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DOD: Mosul briefing inaccurate, misguided

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A U.S. military officer's media briefing about plans for an Iraq-led ground offensive in Mosul, including its expected timing, amounted to a mistaken disclosure of "military secrets," Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said Tuesday.

The briefer, whose presentation for reporters at the Pentagon on Feb. 19 was authorized by U.S. Central Command, said the U.S. wanted the Iraqis to launch the offensive in Mosul in April or May, although he also said it might go later.

"That clearly was neither accurate information nor, had it been accurate, would have been information that should be blurted out to the press," Carter told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "So it's wrong on both scores."

It now appears likely that the offensive will not begin this spring, with Iraq's security forces requiring more time for U.S.-organized training. It has been widely known for months

'That clearly was neither accurate information nor, had it been accurate, would have been information that should be blurted out to the press. So it's wrong on both scores.'

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter

on U.S. Central Command's media briefing regarding Iraq offensive plans

that the offensive is in the planning stages and that it would likely mark a decisive moment in the campaign to dislodge the Islamic State group from Iraq.

Islamic State fighters overran Mosul last June. Iraqi government forces folded quickly, leading to the start of a U.S.-led bombing campaign in Iraq in August.

Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who was testifying alongside Carter, said he had discussed the Mosul briefing with Gen. Lloyd Austin, head of Central Command.

"He's conducting an internal inquiry," Dempsey said, adding

that he is confident Austin will "take the appropriate action." He did not say what that might be.

The briefing was done by an officer at Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Fla. He spoke by phone to a group of reporters in the Pentagon on condition of anonymity under ground rules set by Central Command.

The episode is remarkable in at least two respects. It was unusual for the U.S. military to disclose in advance the expected timing of an offensive as well as details about the makeup of the Iraqi force that would undertake it. And it was curious that a

secretary of defense would wait nearly two weeks after such a briefing to denounce it publicly for having spilled military secrets.

Asked about it by reporters twice last weekend, Carter was circumspect.

"The important thing is that it will get done when it can be done successfully," he said last Friday, referring to the Mosul offensive. "And even if I knew exactly when that was going to be, I wouldn't tell you."

Asked to comment again the following day, Carter said it's important to keep the public informed, "consistent with security and other considerations."

On Tuesday he was more pointed and expansive in directly criticizing Central Command.

"It is important that we be open as a department — not with military secrets and not with war plans, which was the mistake made in this case — but we do try to keep the country informed of what we're doing," he said.

Cole suspect's lawyers seek Senate 'Torture Report'

The Miami Herald

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVY BASE, Cuba — Defense lawyers for a former CIA captive awaiting a death-penalty trial as the alleged mastermind of the October 2000 USS Cole bombing in Yemen asked the judge Tuesday to secure a U.S. government copy of the full so-called "Torture Report" before it disappears into a Senate vault.

The Pentagon's chief war crimes prosecutor, Army Brig. Gen. Mark Martins, opposed the request. Neither the judge nor the defense lawyers, he said, were entitled to the entire 6,200-page report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the CIA program that held their client Abd al Rahim al Nashiri, a 50-year-old Saudi, captive for four years.

A recently released partially redacted

524-page slice of the report shows that agents waterboarded Nashiri, threatened him with a power drill and a handgun and force-fed him rectally when he went on a hunger strike. It also showed the spy agency secretly held him at Guantanamo, out of reach of the International Red Cross, then spirited him away in 2004 — out of reach of anticipated legal rights.

Nashiri's lawyers want access to the whole thing, either to challenge evidence at trial or to argue the United States has lost the moral authority to execute him if he's convicted.

If not that, death penalty defender Richard Kammen told the trial judge, Air Force Col. Vance Spath, the court should at least obtain a copy from the Department of Defense or some other U.S. government entity to review it himself — or safeguard it for a future appeal.

Intelligence committee staff wrote and researched the report during the chairmanship of California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat. She distributed it throughout the Executive Branch to those with high enough security clearances. Now a Republican, Sen. Richard Burr, is chairing the committee and reportedly wants all copies of it returned to be locked in a vault.

Martins disclosed in court that his office did not have a copy of the report. His staff just got permission on Feb. 18 from the Senate committee to read it, and would decide which portions defense lawyers should receive ahead of Nashiri's eventual death-penalty war crimes tribunal.

The general warned the judge against allowing "a fishing expedition into an area that still has very, very sensitive information that really saves lives."

Justice finds bias in Ferguson

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Justice Department report says blacks in Ferguson, Mo., are disproportionately subject to excessive police force, baseless traffic stops and citations for infractions as petty as walking down the middle of street.

City officials said Tuesday they were reviewing the report, which they expected to be released Wednesday.

With scathing findings of a monthslong investigation being released, attention turns to Ferguson as the city confronts how to fix racial biases that the federal government says are rooted in the police department, court and jail.

The full report could serve

as a roadmap for significant changes by the department, which commanded national attention after one of its officers shot and killed an unarmed black man, Michael Brown, 18, last summer.

Similar federal investigations of troubled police departments have led to the appointment of independent monitors and mandated overhauls in the most fundamental of police practices. The Justice Department maintains the right to sue a police department if officials balk at making changes, though many investigations resolve the issue with both sides negotiating a blueprint for change known as a consent decree.

“It’s quite evident that change is coming down the pike. This is

encouraging,” said John Gaskin III, a St. Louis community activist. “It’s so unfortunate that Michael Brown had to be killed. But in spite of that, I feel justice is coming.”

Brown’s killing set off weeks of protests and initiated a national dialogue about police use of force and their relations with minority communities. A separate report being issued soon is expected to clear the officer, Darren Wilson, who has resigned, of federal civil rights charges.

The report is based on interviews with police leaders and residents, a review of more than 35,000 pages of police records and analysis of data on stops, searches and arrests.

FBI: Person held in NSA shooting

The Associated Press

MILLERSVILLE, Md. — Police say they arrested a suspect in several Maryland shootings after spotting his car near the scene of the first incident.

Officer T.J. Smith, of the Anne Arundel County Police, said the suspect is a 35-year-old from Prince George’s County. Smith said officers saw the car after they had stepped up patrols Tuesday in light of the most recent shooting, in which a building at the National Security Agency was struck.

Two officers near Arundel Mills mall saw the vehicle about 10:30 p.m. near a Costco. Smith said because they recognized the car and the store was closed, the officers found the car’s presence suspicious and moved in. He said they saw evidence that linked the suspect to the NSA shooting and other shootings in the area, including one near the Costco.

On Tuesday afternoon, someone fired on a truck and one person was taken to the hospital after being injured by broken glass. Later in the afternoon, and about 12 miles away, there was a report of shots fired along the Baltimore-Washington Parkway; the NSA reported damage to a building nearby. No injuries were reported.

There have been several similar incidents recently in the Baltimore-Washington area and police had said they were investigating if they were linked.

On Feb. 24, a man was injured by breaking glass when his vehicle was fired on near a shopping mall.

Early Monday, police responded to reports of shots fired outside a movie theater.

The first of Tuesday’s shootings was reported about 2:40 p.m., when a truck with two people inside was struck by gunfire, according to police.

Putin: Nemtsov killing a ‘disgrace’

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The killing of a key opposition figure is a “disgrace” to Russia, President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday.

In televised remarks to Interior Ministry employees, Putin condemned the slaying of Boris Nemtsov, who was gunned down while walking near the Kremlin late Friday.

While the Kremlin said Saturday that Putin had sent his condolences to Nemtsov’s mother, his comments Wednesday were Putin’s first public remarks on the subject.

“The most serious attention must be paid to high-profile crimes, including those with a political motive,” Putin said. “We must finally rid Russia of the disgrace and tragedy of the kinds of things we recently saw and experienced.”

Nemtsov, one of Putin’s most vehement critics, was killed just hours after a radio interview in which he denounced the president for his policies in Ukraine.

Speech fallout could decide Netanyahu’s political fate

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu facing a tough re-election fight in two weeks, the U.S. Congress has handed him an unprecedented boost with its effusive welcome to a message that resonates at home: Iran cannot be trusted as a threshold nuclear state.

Which way it goes for Netanyahu may hinge on whether Israel is in some perceptible way punished by the White House for its leader’s extraordinary offensive against a U.S. president. If he is seen as having bravely spoken truth to power and escaped consequences, the episode will likely help him at the polls.

That could deeply affect the Middle East for years to come on issues far beyond Iran, most notably the conflict with the Palestinians, which some consider even more important than the nature of any future deal on Iran’s nuclear program.

Netanyahu is seen by many as

a leading obstacle to peace with the Palestinians and perhaps the Arab world. His insistence on continuing Jewish settlement of the occupied West Bank has many fearing the country will never be able to extricate itself from the territory and Palestinians — with or without peace — destroying Israel’s character as a Jewish state. For this and other reasons, Netanyahu has found himself at increasingly toxic loggerheads with the country’s elites. That has been recently compounded by scandals involving his expenses.

The speech was engineered by the Republican House speaker, John Boehner, and Netanyahu’s ambassador to Washington, U.S.-born Ron Dermer, who once worked as a Republican operative. The White House made no secret about its unhappiness.

The mood in Netanyahu’s entourage was upbeat afterward. And Avraham Diskin, a political scientist at Hebrew University, said that to an Israeli audience Netanyahu’s speech “will definitely help him in the campaign.”

MLB begins efforts aimed at improving the pace of the game

The Associated Press

GOODYEAR, Ariz. — With large, glowing red numbers, the timer on the center-field wall at Goodyear Ballpark ticked down Tuesday, counting off seconds and ushering in change.

Baseball, the timeless game of endless summers, went on the clock.

Major League Baseball introduced its new pace of play initiatives during five exhibition games in Arizona and Florida. As expected, there were a few minor glitches as players, managers, umpires and fans adjusted to the “rules” designed to make games shorter, more appealing to TV viewers and perhaps lure the next generation of fans to a sport fighting for attention.

On this opening day, baseball had a slightly different look.

“I’ve never worked a game in the history of baseball that has a countdown clock,” said umpire Dan Iassogna, who kept an eye on second base as the Pittsburgh Pirates and Toronto Blue Jays played in Dunedin, Fla. “That was a little different.”

Under the pace of play provisions, hitters are required to keep one foot in the batter’s box after taking a pitch. Not everyone seemed to get the memo.

New York Yankees leadoff hitter Jacoby Ellsbury took the first pitch of the game — and this spring, in fact — from Philadelphia’s David Buchanan and immediately stepped outside the white-chalked line, maintaining his routine.

These days, that’s a no-no — not a no-hitter. But Vic Carapazza, the plate umpire for the exhibition in Clearwater, Fla., gave no signal to Ellsbury that he was guilty of breaking one of the new rules.

MLB is using the spring training and regular-season games in April to break

everyone in. But starting May 1, offenders will face discipline — most likely fines.

Along with keeping batters close to the plate, pitchers are required to have their warmup tosses completed before the clock — set at 2:25 for regionally televised games and 2:45 for national broadcasts — is down to 30 seconds and the batter must be ready by the time the clock reaches 5 seconds.

After Cincinnati drubbed Cleveland 10-0 in a fairly tidy 2 hours, 50 minutes, Indians manager Terry Francona said he believes the changes will be smooth and players and umpires will work together to tweak any problems. There will be issues and controversy, but that’s baseball.

“I don’t think it’s going to be that big of a deal. I really don’t,” Francona said. “It’s going to be that day and it’s hot and everyone’s a little on edge, that’s when you’re going to see something. But that’s what you see during the games anyway.”

Two clocks were installed at all ballparks throughout the Cactus and Grapefruit Leagues, and for the most part the time pieces went unnoticed. Players hustled on and off the field between innings, most of them seemingly unaware that they were being timed.

“I tried not to pay attention to it,” said San Francisco ace Madison Bumgarner, last year’s World Series MVP. “It’s going to be that way during the season. I didn’t pay attention. I can usually be ready.”

In a few instances, hitters caught themselves about to drift outside the dirt near home plate and made sure they kept at least a cleat on the edge of the box.

“I reminded a lot of guys today, ‘Oh, you can’t do that. You do that and we’re going to write you up for that. You can’t do that,’” said umpire James Hoye, who called balls and strikes for the Pirates and Blue Jays. “They’d laugh and say, ‘Oh,

sorry.’”

By the way, it took 3 hours, 17 minutes for Pittsburgh to beat Toronto 8-7. The average MLB gametime in the regular season last year was 3:02.

Ellsbury was given the benefit of the doubt for his misstep. He won’t be as lucky in the months ahead. On Day One, crew chief Tom Hallion and his colleagues weren’t enforcing anything.

“He’s already got enough on his mind, the first pitch of spring training, and now he’s got to remember to stay in the box,” said Hallion, who was at first for the opener. “It’s a work in progress. It’s the first game and we’ll go from here. It’s going to take some work. It’s a change for everybody. It’s not going to get fixed on the first day.”

Fans, too, had to adjust.

As he took his seat a few rows behind Cleveland’s dugout, Glen Pawlak of Concord, Ohio, immediately noticed the clock situated in center field, just to the right of one of the giant palm trees standing guard in Goodyear at the spring home shared by the Reds and Indians.

Pawlak, happy to be away from the Ohio winter and visiting Arizona with his wife, Jan, and son, Brenden, was eager to see how baseball might change.

“It’s interesting,” he said. “It’s a new adaptation to the game. TV viewers these days have a very short attention span. I think football and some of the other sports with replay and so forth have a distinct advantage to be able to fill in some of that space in between. The changes are subtle, and it’s new so it’s definitely something for everyone to talk about.”

Source: Eagles trade RB McCoy to Bills

The Associated Press

Chip Kelly’s latest bold move is another example of his coaching philosophy: “Culture beats scheme.”

Two people familiar with the deal told The Associated Press the Philadelphia Eagles have agreed to trade star running back LeSean McCoy to the Buffalo Bills for linebacker Kiko Alonso. Both people spoke under condition of anonymity on Tuesday because the teams had not announced the deal.

Kelly hasn’t won a playoff game in two seasons in the NFL, but he isn’t afraid to make unpopular decisions.

Last year, he cut three-time Pro Bowl wide receiver DeSean Jackson after a career season. Now, he’s trading away a two-time All-Pro for a talented but injury-prone player.

ESPN first reported the trade. It can’t be completed until the 2015 league season begins next Tuesday.

McCoy thrived in Kelly’s up-tempo offense in 2013, leading the NFL with a franchise-record 1,607 yards rushing. His production, along with the rest of the offense, slipped in 2014 and he finished with 1,319 yards.

Kelly could be gearing up to make a run at another one of his former players. Talk about Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota coming to the Eagles has dominated conversations in Philadelphia. The Eagles would have to trade up from No. 20 in the first round of the draft to get the Oregon quarterback, who is projected to go as high as No. 1 or 2.

The Eagles currently have about \$41 million available under the adjusted 2015 salary cap, so expect them to be quite active when free agency begins next week. They now need a new running back, two starting cornerbacks and plenty of defensive help.

Devils stay hot, down NHL-leading Predators

The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — The New Jersey Devils remain hopeful of making a charge to the playoffs. Thank Cory Schneider for that faith.

Schneider made 33 saves and the Devils beat NHL-leading Nashville 3-1 on Tuesday night, sending the Predators to their season-worst fourth straight loss.

Adam Larsson and Eric Gelinas scored first-period goals in front of a sparse crowd on a snowy night. Mike Cammalleri was awarded a goal with 1:14 remaining in the game when he was hauled down on a breakaway toward an empty net.

“I think Cory’s the answer,” Cammalleri said. “We know he’s going to be solid every night. We know what we’re going to get. I can’t say enough about the way he plays and how much he means to this team.”

The Devils improved to 6-1-1 in their last eight games. They pulled within seven points of Boston, holder of the second wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

Schneider is 5-1-1 in his last seven starts, including a pair of shutouts.

Maple Leafs 3, Panthers 2: Peter Holland and visiting Toronto took advantage after both Florida goalies were injured to snap a franchise-worst 16-game road losing streak.

Holland netted the winning goal 5:28 into the third period against Al Montoya, who had replaced injured starter Roberto Luongo after the first period. It was the Maple Leafs’ first road win in 17 games (0-14-2) since they beat Boston on Dec. 31.

Lightning 3, Sabres 0: Tampa Bay rookie Andrei Vasilevskiy made 28 saves in his first NHL shutout.

Steven Stamkos opened the scoring late in the first period, snapping a wrist shot past former teammate Anders Lindback.

Flames 3, Flyers 2 (OT): Jiri Hudler scored 1:23 into overtime as visiting Calgary won for the second time in six games while trying to make a push in the Western Conference playoff race.

Capitals 5, Blue Jackets 3: Alex Ovechkin added to his NHL-leading total with two goals, leading the charge as visiting Washington handed Columbus its seventh straight loss.

Wild 3, Senators 2 (SO): Charlie Coyle scored the winner in a shootout, Matt Dumba had two goals in regulation and host Minnesota stopped Ottawa’s five-game winning streak.

Devan Dubnyk made 31 saves and turned away Mike Hoffman in the fifth round of the shootout to secure Minnesota’s 15th

victory in 20 games.

Stars 3, Islanders 2 (OT): Cody Eakin scored 2:18 into overtime and host Dallas snapped a six-game losing streak.

Ducks 4, Coyotes 1: Andrew Cogliano scored twice, Frederik Andersen stopped 29 shots in his return from injury, and visiting Anaheim got a point from one of their newcomers.

A day after being acquired from Pittsburgh, Simon Despres assisted on Cogliano’s first goal.

Kings 5, Oilers 2: Anze Kopitar and Trevor Lewis each had a goal and two assists for host Los Angeles.

Sharks 6, Canucks 2: Matt Nieto had two goals and an assist for visiting San Jose.

Chris Tierney, Melker Karlsson, Logan Couture and Marc-Edouard Vlasic also scored for San Jose.



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No. 1 Kentucky escapes Georgia

The Associated Press

ATHENS, Ga. — Kentucky has been in some close games.

This was a new predicament, however. With just over 9 minutes to go, the top-ranked Wildcats found themselves down by nine points, facing an inspired Georgia team and a hostile crowd, their perfect season very much in jeopardy.

No problem. Kentucky clamped down defensively and turned to freshman Karl-Anthony Towns to carry the offensive load, ripping off a 14-0 run that finally put away the pesky Bulldogs 72-64 on Tuesday night.

Did losing cross the Wildcats' minds? Not a chance. "We think about what we need to do to win the game," Towns said.

And now, the Wildcats are 30-0, just one win away from a perfect regular sea-

son. They'll try to finish that off Saturday against Florida at Rupp Arena.

At this point, there are not too many more chances for the Wildcats to lose and still reach their ultimate goal: a national championship.

"The championship is much more important than the perfect season," said Aaron Harrison, who also made some huge plays in the closing minutes. "But we're winding down." Perhaps, he surmised, "We're going to need to be undefeated to win the championship."

The Wildcats, who improved to 17-0 in the SEC, had won their previous five games by an average of 24 points.

They were really challenged in this one by Georgia (19-10, 10-7), which had the sellout crowd roaring when Yante Maten tipped in a miss of his own shot on the second attempt to put the Bulldogs up 56-47 with 9:12 remaining.

Kentucky has survived a few tight finishes along the way, most notably consecutive overtime wins over Mississippi and Texas A&M at the start of SEC play back in January. Twice this season, they have trailed by as many as 11 points, but both of those deficits were in the first half.

Georgia, using its quickness on the inside to offset Kentucky's huge size advantage, had the Wildcats on the ropes after Maten's hustle play capped a 17-4 spurt.

Andrew Harrison knocked down a three-pointer from the corner to turn the tide, but Kentucky was still in some trouble when Nemanja Djuricic drove for a basket and Marcus Thornton hit two free throws to make it 62-56 with 5½ minutes to go.

Kansas wins in OT for Big 12 crown

The Associated Press

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Bill Self has won 190 of the 199 games he's coached in Allen Fieldhouse. This might have been the most satisfying, and improbable, of them all.

The ninth-ranked Jayhawks were down 18 points to No. 20 West Virginia, a team that had beaten them on the road two weeks earlier. They were outrebounded 46-34. Two of their best players were out of the game. And from behind the three-point arc, they finished 0-for-15.

Somehow they won. Frank Mason III scored the final six points of overtime and the Jayhawks clinched their 11th straight Big 12 regular-season championship with a 76-69 victory Tuesday night. They missed by only one point of matching the biggest comeback in the 60-year history of Allen Fieldhouse.

Mason had 19 points for the Jayhawks, whose 11 straight conference titles trail only the 13 in a row UCLA won in the John Wooden era.

Junior forward Perry Ellis, the Jayhawks' leading scorer, appeared to injure his knee late in the first half and did not return. Forward Cliff Alexander, who is awaiting an NCAA ruling on an eligibility issue, was also out.

Daxter Miles had 23 points for West Virginia (22-8, 10-7), which was without star guard Juwan Staten, who had scored at least 20 points in each of the last three games against Kansas. Also out with an injury was guard Gary Browne.

"We deserved to win the game. We really did," said a visibly upset West Virginia coach Bob Huggins. "We just didn't do enough at the end."

Kansas finally tied it 59-all on two free throws by Devonte Graham with 11.5 seconds left in regulation. Miles' three-pointer gave West Virginia a quick 63-61 overtime lead before Jamari Traylor's three-point play made it 64-63.

Mason went 4-for-4 from the free-throw line in the waning seconds, the final shot going in with 4.1 seconds to play as the Jayhawks completed a 16-0 home season.

Villanova stays on track for No. 1 seed

The Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Creighton's physical defense left Villanova reeling, but the fourth-ranked Wildcats managed to get out of CenturyLink Center with their hopes for a No. 1 seed in the NCAA tournament intact.

Ryan Arcidiacono converted a three-point play to give Villanova the lead in the last minute and grabbed the game's final rebound, allowing the Wildcats to win their 11th straight game, 76-72 on Tuesday night.

"That," Arcidiacono said, "was one of our guttiest performances of the year."

Austin Chatman's three-pointer had pulled the Bluejays within 74-72 with 6 seconds left, and they got the ball back after Arcidiacono ran into Chatman as Villanova tried to inbound.

Will Artino missed what would have been the tying layup, and Arcidiacono grabbed the ball and got fouled. As Arcidiacono shot the last free throws, what had been a juiced crowd of 16,337 began to quietly head for the exits.

With a No. 1 NCAA seed in its sights, Villanova couldn't afford a slip-up against the Big East's ninth-place team. The regular-season champion Wildcats ended up getting more than they bargained for from an opponent motivated to play spoiler.

Arcidiacono finished with 23 points for the Wildcats (28-2, 15-2), who trailed by nine points in the first half as Creighton played a tight defense that neutralized Darrun Hilliard and JayVaughn Pinkston.

Chatman scored 21 points to lead the Bluejays (13-17, 4-13), who lost for the seventh time when leading in the final minute.

No. 10 Maryland 60, Rutgers 50: Dez Wells scored six straight points after the Scarlet Knights tied the game late in the second half and the visiting Terrapins won their sixth straight game, a much-harder than expected victory.

No. 19 North Carolina 81, Georgia Tech 49: Just in time for a rematch with Duke, the Tar Heels established some late-season momentum by beating the host Yellow Jackets, completing a sweep of the season series.

Georgetown 60, No. 21 Butler 54: D'Vauntes Smith-Rivera scored 16 points in his return to Indianapolis, helping the Hoyas hold on for a victory over the Bulldogs.

The Hoyas (19-9, 11-6) have won four of their last five and still have a chance at the No. 2 seed in the Big East tournament.

N.C. State 66, Clemson 61:

Ralston Turner scored 23 points and grabbed eight rebounds to help the visiting Wolfpack avenge a January loss to the Tigers.

Mississippi 82, Alabama 74: Stefan Moody scored 25 points, 22 in the second half, and Ladarius White added 19 to help the visiting Rebels (20-10, 11-6 Southeastern Conference) record their seventh 20-win season in nine years.

Iowa 77, Indiana 63: Aaron White had 21 points and five rebounds to lead the visiting Hawkeyes (20-10, 11-6 Big Ten) to their fifth straight victory.

The Hoosiers (19-11, 9-8) have lost two in a row.

Dayton 75, Rhode Island 59: Jordan Sibert scored 21 points on a perfect 6-for-6 from the field and 8-for-8 at the line to lead the host Flyers, who have won six of their last seven games and 21 straight at home.

The Flyers (23-6, 13-4 Atlantic-10) moved into sole possession of first-place in the Atlantic-10 with the win.

Navy 56, Army 52: Zach Fong hit the game-winning three-pointer with 56 seconds left and the host Midshipmen rallied to win in the Patriot League tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals.

LeBron scores 27 in Cavs' win; now 21st in career scoring

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — LeBron James doesn't usually spend a lot of time talking about personal accomplishments, but he made an exception Tuesday night.

James scored 27 points to move into 21st place on the NBA's career list, and the Cleveland Cavaliers cruised to a 110-79 victory over the Boston Celtics.

James, who has 24,508 career points, moved past former Miami Heat teammate Ray Allen with a layup in the third quarter.

"He's one of my best friends," James said. "He's a guy I competed against and grew up watching, and to be able to team with him the last two years when I was with Miami, I learned so much from him. To know I passed him, it's very humbling."

The Cavaliers have been one of several teams rumored to sign Allen, who hasn't played this season. Asked if passing Allen might give him the incentive to return, James laughed and said, "He'll make one three and then retire? I'm going to call him. I don't know. It's pretty cool."

James was pulled with 4:41 remaining in the period and didn't return, playing 26 minutes.

Kyrie Irving scored 18 points in his return after missing two games with a shoulder injury, and Kevin Love — who played despite missing the morning shoot-around due to illness — added 12 points.

The Cavaliers, coming off their first back-to-back defeats since early last month, went ahead midway through the first quarter and rolled to their 19th victory in the last 23 games. Cleveland hadn't lost two in a row since a six-game

skid Jan. 4-13. The Cavs have also won 12 straight at home.

Brandon Bass scored 15 points to lead Boston, which lost by its largest margin of the season.

Hawks 104, Rockets 96: Jeff Teague scored 25 points, Al Horford added 18 and NBA-leading host Atlanta rallied from 18 points down to win its fifth straight.

Nuggets 106, Bucks 95: Danilo Gallinari scored a season-high 26 points, Kenneth Faried had 14 points and 14 rebounds and Denver won hours after Brian Shaw was fired as coach.

Hornets 104, Lakers 103: Al Jefferson had 21 points and 16 rebounds, Mo Williams added 20 points and 13 assists and host Charlotte won for the third time in four games.

Kings 124, Knicks 86: Rudy Gay scored 25 points, DeMarcus Cousins had 22 and Ben McLemore finished with 20 as Sacramento handed host New York its worst loss of the season.

Jazz 93, Grizzlies 82: Gordon Hayward and Derrick Favors scored 21 points each, Rudy Gobert added 15 points and a career-best 24 rebounds to lead visiting Utah to its third straight win.

Bulls 97, Wizards 92: Nikola Mirotic scored 23 points to lead short-handed host Chicago.

The Bulls were without former MVP Derrick Rose (right knee), All-Star Jimmy Butler (left elbow), and trusted reserve Taj Gibson (left ankle), but still managed to improve to 4-2 on their season-high seven-game homestand.