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Pentagon wants more help in militant fight

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is pressing European and Arab allies to provide more troops and support for the war against the Islamic State group, hoping that the horror of the Paris attacks — and the fear more are coming — will compel them to get more deeply involved.

The call for help is driven by a hope to build on what the Obama administration sees as the beginnings of battlefield momentum in Iraq and Syria. It may also reflect a sense in the Pentagon that the campaign against the Islamic State has advanced too slowly and requires more urgent and decisive military moves.

U.S. officials say they detect more European interest in contributing to the military campaign in Syria, where many governments have stayed largely on the sidelines.

But the officials acknowledge that it will be difficult to get more from budget-strapped countries already involved elsewhere in the world.

Chances of drawing significant additional help from Arab nations seem even slimmer.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter has made clear the basic U.S. strategy is not changing. But during an hourlong meeting with top advisers and commanders earlier this week, Carter said now is the time to reach out to European allies for support in the fight against the Islamic State group, according to a senior defense official. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal Pentagon deliberations.

The official said Carter asked his top advisers — including Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford; Gen. Philip Breedlove, the top U.S. commander for NATO; and Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland, the

‘I’m hoping that this tragedy has the effect of galvanizing others as it has galvanized the French, and really throughout Europe.’

Ash Carter
secretary of defense

lead commander in the Islamic State fight — to reach out to Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Turkey for additional military support. The requests span a range of options, from equipment and supplies to trainers and special operations forces.

Italy has provided Tornado fighter jets for reconnaissance missions, weapons for Kurdish fighters and training units in Iraq, and has said it would consider playing a more active role in Iraq combating the Islamic State group, but that no decision has been made.

Last month, Defense Minister Roberta Pinotti said Italy isn’t considering any role in Syria because Damascus hasn’t asked for assistance.

“We are ready to help our French brothers, but neither they nor the Americans nor we will make excursions in Syria,” Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni said Thursday on RAI state television.

The U.S. push for broader support for military action in Syria and Iraq comes as France has intensified its aerial bombing in Syria and Russia has widened its air campaign there after concluding that the Islamic State group was behind the bomb that brought down a Russian passenger jet in Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula on Oct. 31, killing 224 people.

French President Francois Hollande is going to Washington and Moscow next week to push for a stronger international coalition against the Islamic State group.

Carter told an interviewer on Monday that the Paris attacks have had a “galvanizing” effect on U.S. cooperation with France, including in the sharing of intelligence. He noted that the French responded with immediate airstrikes against Islamic State targets and said the United States is looking for new ways to improve the effectiveness of its military campaign.

“We need others to get in the game as well,” he told a forum sponsored by The Wall Street Journal. “So I’m hoping that this tragedy has the effect of galvanizing others as it has galvanized the French, and really throughout Europe. Because remember, Europe has been participating in part in operations against ISIL, but not, notably, most of them in Syria so far,” he said, referring to the militant group by an alternate acronym.

Belgium, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands are flying missions in Iraq but not in Syria.

Derek Chollet, a senior adviser at the German Marshall Fund of the United States who previously served as assistant defense secretary for international security, said the Paris attacks may give other European nations the political will and public support they need.

“There is willingness for Europe to get more involved — but it’s a political decision,” said Chollet. “I think now that there’s political space that’s opening because of what happened last week, it makes sense for the U.S. to be perhaps asking

some of these tougher questions to European partners about their involvement in places like Syria.”

The problem, however, is that resources are tight.

“The challenge we all have is that it’s not as though there is this capability that is waiting on the shelf somewhere, that it’s just in reserve and if we just could access it would solve all of our problems,” said Chollet. “We are bumping up against the limits — under current budgets and current sizes of militaries. You can’t manufacture this instantly.”

Gen. Joseph Dunford, the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said “there hasn’t been a great enthusiasm” for ground combat against the Islamic State group beyond the local forces already fighting in Iraq and Syria, including Kurds in both countries and an Arab rebel coalition in Syria.

“We would like to see particularly Sunni (Arab) nations ... contribute to a greater degree on the ground,” he said, citing in particular the predominantly Sunni states in the Persian Gulf region, some of whom have flown combat missions over Iraq and Syria but are not engaged in ground combat.

“I think they would have the credibility and, frankly, come without some of the baggage of Western forces to be on the ground,” Dunford told the same Wall Street Journal forum. “I think there’s some possibility of doing that ... that’s something we need to work on.”

EUCOM restricts travel to high-risk Brussels

Associated Press

BRUSSELS—Heavily armed police and soldiers patrolled key intersections, subways were closed and many stores shut their doors in Belgium's capital, Brussels, on Saturday as the government warned of a threat of Paris-style attacks. At least one suspect from the deadly Paris attacks is at large and was last seen crossing into Belgium, the capital of which is the headquarters of the U.S.-led NATO and the European Union.

In response to the threat, the U.S. European Command has issued a 72-hour restriction on

travel to Brussels by all U.S. military personnel as well as civilian Pentagon employees, contractors and command-sponsored family members and dependents.

The command said in a notice posted on its website Saturday that "for those already in Brussels, everyone is to shelter in place and remain at home."

Prime Minister Charles Michel said the decision to raise the threat alert to the highest level was taken "based on quite precise information about the risk of an attack like the one that happened in Paris... where several individuals with arms

and explosives launch actions, perhaps even in several places at the same time."

The Belgian Federal Prosecutor's office said Saturday that several weapons were discovered during the search of the home of one of three people arrested in connection with the Paris attacks, but said no explosives were found.

Authorities across Europe, the Mideast and in Washington are trying to determine how a network of primarily French and Belgian attackers with links to Islamic extremists in Syria plotted and carried out the deadliest violence in France in

decades — and how many may still be on the run.

A new potential link emerged Saturday in Turkey, where authorities said they detained a Belgian suspected of connections to Islamic extremists — and possibly to the Paris attacks. The private Dogan news agency identified him as Ahmet Dahmani, 26, and said he is suspected of having explored areas in Paris that were targeted in the attacks.

Belgium's national Crisis Center has raised its terrorism alert for the Brussels region to Level 4, which indicates a "serious and immediate threat."

Mali hunting 'more than 3' suspects

Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali — Malian security forces were hunting "more than three" suspects on Saturday after a brazen assault on the Radisson Blu hotel in the capital that killed 19 people, most of them guests, officials said.

Speaking to reporters briefly after visiting the scene, Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita said the attack underscored the global threat posed by Islamic extremists, especially coming just one week after teams of attackers in Paris killed 130 people while target-

ing a stadium, a concert hall and cafes and restaurants.

"These people have attacked Paris and other places. Nowhere is excluded," Keita said, adding that Mali would still remain open to the world. "Mali is not a closed area, and it never will be."

Malians awoke to a state of emergency after Friday's attack in Bamako that was claimed by an extremist group formed by notorious Algerian militant Moktar Belmoktar. The statement from the Al-Mourabitoun (The Sentinels) group said the assault was in cooperation with al-Qaida's "Sahara Emirate."

"The search has started, and I can tell you that we are looking for more than three people at the moment," said Maj. Modibo Nama Traore, describing the hunt for suspects who may have been involved. Two of the attackers died in the assault.

On Friday morning, heavily armed assailants shouting "God is great!" in Arabic burst into the complex and opened fire on guards before seizing dozens of hostages at the hotel, which is popular with foreigners, sparking a more than seven-hour siege by Malian troops backed by U.S. and French special forces.

Navy seeks camo secrets of ocean fish

The Washington Post

A study released Thursday says that two ocean fish — the big-eyed scad and the lookdown — have fine-tuned a method of avoiding predators by hiding in light. Elements in their silvery skin render them nearly impossible to see. The U.S. Navy funded the study as part of an effort understand how fish do this, and how it could be used to the Navy's advantage.

Although the study focused mostly on just two types of fish, the scad and lookdown are members of a family called the Carangidae, a bountiful clan that includes the white ulua, bluefin trevally, mackerel scad, rainbow runner and a collection of jacks: threadfin, almaco, ambers, green and thick-lipped.

The University of Texas study, published in the journal *Science*, said the fish use their skin as camouflage to blend in with light waves. They've evolved a microscopic component on the surface of their skin called guanine platelets. It manipulates the way the fish reflect in polarized light, said the study's author, Parrish Brady, a research associate at the university.

Demotion of VA officials draws outrage

BY DIANNA CAHN

Stars and Stripes

Two senior Department of Veterans Affairs officials accused of scamming the hiring system in the agency for financial gain were demoted Friday, the VA said in a statement released late in the day.

Diana Rubens and Kimberly Graves were both accused of acquiring their jobs as regional office directors for the Veterans

Benefits Administration after manipulating the system to create vacancies in hard-to-fill areas and then receiving nearly \$400,000 in relocation benefits.

The VA Inspector General made criminal referrals to the Department of Justice for Rubens, who was director of the Philadelphia Regional Office, and Graves, who was director of the St. Paul Regional Office.

Both were demoted to assistant director positions at other

regional offices and will return to work immediately, the statement said.

The minor punishments for the two executives were met with outrage from veterans' advocates.

"For those wondering whether VA is committed to real accountability for corrupt employees, VA leaders answered that question today with a resounding 'no,'" said Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Fla.

Pelicans beat Spurs for 2nd win of season

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The moment Anthony Davis rose to block LaMarcus Aldridge's 15-foot jump shot marked the beginning of the end for the San Antonio Spurs.

Davis had 20 points and 18 rebounds in his return from a sore shoulder, and the New Orleans Pelicans beat the San Antonio Spurs 104-90 on Friday night for their second victory of the season.

Davis also had two blocks in the fourth quarter. The first of those, on Aldridge with about 5 minutes to go, was the talk of New Orleans' locker room after the game.

After batting the shot toward the sideline, Davis sprang for the ball, whipping it off Aldridge's legs just before crashing into the first row of seats. As the ball rolled back out of bounds off Aldridge, Davis rose to his feet with an intense glare, his famous "unibrow" furrowed as he raised both arms to rile up the crowd — and his teammates.

"Those are kind of like playoff-type effort plays. Those are like, we-got-to-win-

this-game-tonight type plays," Pelicans forward Ryan Anderson said. "Seeing our leader make plays like that — dive and get us the ball back. That's the biggest way I think you can lead on this team. He just had a great game."

Anderson did pretty well himself, hitting six three-pointers and scoring 30 points for the second straight game. Ish Smith had 17 points and 13 assists for New Orleans (2-11), which snapped a five-game skid.

Davis said Smith is "playing out of his mind."

"I get on him all the time. I say, 'If they go under (the pick and roll), you've got to shoot the ball. You can't have them disrespect you like that,'" Davis said. "He's making the right plays at the right time and being aggressive, and that's what we need."

Kawhi Leonard scored 22 for San Antonio, which lost for only the third time this season and had its six-game winning streak snapped. Aldridge left briefly in the first quarter after twisting his left ankle, but returned and finished with 20 points and 11 rebounds.

Man, 61, caught cheating in Marine Corps Marathon

Wire reports

An anonymous person logged on to a popular running message board last week to report a crime against fair play. The person had been searching for a name on a database of Marine Corps Marathon finishers and unwittingly came across something suspicious.

"I think I have found a serial cheater," the message board user typed on LetsRun.com.

It was ABOUT that same time that race organizers were doing some authenticating of their own. On Oct. 25, more than 23,000 runners weaved through Washington and northern Virginia, but when organizers combed through the times of the top finishers, the results of one man drew a red flag.

For 50 minutes late in the race, the 61-year-old experienced runner from Washington left no record of his progress, but he reappeared at some point and ran at least the final five to six miles.

"We don't know where he was," said Rick Nealis, the race director. "He was sitting on a park bench or going in the Air and Space Museum. He's doing something for 50 minutes, but I know he's not running the race."

Gregory Price finished second in his age group last month with a time of 3 hours 17 minutes 47 seconds. Nealis was so certain that Price cheated that this week he purged the result from the race logs and

issued a rare lifetime ban.

"You won't see him running in the Marine Corps Marathon again," Nealis said Thursday.

In a brief telephone interview Friday afternoon, Price admitted to shortening his marathon route in recent years and said he never entered a race with the intention of cheating.

"In this case, you click on the photo, yeah, looks like a runner — 61 years old, fit, healthy black male," Nealis said. "But then you look at the times, and you see he's missing two mats."

Every five kilometers and at 13.1 miles, race officials position wide rubber timing mats that register when a chip embedded on each runner's bib passes by. So a runner who finishes the race should have nine split times between the start and the finish.

Price, though, was missing times from the 25-kilometer mark, near the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and again at 30 kilometers, near the U.S. Botanic Garden.

But the mat at the 35-kilometer mark, not far from the Pentagon, showed that Price had resurfaced on the race course and, according to the clock, apparently had been running much faster than at any other point of the race.

The race director said that from 2004 to 2009, Price also had recorded suspect results, missing a chip mat in four of the six races.

Allen's 30 leads Duke past TCU in opener

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Grayson Allen didn't wait very long to bounce back from an off night. It took one game.

Just three days after a rough performance against No. 2 Kentucky, Duke's sophomore guard came up with a career-high 30 points as the fifth-ranked Blue Devils beat TCU 79-71 on Friday night in the opening round of the 2K Classic at Madison Square Garden.

Allen, who averaged 27 points in the Blue Devils' first two games of the season, was held to six points on 2-for-11 shooting by Kentucky on Tuesday night in the Champions Classic. Facing the Rams, he looked a lot more like the player who had an exceptional Final Four in leading Duke to its fifth national championship last season.

"For us, it's all about moving on," Allen said. "There was obviously a rough film session after the Kentucky game where we talked about the improvements that needed to be made. Once you see that you move on to the next game. You make those improvements and move on. For me, coming off the bench it was nothing different as if I was starting. It's the same aggressive, attacking mindset."

He was 9-for-15 from the field, including matching his career high with four three-pointers. He was the key to Duke's 17-3 run that turned VCU's last lead of the game, 54-53, into a comfortable 70-58 lead with 5:43 to play.

"We have a thing on our team, a standard, we tell each other the truth. So you confront it," Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "He didn't play well against Kentucky. He didn't have a good look and he didn't adjust. That was his first big-time start, too. It's not like Grayson's a combat veteran. So I was hard on him but honest."

"The response that Grayson had from Kentucky is huge. I think it's spectacular, to be quite frank with you. Most kids, not most but a lot of kids, would question themselves and he never did."

The Blue Devils (3-1) will face Georgetown, which beat Wisconsin 71-61, in the championship game on Sunday.

"He is a heck of a player," Melvin Johnson, who led the Rams with 20 points, said of Allen. "Once he gets downhill he has a great way of initiating contact. It wasn't necessarily hard, but it was us sticking to the details of the game plan. I think if we stuck to it a little better we could have limited him."

Duke turned up the defense when it needed to in the second half.

From their last lead with 12:03 to play, the Rams (2-1) went 5-for-20 from the field and Duke had a lot to do with that, especially inside where easy baskets in the first half were being challenged and that led to some breakouts for the Blue Devils.

VCU finished with a 46-24 advantage in points in the paint, but most of that came in the first half.

Air Force edges Boise St.

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — Air Force quarterback Karson Roberts flashed a wry grin after the Falcons upset Boise State 37-30 Friday night on the strength of his 279 yards passing.

"That was definitely fun," said Roberts, who threw for the most yards in a game since Dee Dowis passed for 306 in 1989 against Notre Dame and has thrown for 550 yards in his last two games.

But it didn't start out that way.

"It wasn't the best start," said Roberts, who fumbled on the Falcons' first offensive play from scrimmage. "It was really about as bad of a start as you can get. But the coaches settled us down and reminded us that there was a lot of football left to play."

Eighty seconds into the game, Boise State held a 10-0 lead after an 83-yard touchdown run by Jeremy McNichols and a 37-yard field goal by Tyler Rausa off Roberts' fumble.

But it was a lead that didn't even last until halftime.

Air Force (8-3, 6-1) stormed back and built a 21-point lead in the third quarter before holding on for the victory. In the process, the Falcons took control of the Mountain Division race and can secure

a spot in the conference title game with a win against New Mexico next week or a loss by the Lobos on Saturday against Colorado State.

Boise State (7-4, 4-3) watched its hopes of defending its conference crown vanish in losing consecutive games at home for the first time since 1997.

"There's a problem in execution and there's a problem in going out there and just doing our jobs," Boise State coach Bryan Harsin said. "We're not sneaking up on anybody any more. We just have to go out there and be more consistent."

South Florida 65, Cincinnati

27: Quinton Flowers threw four touchdown passes and Marlon Mack topped 100 yards rushing for the seventh time this season, helping the surging Bulls remain in contention for the American Athletic Conference East Division title with a rout of the visiting Bearcats.

USF (7-4, 5-2) won for the sixth time in seven games following a 1-3 start. The second-place Bulls will close the regular season at winless Central Florida and need to beat the Knights, as well have division leader Temple lose at least one of its final two games to clinch a berth in the inaugural American championship game.



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Warriors win 14th straight

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Until a couple of games ago, Stephen Curry really hadn't thought much about making more NBA history.

Now, Curry and the Golden State Warriors are right on the cusp of adding another accomplishment in an incredible year.

Curry scored 27 points and the defending champions moved within one victory of matching the best start in NBA history, holding off the Chicago Bulls 106-94 on Friday night to improve to 14-0.

The league's last undefeated team ran its franchise-record home winning streak to 26 games by beating a Chicago team that is the last to win at Oracle Arena during the regular season, way back in late January. Golden State did so with its third tough game in four nights, too.

"It's a goal that's right here and now and it's something that we want to experience," Curry said. "It'd be a huge accomplishment because doing something that hasn't been done in the history of the league is special. You never know if this opportunity will come back again. There are so many variables that go into winning this many in a row, especially the start of the season."

Golden State equaled the 1957-58 Celtics as the only defending champions to win their initial 14 games. The Warriors are one of five teams in NBA history to begin 14-0, and will travel to Denver looking to keep it going Sunday.

Harrison Barnes added 20 points and nine rebounds for the Warriors in a game featuring 18 lead changes and 17 ties.

Jimmy Butler had 28 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the Bulls in the second game of a four-game road trip.

"We understand how hard you have to play in order to win in this league, and everybody has bought into that," Butler said.

Kirk Hinrich hit a tying three-pointer with 5:44 to go only to see Curry knock one down moments later to put his team back up 92-89.

A day after rallying from a 23-point deficit to beat the rival Clippers in Los Angeles 124-117 — the biggest comeback in the NBA this season — Golden State overcame another slow start.

The Bulls led by 10 in the first before the Warriors roared back and got the sellout crowd at Oracle Arena rocking on Curry's over-the-head lob pass to Andre Iguodala for a dunk.

The Bulls' 113-111 overtime win on Jan. 27 snapped Golden State's then-franchise record 19-game home winning streak. It was one of only two regular-season home losses last season.

Interim coach Luke Walton reminded his players of that loss before the game.

If Golden State gets by Denver to move to 15-0, it will have a chance to break the record Tuesday night back home against the Lakers.

The Washington Capitols in 1948-49 and Houston Rockets in '93-94 are the other teams to start 15-0.

Suns 114, Nuggets 107: Brandon Knight scored a career-high 38 points, Eric Bledsoe had 22 and Phoenix overcame a 17-point deficit to beat host Denver.

Pelicans 104, Spurs 90: Anthony Davis had 20 points and 18 rebounds in his return from a sore shoulder, and host New Orleans beat San Antonio for its second victory of the season.

Trail Blazers 102, Clippers 91: Damian Lillard had 27 points, including three key three-pointers down the stretch, and Portland beat visiting Los Angeles to snap a seven-game losing streak.

Knicks 93, Thunder 90: Carmelo Anthony scored 25 points and New York beat host Oklahoma City for its third straight victory.

Hornets 113, 76ers 88: Al Jefferson had 26 points and 10 rebounds and host Charlotte beat winless Philadelphia.

Mavericks 102, Jazz 93: Deron Williams scored a season-high 23 points, Dirk Nowitzki had 19 and Dallas beat visiting Utah for its sixth straight win.

Grizzlies 96, Rockets 84: Mike Conley scored 26 points, Marc Gasol had 16 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists, and Memphis beat visiting Houston.

Raptors 102, Lakers 91: Kyle Lowry had 25 points, DeMar DeRozan scored seven of his 18 in the final 3:34, and Toronto beat host Los Angeles to snap a three-game skid.

Pistons 96, Timberwolves 86: Andre Drummond had 21 points and 11 rebounds to help lift visiting Detroit past Minnesota.

Celtics 120, Nets 95: Avery Bradley scored 21 points and Isaiah Thomas added 18 points and nine assists in host Boston's victory over Brooklyn.

Calgary surprises Chicago

Associated Press

CALGARY, Alberta — Two days after the NHL announced its All-Star game is going to a 3-on-3 format, Johnny Gaudreau made his case to represent Calgary.

Gaudreau had a highlight-reel goal 1:38 into overtime and the Calgary Flames beat the Chicago Blackhawks 2-1 on Friday night to remain perfect in overtime games.

The Flames dominated the overtime and finally solved goalie Scott Darling with their sixth shot of the period. Gaudreau chased down his own rebound, stole the puck from Brent Seabrook and then went backhand-to-forehand to beat Darling from in tight.

"He's a big goalie and he's making saves from outside the crease when I was shooting on him all night. I figured I'd try to get him in close and get him down and get the puck up," Gaudreau said.

Flames goaltender Karri Ramo watched from 180 feet away and admired Gaudreau's ability to finish.

"He has the thing where he somehow manages to deke you all the way and you think that you are there and he is still able to lift the puck up even though it seems impossible," Ramo said. "Today was one of those where many guys would have pounded it into the goalie's pad, but he had the patience and the skill to lift it up."

Calgary has won five times in six games that went to extra time, with the lone loss coming in its only shootout.

Canadiens 5, Islanders 3: Jeff Petry had his first two-goal game and visiting Montreal beat New York in goalie Carey Price's return from a lower-body injury.

Price, the NHL's reigning MVP and Vezina Trophy winner, missed eight games. He made 33 saves to help Montreal win for the second time in three games.

Blue Jackets 4, Predators 0: Sergei Bobrovsky made 39 saves for his 12th career shutout, and Boone Jenner and Ryan Johansen each had a goal and an assist in host Columbus' victory over Nashville.

Gregory Campbell and Scott Hartnell also scored to help Columbus win for the fourth time in five games. Bobrovsky got his sixth win in seven starts.

Maple Leafs 2, Hurricanes 1 (SO): Joffrey Lupul beat Cam Ward to the glove side in the fifth round of the shootout to lift visiting Toronto past Carolina.

Brad Malone scored for the Hurricanes 7:47 into the third period, and Toronto's Nazem Kadri tied it with 3:33 left. Toronto's James Reimer stopped 33 shots, and Ward made 24 saves.

Oilers 5, Devils 1: Leon Draisaitl and Taylor Hall each had a goal and two assists and host Edmonton beat New Jersey to snap a three-game losing streak.

Oscar Klefbom, Jordan Eberle and Mark Letestu also scored, and Anders Nilsson made 19 saves to help the Oilers win for the second time in seven outings. Kyle Palmieri scored for New Jersey.

Red Wings 3, Kings 2: Mike Green and Dylan Larkin put their team ahead with second-period goals and Petr Mrazek made 35 saves in host Detroit's victory over Los Angeles.

Tomas Tatar also scored for the Red Wings, and Justin Abdelkader and Henrik Zetterberg each had two assists. Jeff Carter scored twice for Los Angeles. The Kings dropped to 5-2 on the road.

Ulis leads Kentucky past Wright State

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. — Tyler Ulis waited patiently for more responsibility at Kentucky, and the sophomore point guard is making the most of his big opportunity.

Ulis scored a career-high 21 points, and the No. 2 Wildcats beat Wright State 78-63 on Friday night.

The Wildcats (4-0) followed Tuesday night's impressive victory over No. 5 Duke by shooting 53 percent from the field, with the 5-foot-9 Ulis setting the tone by getting to the basket and the foul line. He was 5-for-9 from the field and 10-for-12 from the line with five assists, after he collected 18 points and six assists in 40 minutes against the Blue Devils.

Ulis achieved his career scoring best in 36 minutes and likes where his game is right now.

"I try to make the right decision, find guys when they're open and attack when I have it," he said.

Ulis played in 37 games in his first season with the Wildcats, but had no starts and averaged 23.8 minutes. He is enjoying his extended time on the court so far this year.

"Everybody likes to play, nobody wants to come out, so it's not a problem for me," he said.

Kentucky held the Raiders to 36 percent shooting and outrebounded them 37-27. Alex Poythress had 10 points and 10 rebounds, and Marcus Lee grabbed seven boards.

Sophomore guard Grant Benzinger, son of former major leaguer Todd Benzinger, had 19 points for Wright State (1-3).

Poythress, who sustained a season-ending left knee injury last December, posted

his first double-double since a 10-point, 13-rebound effort against UNC Asheville last November. His performance included a midcourt steal leading to a monstrous dunk and an emphatic hang on the rim.

"It felt real good to jump the pass lane and get the fast-break dunk," Poythress said. "That's how you make progress."

Not surprisingly, Kentucky enjoyed a 38-20 advantage in points in the paint. Isaiah Briscoe (15 points), Jamal Murray (13 points) and Skal Labissiere (13) also scored in double figures.

The performance came just a few nights after answering coach John Calipari's challenge to show toughness against the Blue Devils, and it dropped Wright State to its third straight loss.

But as Calipari quickly noted, things could have been better. Kentucky committed 12 turnovers and shot just 2-for-10 from three-point range. The Wildcats also seemed to struggle with Wright State's sagging defense.

No. 3 Maryland 65, Rider 58: Freshman Diamond Stone fueled a second-half surge that brought the host Terrapins back from a 14-point deficit, and Jake Layman had 11 points and 11 rebounds.

No. 5 Duke 79, VCU 71: At New York, Grayson Allen bounced back from an off game against Kentucky by scoring a career-high 30 points, and the Blue Devils beat the Rams in the opening round of the 2K Classic at Madison Square Garden.

No. 6 Virginia 87, Long Beach State 52: At Charleston, S.C., Marial Shayok had a career-high 17 points, London Perrantes added 15 and the Cavaliers reached the Charleston Classic final.

No. 8 Oklahoma 85, McNeese State

56: Buddy Hield scored 24 points and the Sooners shook off a sluggish start to rout the Cowboys in their home opener.

No. 11 Villanova 86, East Tennessee State 51: Daniel Ochefu posted his third straight double-double with 12 points and 16 rebounds and the host Wildcats beat the Buccaneers in a preliminary round of the NIT Season Tip-off.

No. 13 Michigan St. 92, Arkansas-pine Bluff 46: Sophomore Javon Bess scored a career-high 16 points and the host Spartans beat the Golden Lions.

No. 15 California 70, East Carolina 62: Ivan Rabb had 14 points and 13 rebounds, Jaylen Brown added 16 points and 10 boards, and the host Golden Bears got a win in the Las Vegas Invitational.

Miami 90, No. 16 Utah 66: At San Juan, Puerto Rico, Sheldon McClellan scored 27 points to help Miami to another runaway win in the Puerto Rico Tipoff.

No. 22 Butler 74, Temple 69: At San Juan, Puerto Rico, Kellen Dunham scored 16 points to help the Bulldogs beat the Owls in the second round of the Puerto Rico Tipoff.

No. 20 Baylor 77, Jackson State 60: Al Freeman scored 20 points and the host Bears overcame a slow start.

Xavier 86, No. 24 Michigan 70: Trevon Bluiett scored 15 points, including a three-pointer that started a key 12-1 run in the second half, and the visiting Muskateers pulled away from the Wolverines.

No. 25 Oregon 75, Savannah State 59: Chris Boucher scored 17 points and Elgin Cook had 12 points and eight rebounds, leading the host Ducks to the victory.