

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Surf hinders search for missing Marines

Associated Press

HALEIWA, Hawaii — The high-surf warning that has complicated the search for 12 Marines who are missing after two helicopters crashed off Hawaii was expected to persist Sunday.

The waves dispersed the debris and complicated the search, which was expanded to include waters off Oahu's west coast.

"It makes finding things incredibly difficult," Coast Guard spokesman Lt. Scott Carr said.

Rescuers battled waves up to 30 feet Saturday, but winds decreased to about 10 mph.

The U.S. Marine Corps released the names of the 12 missing crewmembers late Saturday. Although based in Hawaii, the Marines were from various states.

The Coast Guard was notified late Thursday of the crash by a civilian who saw the aircraft flying, then its disappearance and then a fireball. Someone else reported a flare in the sky, Carr said. It was not clear if the fireball and the flare were the

same.

The Marines were alerted when the CH-53E helicopters carrying six crewmembers each failed to return to their base at Kaneohe Bay following a nighttime training mission. Hours later, a Coast Guard helicopter and C-130 airplane spotted debris 2½ miles off Oahu.

A Navy P-3 airplane was scouring the ocean, along with helicopters from the Coast Guard, Army and Navy and the Honolulu police and fire departments. Two Navy warships and two Coast Guard cutters were on the scene. Honolulu lifeguards on personal watercraft were also looking.

The Coast Guard was keeping people out of a wide zone that spanned about 30 miles of shoreline, citing danger from debris. The zone extended from the shore to 8 miles off the coast.

National Weather Service meteorologist Derek Wroe said Saturday that the surf peaked Friday afternoon and was slowly declining.

The transport helicopters

were part of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Marine Corps Base Hawaii. The Coast Guard initially reported that the choppers had collided, but Marine Capt. Timothy Irish said Friday that he did not know if the accident was a collision.

The family of Cpl. Christopher J. Orlando, 23, of Hingham, Mass. — who is among the missing — said they are grateful for people's prayers. "We continue to monitor the ongoing search effort in Hawaii and are thankful for the hard work of the many federal and local heroes undertaking this search and rescue mission," the family said in a statement released by the Massachusetts State Police.

The family of Capt. Kevin T. Roche, 30, of St. Louis, said in a statement distributed by brother-in-law Anthony Kuenzel in St. Louis, "We believe the Marines and Coast Guard are doing everything they can to bring Kevin and his fellow Marines home safely, and we are grateful to everyone involved in the rescue."

Names of missing

- Maj. Shawn M. Campbell, 41, College Station, Texas.
- Capt. Brian T. Kennedy, 31, Philadelphia.
- Capt. Kevin T. Roche, 30, St. Louis.
- Capt. Steven R. Torbert, 29, Florence, Ala.
- Sgt. Dillon J. Semolina, 24, Chaska, Minn.
- Sgt. Adam C. Schoeller, 25, Gardners, Pa.
- Sgt. Jeffrey A. Sempler, 22, Woodruff, S.C.
- Sgt. William J. Turner, 25, Florala, Ala.
- Cpl. Matthew R. Drown, 23, Spring, Texas.
- Cpl. Thomas J. Jardas, 22, Fort Myers, Fla.
- Cpl. Christopher J. Orlando, 23, Hingham, Mass.
- Lance Cpl. Ty L. Hart, 21, Aumsville, Ore.

Philippines seeks patrols with US in South China Sea

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The Philippines has asked the U.S. to conduct joint naval patrols in the South China Sea as tensions rise with China over resources and freedom of navigation in the Asia-Pacific region.

U.S. and Philippines officials met in Washington last week for the second time in more than three years to discuss trade and security, Reuters reported Thursday.

"We are suggesting that we also patrol the area together,"

Peter Paul Galvez, a Philippines Defense Ministry spokesman, told reporters in Manila. "There is a need for a more collaborative presence in the South China Sea."

The call for joint patrols comes just days after the Philippine Supreme Court ratified a defense pact that allows American forces to be temporarily based in the country, paving the way for further cooperation. The allies already conduct joint military training and exercises. After Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines in 2013,

U.S. troops spent weeks providing aid to the most devastated cities.

U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus declined to comment on the request, Reuters reported. However, Mabus extolled the importance of the U.S.-Philippine partnership at a conference just outside Washington, where he said the defense agreement's details were still being worked out.

China's economic growth has spurred a vast modernization of its military in recent years. To keep the bubble from burst-

ing, experts say, it has pushed into and claimed territory rich in oil and gas deposits, leading to disputes with countries such as Vietnam, Japan, Philippines and Malaysia.

China also has threatened freedom of navigation in those vital trade routes by claiming disputed waters in the South China Sea, reclaiming land and building military facilities there. Earlier this month, China began test flights from Fiery Cross Reef, one of its man-made islands.

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3 days of mourning begin in Burkina Faso

Associated Press

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso — Burkina Faso began three days of national mourning Sunday, and the president said security would be stepped up in the capital and at the country's borders after al-Qaida militants in a vehicle from neighboring Niger killed at least 28 people in an attack on two hotels and a cafe popular with foreigners.

In a message to the nation, President Roch Marc Christian Kabore said the people of Burkina Faso must unite in the fight against terrorism.

He also announced on national broadcaster Burkina 24 that security forces would step up their efforts to thwart future attacks, and he asked people to comply with the new restrictions.

"These truly barbaric criminal acts carried out against innocent people, claimed by the criminal organization al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, seek to destabilize our country and its republican institutions and to undermine efforts to build a

US forces aided during siege

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A small number of U.S. forces provided support to the military of Burkina Faso during a deadly weekend attack by al-Qaida-linked militants on a hotel and cafe in that nation's capital, Africa Command said Sunday.

Twenty-eight people died and 54 were injured in the attack in Ouagadougou that started early Saturday and lasted about 12 hours. A total of 124 hostages were freed

by the security forces.

"U.S. forces were primarily advising and providing information to the response forces from the Burkina Faso and French militaries," said Chuck Prichard, a spokesman at AFRICOM's headquarters in Stuttgart. "A small number of U.S. forces directly assisted the recovery operation in the hotel."

Both American and French military personnel provided support during the siege, helping to secure the area, Prichard said.

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democratic, quiet and prosperous nation," Kabore said.

The national mourning began Sunday, a day after Burkinabe and French forces ended a more than 12-hour siege at the upscale Splendid Hotel in down-

town Ouagadougou. When the gunfire and explosions finally stopped, authorities said 18 were killed in the hotel and 10 were killed at the nearby Capucino Cafe.

Among the victims were the

wife and young daughter of Italian Gaetan Santomano, who owned the cafe.

Government officials said the toll also includes six Canadians, five Burkinabes, two Swiss nationals, two French citizens and one American.

The American — Michael Riddering, 45, of Cooper City, Fla. — had been working as a missionary in Burkina Faso since 2011, where he and his wife ran an orphanage that also provided shelter to abused women and widows. He is survived by his four children, two of whom were adopted from Burkina Faso.

Riddering was "a wonderful, godly man" who managed to find spare time to help teams of volunteers from other organizations, who dug wells for local residents, said John Anderson, a board member of Sheltering Wings, Riddering's charity.

Swiss authorities said its two nationals who were killed were also in Burkina Faso for humanitarian reasons.

Afghan bombing kills 13

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A suicide bomber targeting a gathering in a volatile eastern province of Afghanistan killed 13 people, including seven members of a prominent pro-government clan, Afghan officials said.

Another 14 people were wounded in the attack on the home of Obaidullah Shinwari, a scion of the clan and member of the Nangarhar provincial council who was not harmed in the attack, the officials said.

The attack came a day before a second round of international talks aimed at reviving the peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

A Taliban spokesman tweeted that his group was not involved.

The head of the council, Ahmad Ali Hazrat, told The Associated Press that the bomber mingled with a crowd at the family event in the provincial capital of Jalalabad before setting off his payload.

Malik Osman, the head of the family and a respected community elder in the Shinwar district near the Pakistan border was wounded and was flown to Kabul for treatment, Hazrat said.

The family has strongly supported President Ashraf Ghani's efforts to bring peace to the country after almost 40 years of war and 15 years of Taliban insurgency.

Obama proposes changes to unemployment insurance

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama on Saturday proposed changes to the U.S. unemployment insurance system that he says would offer more security to the jobless and encourage experienced workers to rejoin the workforce, even if it means taking a pay cut.

"We shouldn't just be talking about unemployment; we should be talking about re-employment," Obama said in his weekly radio and Internet address.

The president's proposal would require states to provide wage insurance to workers who lose their jobs and find new employment at lower pay. The insurance would replace half of the lost income, up to \$10,000

over two years. It would be available to workers who were with their prior employer for three years and make less than \$50,000 in their new job.

It would require states to make unemployment insurance available to many part-time and low-income workers, and it would mandate that states provide at least 26 weeks of unemployment insurance. Nine states fall short, the White House said.

The proposal comes as U.S. businesses, outside the manufacturing sector, are experiencing strong demand and adding employees. A recent government employment report showed that employers added a net 292,000 jobs in December, with an unemployment rate of 5 percent.

Fitzgerald lifts Cards over Packers in OT

Associated Press

GLENDAL, Ariz. — After being forced into overtime by another Hail Mary from Aaron Rodgers, the Arizona Cardinals wasted no time calling for the “Hail Larry” to get to the NFC title game.

On the first play of overtime, Carson Palmer spun away from a defender and throw across his body to an uncovered Larry Fitzgerald. The 32-year-old darted through tacklers for 75 yards as the screaming Cardinals fans finally drowned out the visiting Cheeseheads. He was tackled at the 5. Two plays later, Palmer shoveled the ball to Fitzgerald who ran it in to give the Cardinals a 26-20 victory over the Packers Saturday night.

The stadium rocked with chants of “Larry! Larry!”

“As simple a word as ‘special’ is, it describes him probably the best,” Palmer said.

Fitzgerald, who still holds single-season playoff records set during Arizona’s Super Bowl run seven years ago, gave the Cardinals the signature plays that prevented what would have been a devastating loss for a team that has its sights on another trip to the NFL’s biggest stage. He finished with eight receptions for 176 yards.

“As an elder statesman on this team I just try to elevate my game and make

plays for my teammates,” he said.

The Cardinals (14-3) will play the winner of Sunday’s Seattle-Carolina game for the NFC title.

It can’t be any crazier than this one, which unfolded on the same field where the Cardinals beat the Packers in overtime 51-45 in a 2009 wild-card game and where Arizona routed Green Bay 38-8 three weeks ago.

“Losing in that fashion, especially with the offense pulling that out, another Hail Mary, is unbelievable,” Green Bay line-backer Clay Matthews said.

Rodgers, in a play reminiscent of his final-play heave against Detroit this season, took the snap with 5 seconds to go in regulation, scrambled around and heaved it 41 yards to the end zone.

Jeff Janis, a 6-foot-3 receiver pressed into extended duty because Green Bay’s top two receivers were hurt, outjumped defenders Patrick Peterson and Rashad Johnson and clutched the ball to his chest as he fell to the turf in the silence of University of Phoenix Stadium, except for the Packers fans, who went nuts.

“I didn’t know where anybody was really,” Rodgers said. “I saw Jeff briefly and I just tried to put some air on it to give him a chance.”

Arizona won the overtime coin toss — after the referee declared the first toss hadn’t flipped — took the ball and

scored a touchdown, denying the Packers a chance to touch the ball in the extra period.

“It comes down to a coin flip sometimes after a long hard-fought game,” Rodgers said, “back and forth, bizarre plays made by both teams and unfortunately it comes down to that.”

The Packers, already without wide receiver Davonte Adams, lost Randall Cobb in the first quarter to a chest injury. James Jones was neutralized most of the game with All-Pro Peterson on him, forcing Rodgers to go to Janis, who had seven catches, five more than he had all year.

A strange play had given Arizona a 20-13 lead with 3:44 to play.

Damarious Randall, who moments earlier had made a key interception in the end zone, deflected a pass intended for Fitzgerald and the ball sailed into the end zone into the hands of Michael Floyd for a 9-yard touchdown.

Floyd also had an 8-yard touchdown catch in the first quarter, dragging his foot to stay in bounds and gather in Palmer’s high throw.

The Packers (11-7) took the kickoff but went nowhere and turned the ball over on downs, setting up Chandler Catanzaro’s 38-yard field goal that put Arizona up 20-13 with 1:55 to play.

With 55 seconds left, Green Bay was pushed back into a fourth-and-20 at its 4.

Rodgers scrambled and threw 60 yards to Janis at the 36. A penalty pushed it back to the 41 and Rodgers threw incomplete before getting off his last completion for the touchdown.

“That’s Aaron Rodgers,” Arizona line-backer Kevin Minter said. “I think it was No. 83 (Janis). Man, he made a play, didn’t he? It looked like they batted it down and he just made a great play. My [darn] jaw was on the ground.”

Rodgers completed 24 of 44 passes for 261 yards and two touchdowns with one interception. Palmer, in his first playoff victory (in three tries) was 25 of 41 yards for 349 yards and three scores with two interceptions.

“It was a roller coaster on the sidelines,” Arizona coach Bruce Arians said. “You’ve just got to keep all your emotions in check and go to the next play. No matter what happened on the last play, you’ve got to go good, bad or ugly on the next play, and that’s basically what our football team did.”

Green Bay dominated statistically for much of the game, taking a 13-7 lead on Rodgers’ pass to Janis with 10:17 left in the third quarter.

“I can’t say we played our best game,” Green Bay coach Mike McCarthy said. “We didn’t play well. We didn’t do enough to win. We had a lot of things we needed to overcome and they just kept battling.”

Patriots earn spot in 5th straight AFC final

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The Patriots’ late-season slump didn’t mean much when the playoffs came to New England. Kansas City’s 11-game winning streak mattered even less.

With Rob Gronkowski and Julian Edelman coming back from injuries to help Tom Brady return to his Super Bowl MVP form, the Patriots earned a spot in the AFC title game for the fifth year in a row, beating the Chiefs 27-20 on Saturday.

“It’s pretty special to get back to another AFC championship game,” said Brady, who will play for the conference title for the 10th time in his career. “It’s pretty cool. It’s hard to do, man. You’ve got to grind throughout the entire year. There’s only four teams playing next week and we’re one of them. That game means a lot.”

The Patriots (13-4) are trying to become the first team to win back-to-back NFL titles since they did it in 2003-04. But first they will meet the winner of Sunday’s game between the Steelers and Broncos for a spot in Super Bowl 50.

The defending champions would play in Denver on Jan. 24 if the Broncos win, or at home if it’s the Steelers.

“You can’t take it for granted because everybody knows how hard it is to get there,” said Edelman, who was sidelined with a broken foot when the Patriots lost four of their last six regular-season games. “We didn’t do too well down the stretch and we were playing against a team that won 11 games in a row.

“We didn’t worry about what’s happened in the past or what’s going to happen in the future.”

Brady threw for two touchdowns to Gronkowski and sneaked in for another just one play after diving for the pylon after a 10-yard scramble that was his longest

postseason run in nine years. Brady took a helmet in the back as his body — but not the ball — cleared the goal line.

“Anytime the Clydesdale gets running, the crowd goes crazy,” Edelman said.

After spending the last two weeks recovering from knee and back injuries, Gronkowski caught seven passes for 83 yards, including touchdowns from 8 and 16 yards out. Gronkowski also recovered an onside kick after Kansas City cut the deficit to 27-20 with just over one minute left.

Danny Amendola had two catches for 18 yards as he worked his way back from a knee injury.

“It’s just great to have those guys back,” Gronkowski said. “They’re hard workers, they’re great players. The chemistry was clicking tonight.”

Alex Smith completed 29 of 50 passes for 246 yards and one touchdown for Kansas City (12-6). The Chiefs had won 11 consecutive games, including a 30-0 victory over Houston in the wild-card round last week for their first playoff victory since 1993.

In the meantime, the Patriots have won 24 postseason games.

“It gives us a great example of where we need to be,” Chiefs coach Andy Reid said. “So, this is a good experience for us. That’s the way we’ll take it. We’ll learn from our mistakes.

“I’m proud of my guys, man. They battled like crazy this year, but came up a little short. We’ll be a better team for it next year.”

Brady led New England to a score on the opening drive, throwing 11 straight passes and completing eight — the last an 8-yard score to Gronkowski. The Chiefs then made it to the Patriots 16, but settled for a field goal.

After trading punts twice, the Patriots started on their 2 when Amendola was flagged for a helmet-first hit to Jamell Fleming. The drive was in danger of stalling at the Kansas City 35 when Chiefs linebacker Dezman Moses hit Brady late and was called for roughing the passer.

The stadium erupted in cheers of “Brady!” — just as it had four months ago when the four-time Super Bowl champion returned from his looming “Deflategate” suspension for the season opener.

Four plays later, unable to find an open receiver, Brady took off for the corner of the end zone. The Chiefs managed to keep him out, but on the next snap, Brady leaned forward and reached into the end zone to make it 14-3.

“I thought I could try to make it. We were close. Not close enough, but we got in on the next play,” said Brady, who shrugged off the two big hits on that drive. “It’s football season, so there’s bumps and bruises, but you’ve got to fight through those.”

Patriots defensive lineman Chandler Jones also had a big play to finish an odd week that started when he left his home reeking of marijuana and showed up shirtless and confused at the local police station. Jones apologized on Thursday, and coach Bill Belichick kept him in the starting lineup.

That left Jones in position to force Knile Davis’ fumble on Kansas City’s first possession of the second half, stopping the Chiefs as they drove into New England territory for the sixth straight time. Brady added another touchdown to Gronkowski to make it 21-6.

Smith finally got the Chiefs into the end zone when he hit Albert Wilson on a 10-yard pass that made it 21-13 with 2 minutes left in the third quarter. Kansas City made it 27-20 with just over one minute left in the game on Charcandrick West’s 1-yard run, but Gronkowski smothered the onside kick attempt to protect the lead.



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Pistons top sliding Warriors

Associated Press

AUBURN HILLS, Mich. — Before the game, Detroit coach Stan Van Gundy said Golden State simply has more margin for error than other teams, meaning the Warriors can win even when they don't play their best.

Not on this night against Van Gundy's Pistons.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope held his own against Stephen Curry for most of the night, scoring 20 points as the Pistons handed the Warriors their second loss in three games, 113-95 on Saturday.

Much of the pregame talk centered around how well Caldwell-Pope might be able to defend Curry. The Golden State star scored 38 points, but Caldwell-Pope gave the Pistons a boost offensively.

"I think we know that we're capable of beating anybody," Van Gundy said afterward. "The difference between the Golden States, San Antonios, Cleavelands of the world and where we are right now, is you've got to do it night after night after night after night after night, and that's our challenge."

The Warriors (37-4) reached the midway point of the regular season a win short of the best 41-game start in NBA history. The 1971-

72 Los Angeles Lakers and 1995-96 Chicago Bulls started 38-3.

Detroit retired Ben Wallace's No. 3 jersey at halftime, and by that time the Pistons led 65-49 on a raucous night at the Palace.

Curry scored 16 points in the third, but the Warriors still trailed by 11 at the end of the period. Then Detroit started the fourth with a 16-2 run to lead 101-76.

Golden State was whistled for three technical fouls. Curry and Draymond Green were hit with technicals late in the second quarter, and Walton was called for one in the fourth after a dunk by Detroit's Andre Drummond.

Grizzlies 103, Knicks 95: Host Memphis beat New York in the first game between the teams since the NBA suspended Grizzlies forward Matt Barnes for two games for his fight with Knicks coach Derek Fisher in October.

Barnes finished with two points and nine rebounds in 26 minutes. Despite the buildup to the first game between the sides, there were no incidents between Barnes and Fisher.

Marc Gasol had 37 points and eight rebounds to help the Grizzlies.

Kings 110, Clippers 103: DeMarcus Cousins had 19 points and 13 rebounds,

Omri Casspi added 17 points and the visiting Kings stopped the Clippers' 10-game win streak.

Casspi went 5-for-8 from three-point range.

Hawks 114, Nets 86: Paul Millsap scored 21 points and went past 10,000 for his career, leading host Atlanta to a dominant second half.

76ers 114, Trail Blazers 89: Jahlil Okafor had 25 points and 10 rebounds to help host Philadelphia snap a four-game losing streak.

Jazz 109, Lakers 82: Rudy Gobert had 18 points, 18 rebounds and five blocked shots, leading host Utah to the easy win.

Celtics 119, Wizards 117: Jae Crowder had a go-ahead layup with 3.9 seconds left off a pass from Marcus Smart, lifting Boston to the road win.

Isaiah Thomas scored 32 points for the Celtics, who earned their third consecutive victory. They had dropped their last three road games.

Bucks 105, Hornets 92: Khris Middleton scored 24 points on 11-of-16 shooting, leading Milwaukee to the road win.

Hertl lifts Sharks in overtime

Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Tomas Hertl scored 1:12 into overtime against former teammate Antti Niemi to lead the San Jose Sharks to their fifth straight win, 4-3 over the Dallas Stars on Saturday night.

Marc-Edouard Vlasic scored twice and Chris Tierney also scored to give San Jose three straight home wins for the first time since last January. Martin Jones made 32 saves and earned his career-high 20th win.

Ales Hemskey, Tyler Seguin and Jason Spezza scored for the slumping Stars, who have lost six of seven overall and seven straight on the road.

Niemi made 35 saves in his return to San Jose. Niemi was the starting goalie for the Sharks for five seasons before being dealt to Dallas last June. He got a nice ovation and a video tribute in his first game as a visitor in the Shark Tank since the 2010 Western Conference finals with Chicago.

Bruins 3, Maple Leafs 2 (OT): Brad Marchand scored with 47 seconds left in the third period to lift host Boston over Toronto.

Patrice Bergeron scored twice for Boston and Tuukka Rask finished with 26 saves as the Bruins extended Toronto's losing streak to five straight.

Blues 4, Canadiens 3 (OT): Jori Lehtera scored 2:04 into overtime, Brian Elliott made a career-high 46 saves and St. Louis beat visiting Montreal.

Ty Rattie tied the game with 5:25 left for St. Louis, and Robby Fabbri and Paul Stastny also scored.

Senators 5, Kings 3: Mika Zibanejad broke a tie on a power play with 6:50 to play and visiting Ottawa roared back from a two-goal deficit in the third period.

Bobby Ryan and Jean-Gabriel Pageau scored 26 seconds apart earlier in the third as the Senators stunned the Pacific Division leaders and All-Star goalie Jonathan Quick with three goals in just over five minutes.

Sabres 4, Capitals 1: Evander Kane had a goal and an assist, Chad Johnson stopped 33 shots and Buffalo beat visiting Washington to hand goalie Braden Holtby a rare loss.

Predators 3, Wild 0: Backup Carter Hutton made 29 saves for his third career shutout and host Nashville beat Minnesota to end a five-game losing streak.

Hutton made his first home start of the season and stopped 25 shots over the first two periods before Nashville's defense locked down Minnesota in the third. He was filling in for Pekka Rinne after the All-Star lost his last four starts.

Blue Jackets 2, Avalanche 1: Jack Johnson scored with 1:07 left off Colorado forward Cody McLeod's skate to give host Columbus a victory.

Rangers 3, Flyers 2 (SO): Mats Zuccarello scored in a shootout and Henrik Lundqvist reached 20 wins for the 11th straight season in New York's victory over host Philadelphia.

Devils 2, Coyotes 0: Cory Schneider made 38 saves for his fourth shutout of the season, leading New Jersey past host Arizona.

Oilers 2, Flames 1 (SO): Teddy Purcell scored in the shootout to lift host Edmonton over Calgary.

Mark Fayne scored in regulation for the Oilers, who snapped a four-game skid and won at home against Calgary for the first time in their last eight meetings here.

No. 2 OU escapes WVU in last second

Associated Press

NORMAN, Okla. — West Virginia came agonizingly close to posting a historic week of basketball.

Khadeem Lattin's tip-in with one second remaining gave No. 2 Oklahoma a 70-68 victory over the 11th-ranked Mountaineers on Saturday.

West Virginia beat No. 1 Kansas on Tuesday. The Mountaineers were trying to become the first team to beat the No. 1 and No. 2 teams in consecutive games since Kansas topped North Carolina and Memphis in the 2008 Final Four.

West Virginia coach Bob Huggins said his team gave its all both games.

"We play hard," he said. "We try. I think we compete. They're good guys. They want to win, they try to win."

West Virginia entered the day alone in first place in the Big 12. The Mountaineers might still be there if they had shot better than 13-for-22 from the free-throw line or hadn't turned it over 16 times.

Jaysean Paige scored 18 points for West Virginia (15-2, 4-1). Devin Williams, the team's top scorer and rebounder for the season, played just 15 minutes because of foul trouble and finished with five points and six rebounds.

Buddy Hield scored 17 points, Jordan Woodard had 13 and Ryan Spangler added 10 points and 14 rebounds for the Sooners (15-1, 4-1 Big 12).

Oklahoma is in position to move to No. 1 in the AP poll since top-ranked Kansas lost to West Virginia on Tuesday. It would be the Sooners' first No. 1 ranking since March 1990. The Sooners won despite shooting a season-low 33.3 percent.

No. 1 Kansas 70, TCU 63: Wayne Selden Jr. scored 11 points, Carlton Bragg and Cheick Diallo provided a boost off the bench, and host Kansas slogged past TCU.

Bragg had 10 points, as did Perry Ellis and Devonte Graham. Diallo had nine points and nine rebounds to help the Jayhawks (15-2, 4-1 Big 12) bounce back from a loss at West Virginia.

No. 3 Maryland 100, Ohio State 65: Robert Carter Jr. scored a career-high 25 points, Rasheed Sulaimon added a season-best 22 and host Maryland bounced back from its first Big Ten loss of the season.

No. 5 North Carolina 67, North Carolina State 55: Kennedy Meeks scored 18 of his 23 points after halftime to help host North Carolina pull away.

Joel Berry II added 14 points for the Tar Heels (16-2), who improved to 5-0 in the Atlantic Coast Conference for the first time since the 2000-01 season.

No. 6 Villanova 55, Georgetown 50: Josh Hart had 15 points and 12 rebounds as visiting Villanova posted its 21st consecutive Big East victory.

The Wildcats (16-2, 6-0) won despite going almost 6 minutes without a field goal in the second half.

No. 7 Xavier 74, Marquette 66: Trevon Bluiett had 18 points and visiting Xavier used a 21-0 burst in the first half to seize control.

Clemson 76, No. 8 Miami 65: Jaron Blossomgame scored 25 points and host Clemson defeated a third straight ranked opponent for the first time in program history.

Notre Dame 95, No. 9 Duke 91: Bonzie Colson scored a career-high 31 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to lead visiting Notre Dame.

Freshman Luke Kennard had 30 points and Brandon Ingram added 25 for the Blue Devils (14-4, 3-2), who have lost two straight for the first time this season.

Seton Hall 81, No. 12 Providence 72: Khadeem Carrington went 12-for-12 at the free throw line and scored 22 points to lead visiting Seton Hall.

Ben Bentil paced Providence (15-3, 3-2) with 21 points.

Auburn 75, No. 14 Kentucky 70: Kareem Canty scored 26 points, including two free throws with 20 seconds left that helped visiting Auburn ends its 18-game losing streak to Kentucky.

No. 15 Texas A&M 79, Georgia 45:

Jalen Jones, Alex Caruso and Danuel House all scored 12 points and visiting Texas A&M won its eighth straight game.

No. 17 Iowa State 76, Kansas State 63: Monte Morris scored 15 of his 19 points in the second half and visiting Iowa State ended a two-game skid.

No. 18 Arizona 90, Washington State 66: Ryan Anderson had 15 points, eight rebounds and a blocked shot that sparked a decisive first-half run, and host Arizona continued its dominance of Washington State.

No. 19 South Carolina 81, Missouri 72: Sindarius Thornwell scored 22 points to lead host South Carolina.

No. 20 Pittsburgh 84, Boston College 61: Jamel Artis scored 22 points and host Pittsburgh recovered from a forgettable loss at No. 21 Louisville.

No. 22 Baylor 63, Texas Tech 60: Lester Medford hit a three-pointer at the buzzer — his only one of the game — to lift visiting Baylor past Texas Tech.

No. 23 Butler 78, St. John's 58: Kellen Dunham scored 24 points and host Butler sent St. John's to its school-record ninth straight loss.

No. 25 Gonzaga 88, San Diego 52: Kyle Wiltjer scored 25 points and Gonzaga beat visiting San Diego.

Navy 87, Lafayette 61: Will Kelly had 13 of his 17 points in the second half and Navy won its fifth straight with a win over Lafayette.

This is Navy's first five-game winning streak in league play since 2008. Kelly's dunk with 7:50 left gave the Midshipmen (14-5, 5-1 Patriot) their largest lead at 73-45 and ended a 33-9 stretch since the start of the second half.

UNLV 100, Air Force 64: Derrick Jones Jr. had 22 points and 10 rebounds and host UNLV made 13 three-pointers to beat Air Force.

Hayden Graham had 18 points and Pervis Louder had 13 to lead the Falcons (10-8, 1-4).