He'll think about turning his life around and becoming a junior college football standout, only to lack the money to continue in school.

And, of course, Irvin will remember all the criticism that was directed toward the Seattle Seahawks when they decided to make him the No. 15 pick of the 2012 draft.

"Sometimes I'll be in a game during a timeout break looking at the crowd and think, 'Dang, a lot of people said I wouldn't be here.' Sometimes I thought about myself I wouldn't be more than what I was," Irvin said. "It's a blessing. I thank God every day. ... Lord knows I was supposed to be in jail or dead. Just for me to be able to practice every day and come out here and watch film is a blessing. I try and make the most of letting the guys know it ain't guaranteed."

Once considered to be a risky draft

choice who could only be a pass rusher in the NFL, Irvin has developed into an every down linebacker who rarely leaves the field. On first and second downs, Irvin is a strongside linebacker who plays on the line of scrimmage.

During passing situations, Irvin gets to put his hand on the ground and do his favorite thing in football: rush the quarterback.

It's a scenario that works for the Seahawks and one no one could have anticipated when Irvin entered the NFL.

"It makes me happy. That was the biggest knock on me that I was situational and I couldn't play the run," Irvin said. "These coaches, Pete (Carroll) and (general manager) John (Schneider), they never wavered, they never pulled the plug on me and they kept believing in me. ... I can't ask for a better supporting cast and a better situation than the one I'm in right now. I just have to continue to keep getting better and not let those guys down."

Irvin is at the end of his third season, but early in Year 2 his future seemed in question. He had played mostly as an undersized pass-rushing defensive end his rookie season and while he was successful at getting to

the quarterback, he also got pushed around in run defense. Seattle's coaches wanted to keep it simple for him at first and not push him to learn multiple positions.

Seattle started transitioning Irvin to linebacker at the start of his second season. He was suspended four games for using performance-enhancing substances, but Seattle stuck with its plan. The Seahawks were convinced their best defensive alignment was with K.J. Wright at weakside linebacker and Irvin as their future on the strongside.

Irvin believes that if he was with any other team, he'd still just be a situational player.

Irvin is far from a finished product as a linebacker, but he's managed to retain his pass-rush ability. Irvin finished second in the regular season with seven sacks for Seattle, and he'll likely be getting plenty of opportunities to try to get to Tom Brady against New England in the Super Bowl. When the teams played during the 2012 season in Seattle, the Patriots put the ball in the air 58 times, although their run game is more consistent now.

Federer eliminated in 3rd round in Australia

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — For the first time in a dozen years, Roger Federer won't be featuring in the Australian Open semifinals after his upset third-round loss to Andreas Seppi on Friday.

The 17-time Grand Slam champion had never lost to Seppi in 10 previous meetings, but made some uncharacteristic errors including nine double-faults — one to surrender a mini break in the last tiebreaker — in the 6-4, 7-6 (5), 4-6, 7-6 (5) defeat.

Seppi, a 30-year-old Italian who had only advanced beyond the second round once at his nine previous trips to Melbourne Park, held his nerve despite some withering winners from Federer, who registered his 1,000th career match win when he collected the Brisbane International title earlier this month to open the season.

Federer has won the Australian title four times, and had reached the semifinals or better at Melbourne Park every year since winning the championship for the first time in 2004. This was his earliest exit in Australia since 2001, when he also lost in the third round.

Seppi will almost certainly get another match on Rod Laver Arena for his fourth-round meeting with Australian teenager Nick Kyrgios, who shrugged off concern over a nose-bleed to beat Malek Jaziri of Tunisia 6-3, 7-6 (6), 6-1.

Three-time Australian Open finalist Andy Murray beat Joao Sousa 6-1, 6-1, 7-5 to set up a fourth-round clash with No. 10 Grigor Dimitrov, who had a tough third-rounder against 2006 Australian Open finalist Marcos Baghdatis before winning 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Seventh-seeded Tomas Berdych needed eight match points before beating Viktor Troicki 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 and will next play Bernard Tomic, who beat fellow Australian Sam Groth 6-4, 7-6 (8), 6-3.

No. 14 Kevin Anderson beat No. 24 Richard Gasquet 6-4, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (6) and will face the winner of the Nadal vs. Dudi Sela match.

On the women's side, No. 2-ranked Maria Sharapova needed just 61 minutes for her 6-1, 6-1 win over No. 31 Zarina Diyas and will next meet No. 21 Peng Shuai.

Eugenie Bouchard struggled through a scrappy opening set before getting on top in a 7-5, 6-0 third-round win over Caroline Garcia that featured 10 breaks of serve.

Third-seeded Simona Halep advanced with a 6-4, 7-5 win over Bethanie Mattek-Sands, missing twice when she served for the match in the eighth and 10th games before finally serving out.

Halep, who opened the season by winning the Shenzhen Open in China, will next play Yanina Wickmayer, who beat No. 14-seeded Sara Errani 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.

No. 10 Ekaterina Makarova advanced earlier with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over No. 22 Karolina Pliskova.

Brady, Belichick: No explanation

The Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The two men most responsible for delivering wins for the New England Patriots both said on Thursday they have no explanation for how footballs used to reach the Super Bowl were underinflated.

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady said he has not been contacted by the NFL, even as league officials investigate whether the team cheated against the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC Championship last Sunday.

"I don't know what happened," Brady said, answering questions from reporters hours after Patriots coach Bill Belichick said he almost never thinks about football pressure, and doesn't know how the game balls came to be 2 pounds per square inch under regulations.

"I didn't alter the ball in any way," Brady said.

Unlike Belichick, who briefly answered questions after a long opening remark by repeatedly saying "I've told you everything I know" and "I don't have an explanation," Brady answered many questions and said he doesn't think about the condition of the football during games.

"I get the snap, I drop back, I throw the ball," Brady said. "I don't sit there and try to squeeze it and determine that."

He does, however, have his preferences — he likes the football to be pumped to 12.5 pounds per square inch of air pressure, he said.

The NFL requires balls to be inflated between 12.5 and 13.5 pound per square inch. Brady said he never has knowingly played with a ball with less than 12.5 pounds per square inch of pressure.

"To me, that's a perfect grip for the football," said Brady, who will face the Seattle Seahawks in the Super Bowl on Feb. 1 in Glendale, Ariz. "I would never do anything outside the rules of play."

With different approaches, Belichick and Brady sent a unified message: Both said they have no clue how the footballs were tampered with or switched, and started learning about the issue along with fans and everyone else.

"I have no knowledge of anything, any wrongdoing," Brady said when asked who on the Patriots was responsible for the underinflated footballs. "I'm very comfortable saying nobody did it as far as I know."

Brady said he picks the game balls he wants to use several hours before kickoff, then doesn't think about them at all. He said he didn't know the protocol for handling game balls after he chooses them.

"Once I approve the ball, that's the ball that I expect out there on the field," Brady said. "It wasn't even a thought, inkling, or concern of mine that they weren't the same ball."

Belichick said that before this week, he didn't give air pressure in footballs much thought at all.

"I've learned more about this process in the last three days than I knew or have talked about it in the last 40 years that I've coached in this league," Belichick said during an 8½-minute opening statement during an 11½-minute news conference in the morning. While neither Belichick nor Brady took responsibility for the underinflated balls, neither absolved anyone besides themselves of potential wrongdoing.

"I felt like we won the game fair and square," Brady said. "I feel like I've always played within the rules. I would never do anything to break the rules."

Softer balls are generally considered easier to throw and catch, and quarterbacks, specialists and equipment managers are known to have very individualized preferences in how footballs are readied for games.

Belichick said he was unaware of the process for game balls until the accusations were raised.

Belichick said he sometimes hears quarterbacks, kickers and other specialists talk about their preferences.

"I can tell you and they will tell you that there is never any sympathy from me whatsoever on that subject. Zero," Belichick said.

Under league rules, each team provides 12 balls for use on offense. Referees approve the balls more than two hours before game time, then keep the balls until they're turned over to ball handlers provided by home teams just before kickoff.

The coach who has won three Super Bowls said the balls used by the Patriots offense are inflated to the "12 1/2-pound range" and "any deflation would then take us under that."

Going forward, he said, the Patriots will inflate footballs to a safe level to prevent them from dropping under allowable air pressure during games.

The issue has drawn inflated reaction from around the game and its fans as the Patriots prepare to play for the NFL title.

Several players said it would not distract them in preparing for the game.

"We'd rather be celebrating our trip to the Super Bowl," special teams captain Matthew Slater said. "It's important to us that we respect the game and deal with things in a way that's considered professional."



Ship's Store official new car program

Exclusive Navy at-sea offers:

www.navyauto.com or nasinfo@navyauto.com

Struggling Bulls knock off Spurs

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Derrick Rose drove hard to the rim. The defense was at its stifling, suffocating best.

More than anything, the swagger was back and so were the Bulls.

Rose scored 22 points and struggling Chicago beat the San Antonio Spurs 104-81 on Thursday night.

The Bulls came away with a much-needed win after dropping six of eight and handed the defending champions their most lopsided loss of the season.

The Central division leaders broke this one open in the third quarter, outscoring the Spurs 31-20, and snapped San Antonio's four-game win streak.

"It shows what we're capable of doing," All-Star Pau Gasol said.

Rose, who called out his team after Monday's loss at Cleveland, led six Bulls in double figures.

He was aggressive going to the rim, hitting 9 of 16 shots. Rose played just 45 seconds in the fourth quarter because of some stiffness and the lopsided score, but he expects to suit up at Dallas on Friday.

Gasol added 12 points and 17 rebounds after being voted to his fifth All-Star game and first as a starter.

Jimmy Butler scored 17 on just nine shots. Taj Gibson added 15 points, nine rebounds and four blocks. Aaron Brooks scored 15, and the Bulls snapped a three-game home losing streak.

After giving up at least 102 points in six of the previous eight games, Chicago held San Antonio to 37 percent shooting. The Spurs' Kawhi Leonard scored all of his team-leading 16 points in the first half.

"We just played embarrassing basketball," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said. "I

want my money back."

Rose had it going right from the start with 15 points the first half, and Chicago headed to the locker room with a 46-40 lead that was about to get much bigger.

Tony Snell converted a three-point play with 17.3 seconds left in the second quarter to start a 14-2 Bulls run that made it 57-42 early in the third. The Bulls stayed in control the rest of the way, putting aside the chaos for at least one night.

The recent struggles combined with Rose's criticism and a meeting between the players and coach Tom Thibodeau painted an ugly picture for a team that was rolling along before the recent slide.

There is speculation that Thibodeau's job is in jeopardy and that he is losing the locker room. It sure seemed like there was plenty of outside noise even if he shot down that idea, asking, "What noise?"

"As I told you yesterday, I could care less, couldn't care less, and I don't think our team couldn't care less about that stuff," he said.

Popovich dismissed the idea of Thibodeau losing the team before the game and did it again afterward.

"That's baloney," he said. "Nothing could be further from the truth."

Jazz 101, Bucks 99: Gordon Hayward scored 13 of his game-high 24 points in the fourth quarter and visiting Utah held on for the win as Milwaukee missed its last five shots in the closing minute.

The Jazz appeared to be in control after a 15-3 run, taking a 101-92 lead on two free throws by Hayward with 2:35 remaining. But the Bucks pulled within the final score on Jared Dudley's three-pointer from the top right with 1:29 left.

The Bucks had a final opportunity when

an officials review awarded them the ball out of bounds under the basket with 7.1 seconds left. Brandon Knight missed a jumper with two seconds left and Zaza Pachulia missed the tip-in at the buzzer.

Celtics 90, Trail Blazers 89: Evan Turner hit a three-pointer with 1.9 seconds left and visiting Boston overcame shorthanded Portland.

Avery Bradley had 18 points to lead the Celtics, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Jared Sullinger added 17 points and nine rebounds.

Damian Lillard had 21 points and seven assists to lead the Blazers, who have lost five of their last six as they struggle with injuries to their front line.

The Blazers were hit before the game with the news that three-time All-Star LaMarcus Aldridge had torn a ligament in his left thumb and would need surgery. The 6-foot-11 power forward is expected to miss from six to eight weeks.

Clippers 123, Nets 84: Blake Griffin scored 22 of his 24 points in the first half, when the Clippers led by 33 points, and host Los Angeles went on to its largest victory ever over Brooklyn.

J.J. Redick and Jamal Crawford added 17 points each, DeAndre Jordan had 14 points and 12 rebounds, and Chris Paul had a season-high 17 assists for the Clippers, who have won nine of their last 12 and three in a row.

With Kevin Garnett resting, the Nets were led by Mason Plumlee with 16 points. Darius Morris and Jerome Jordan had 11 points each, and Jordan had 11 rebounds.

The Clippers put the game away in the first half, when they shot 66 percent and Jordan had already secured his double-double.

Gasol bros. become 1st siblings to start All-Star game

The Associated Press

Pau and Marc Gasol of Spain have been voted the first brothers to start in the NBA All-Star Game, while Toronto's Kyle Lowry made a late surge in fan balloting and will start for the Eastern Conference.

Lowry passed Dwyane Wade and will start alongside Washington's John Wall, the first time the East has had two first-time starters at guard since 2000.

Golden State's Stephen Curry made his own late surge to pass LeBron James as the overall leading vote-getter, the league announced on Thursday.

Kobe Bryant was also voted to start at West guard, though that's in jeopardy because of a torn right rotator cuff.

Chicago's Pau Gasol will start up front for the East along with James and Carmelo Anthony for the Feb. 15 game in New York. Memphis' Marc Gasol joins New Orleans' Anthony Davis and the Los Angeles Clippers' Blake Griffin in the West frontcourt.

Tom and Dick Van Arsdale played in the 1970 and 1971 games, but the Gasols — once traded for each other — are the first brothers to be chosen to start.

"Knowing that I will be facing my brother Pau for the opening tip, it will be a true accomplishment for our family, and a memory I will cherish for the rest of my career," Marc Gasol said in a statement through the Memphis Grizzlies. "It holds special meaning to be voted in by the fans, and I look forward to representing my teammates, the organization, the city of Memphis, and entire Mid-South community and Grizzlies fans across the world."

Both Gasols were among the leaders in all the balloting updates, but Lowry was running more than 100,000 votes behind Wade, a perennial All-Star and fan favorite, when the last results were released. Fans rewarded him for his hard-nosed play in leading the Raptors to a huge lead in the Atlantic Division with his first All-Star appearance.

Wall earned his first last year, and now he's earned his first start. The East hasn't had both of its guards making their first start since Philadelphia's Allen Iverson and Charlotte's Eddie Jones in 2000.

Fans had to vote for two guards and three frontcourt players. The reserves will be picked by the head coaches in each conference and be announced next Thursday.

The star of the NBA-leading Golden State Warriors, Curry ended up with more than 1.5 million votes, more than 42,000 ahead of James, who had a 13,285-vote lead at the last update. Curry, who just two years ago was an All-Star snub, becomes the first Warriors player elected to consecutive starts since Chris Mullin in 1991-92.

His partner in the backcourt is up in the air after the Lakers revealed Bryant's injury earlier Thursday. Though the severity of the injury is unknown, many rotator cuff injuries require surgery and several months of rehabilitation.

That could rule Bryant out of his 17th All-Star appearance, second all-time behind Kareem Abdul Jabbar's 19. Bryant's first was in 1998 at Madison Square Garden, site of this year's game.

No. 2 Virginia shuts down Georgia Tech

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — Virginia coach Tony Bennett and his team call it a "gap," a string of three consecutive possessions for the opponent in which the No. 2 Cavaliers yield no points. It might be time for Bennett's team to increase the standard.

Malcolm Brogdon scored 13 points to lead a very balanced offense and Virginia ran its home winning streak to 21 games with a 57-28 victory against Georgia Tech on Thursday night. It marked the third time this season the Cavaliers have held a team under 30 points in a game, and it featured many of those three-possession gaps the team has come to celebrate.

"We build on each stop we get and that turns into our offense, really gets our offense going, but I also think our fans get into it," Brogdon said of the roar that builds as a foe looks for a shot. "They love us getting stops as much as scoring."

Nine other players scored for the Cavaliers (18-0, 6-0 Atlantic Coast Conference), who pretty much broke the game open with a 10-0 first-half run. The burst turned a 13-10 lead into a 13-point margin that never again dipped into single digits.

Virginia led 28-16 at halftime and, at the midpoint of the second half, Georgia Tech (9-9, 0-6) had added just four more points and trailed 41-20 as Cavaliers reserves started anticipating a chance to play. It came in the final minutes.

Georgia Tech coach Brian Gregory said Virginia's defense was good in the first half, and "in the second half, it was another level. ... What they do is every open shot you get, you have to make and we struggled to make open shots tonight."

No. 3 Gonzaga 68, Saint Mary's 47:

Kevin Pangos scored 14 points as the No. 3 Bulldogs cruised past the visiting archrival Gaels to take sole possession of first place in the West Coast Conference.

Przemek Karnowski added 12 points and Kyle Wiltjer 11 for Gonzaga (19-1, 8-0 West Coast), whose only loss this year is at No. 7 Arizona. This is the best start in program history.

Brad Waldow scored 14 points to lead Saint Mary's (15-4, 7-1), which saw its nine-game winning streak snapped.

Gonzaga has won 12 straight games and has the nation's longest home winning streak at 35, dating to 2012.

No. 7 Arizona 89, Stanford 82:

Stanley Johnson had 19 points and seven rebounds and the No. 7 Wildcats handed the Cardinal its first home loss of the season.

Brandon Ashley added 17 points while playing with foul trouble in Arizona's 10th straight win in the rivalry.

The Wildcats (17-2, 5-1 Pac-12) tied the game at 52 with 14:34 left on Ashley's three-point play and went ahead on his three-pointer the next time down the floor in a decisive sequence that helped Arizona pull away.

Stanford (13-5, 4-2) dropped to 9-1 at home in Maples Pavilion and had a three-game winning streak snapped with just its second defeat in nine games.

No. 8 Notre Dame 85, Virginia Tech 60:

Jerian Grant scored 18 points to lead the visiting Fighting Irish past the Hokies.

Grant shot 6 of 9 from the floor, includ-

ing two three-pointers, as Notre Dame (18-2, 6-1 ACC) won its third straight game. Pat Connaughton added 17 points and hit five three-pointers on a night when the Fighting Irish shot 12 of 26 from beyond the three-point arc.

Ahmed Hill scored 13 points for Virginia Tech (8-10, 0-5), which lost for the fifth straight time, four by double figures.

No. 23 Indiana 89, No. 13 Maryland 70:

Kevin "Yogi" Ferrell scored 24 points and Collin Hartman added a career high 15 to lead the host Hoosiers over the Terrapins.

Indiana (15-4, 5-1 Big Ten) has won four straight and is tied with No. 6 Wisconsin for the conference lead.

Jake Layman had 13 points and Jared Nickens finished with 12 for Maryland (17-3, 5-2), which was off all night. The defense was shredded for a season-high point total and the league's best three-point defense allowed Indiana to make 15 threes.

DePaul 64, No. 24 Seton Hall 60:

Billy Garrett Jr. scored 14 points before fouling out and Myke Henry also had 14 to help the Blue Demons come from behind and edge host Pirates.

It was DePaul's first win on the road against Seton Hall, and it snapped a 51-game losing streak for the Blue Demons (11-8, 5-2) against ranked teams — dating to 2008, when they defeated No. 17 Villanova.

DePaul outscored Seton Hall 17-5 over the final five minutes.

Angel Delgado set career highs with 19 points and 19 rebounds for the Pirates (13-5, 3-3).