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NATO: We must cut confrontation risks

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

BRUSSELS — NATO allies must not lose sight of the threat Russia poses along the alliance's eastern flank even as it considers new steps this week to avoid airspace confrontations in the wake of Turkey's downing of a Russian warplane, NATO's top official said Monday.

As NATO foreign ministers gather for two days of talks in Brussels on Tuesday, much of the focus will be on Russia and its growing military presence on NATO's doorstep in Syria. But the crisis in Ukraine also will demand alliance attention.

"We have to do both at the same time," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters.

Allies also are expected to discuss the size and shape of its future training mission in Afghanistan, where the U.S. plans to keep 5,500 troops through 2017.

Stoltenberg, who met earlier Monday with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, defended Turkey's downing last week of the Russian jet, which Ankara claimed had entered Turkish airspace. Russia said it did not. One of the pilots and a

Russian marine involved in the rescue were killed by Turkish-allied militants on the Syrian side of the border, where the plane went down.

More transparency among militaries operating in the region "is key to reducing risks of incidents and accidents, and if they occur, to prevent them from escalating and coming out of control," Stoltenberg said.

Davutoglu said during a joint news conference with Stoltenberg: "We have no intention whatsoever to escalate this situation. We are ready to talk at every level."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has asked for a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the climate conference this week in Paris, but Putin's office has not said whether he will agree to meet.

Turkey has continued to defend its actions, and Davutoglu criticized Russia's bombing in Syria, much of which he said targets "moderate opposition" and civilians near Turkey's border.

That is "creating new waves of refugees," Davutoglu said. "Turkey is a country paying the price of this crisis and cannot be blamed for defending its

airspace."

Tuesday's meeting of NATO foreign ministers will be the first since the Russian plane incident and the Nov. 13 terrorist attacks in Paris, which were claimed by the Islamic State group.

U.S. and coalition airstrikes have been targeting the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. The Paris attacks have hardened the resolve of some NATO members to go after the militants more aggressively.

"The situation alongside NATO's southeastern border remains highly volatile," Stoltenberg said.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will be leading the American delegation in Brussels, a city that only last week was in a state of near-total lockdown because of fears that a Paris-style terrorist attack was potentially in the works.

For NATO, the crisis in Syria and Iraq, where the Islamic State group remains entrenched, is fueling a refugee crisis across Europe. That has put a strain on many governments working to accommodate the migrants while also reassuring wary publics.

Since the Paris attacks, pressure has mounted on NATO

states to contribute more to the U.S.-led fight against the militants. France has stepped up the pace of its airstrikes. Germany has taken a rare step by pledging to commit warships and surveillance aircraft to the coalition, and British Prime Minister David Cameron is seeking parliamentary approval to extend the bombing of Islamic State targets from Iraq to Syria.

Russia's involvement in Syria has drawn criticism from the West, which maintains that Moscow, in backing Syrian President Bashar Assad, is targeting moderate rebels in Syria, not just the Islamic State.

French President Francois Hollande met with Putin last week to push for better coordination of counter-Islamic State operations, but the tensions between Russia and Turkey underscore the challenges in the region.

Besides the fight against the Islamic State group, NATO foreign ministers will be discussing progress on efforts to double the size of the NATO Response Force to roughly 40,000 troops. Those troops could be called upon in a crisis, whether to the south or the east.

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Stability of new Navy destroyer to be put to the test

Associated Press

BATH, Maine — The largest destroyer built for the U.S. Navy cuts an imposing figure. But underneath its exterior is a style of hull that fell out of favor a century ago in part because it can be unstable.

The Navy will soon learn how this modern take on the "tumblehome" hull holds up when the first-in-class Zumwalt heads out to sea this month for trials in the rough-and-tumble North Atlantic.

The Navy, which views the ship as an important part of the Obama administration's

Asia-Pacific strategy, can't afford a flop after the cost of the first ship ballooned to at least \$4.4 billion and construction fell behind schedule.

Amy Lent, of the Maine Maritime Museum, which works closely with General Dynamics' Bath Iron Works shipyard, said taxpayers needn't worry because the Navy and the shipbuilder, Bath Iron Works, have "tested the hell out of it."

The inverse bow juts forward to slice through the waves. A composite deckhouse hides radar and antennas, giving it a clean

look. Sharp angles deflect radar signals.

Typical of tumblehomes, though, the hull slopes inward above the waterline, giving the Zumwalt something of a pyramid shape, which can cause problems in certain conditions, critics say.

Concerns have been voiced in the ship-design and shipbuilding communities about the warship's overall stability — and any instability could be exacerbated if there's battle damage, said Matthew Werner, dean at the Webb Institute, which teaches naval architecture and marine engineering.

US Embassy: Threat of attack in Kabul 'credible'

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. Embassy in Kabul on Monday warned of a "credible" threat of an attack on the Afghan capital, possibly within 48 hours.

Officials said they did not have any information on possible targets, timing or method of the possible attack, but they warned Americans "to exercise extreme caution if moving around the city."

In the past few months, alerts from the embassy in Kabul have warned of kidnappings, car bombs and suicide bombers. While the Afghan capital has been relatively quiet in recent weeks, it has frequently been the scene of high-profile attacks, particularly against

foreigners.

As a matter of policy, the U.S. State Department advises Americans against traveling to Afghanistan, and the embassy regularly issues warnings related to specific threats.

"The security situation in Afghanistan is extremely unstable, and the threat to all U.S. citizens in Afghanistan remains critical," the State Department warns on its website. "Travel to all areas of Afghanistan remains unsafe due to ongoing military combat operations, landmines, banditry, armed rivalry between political and tribal groups, and insurgent attacks, including attacks using vehicle-borne or other improvised explosive devices."

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Warming world's leaders talk emissions at meeting

Associated Press

LE BOURGET, France — Addressing the twin threats of global warming and extremist violence, the largest group of world leaders ever to stand together kicked off two weeks of high-stakes climate talks outside Paris on Monday, saying that by striking an ambitious deal to cut emissions they can show terrorists what countries can achieve when they are united.

"What greater rejection of those who would tear down our world than marshaling our best efforts to save it?" President Barack Obama asked his fellow world leaders.

The gathering of 151 heads of state and government comes at a somber time for France, two weeks after militants linked to the Islamic State group killed 130 people around Paris. Fears of more attacks prompted extra-high security and a crackdown on environmental protests — and threatened to eclipse longer-term concerns about rising seas and extreme

weather linked to man-made global warming.

"The challenge of an international meeting has never been so great because it's the future of the planet, the future of life," French President Francois Hollande said after a moment of silence for attack victims in France, Lebanon, Iraq, Tunisia and Mali.

A climate deal is by no means guaranteed. More than 180 countries have already submitted individual national plans, but that's just a foundation for a binding agreement that Jennifer Morgan, a climate policy expert at World Resources Institute, calls "the international glue that puts them all together."

Many leaders called for a binding agreement and emphasized the role of private funding. They said the world must keep the average temperature within 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit) of current levels — and if possible to half that, to spare island nations threatened by rising seas.

Gates: Deepen US ties with Turkey, Saudis

Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's efforts against the Islamic State group should be "sped up and intensified," and the U.S. needs closer alignment with Turkey and Saudi Arabia to prevail, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Sunday.

"Those two really do have to be on board or we have to be on board with them in terms of priorities," said Gates, who appeared on NBC's "Meet the Press."

Joining closely with Turkey and Saudi Arabia, Gates suggested, also would place the U.S. more squarely against the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad, who is fighting the Islamic State group, or ISIS, and other factions within his country.

Turkey and Saudi Arabia, Gates noted, "are united in the fact that Assad has to go before you can make any real progress against ISIS. I think we need to listen to them if we want them to be active and aggressive members of the coalition."

Gates' comments underscore the challenge of defeating the Islamic State group while navigating the region's other geopolitical undercurrents. The Saudis fear a rising Iran, and

Turkey feels threatened by ethnic Kurds. Yet the Kurds and Iran are fighting against the Islamic State group — and Russia has intervened militarily in Syria to bolster Assad.

Recent attacks launched by the Islamic State group in Paris and against a Russian airliner make clear that Obama must accelerate his efforts, Gates said.

"We obviously have some strong allies like France," Gates said, adding the U.S. also needs "to have some allies in the region where we're on the same page and where we have the same strategy. ... We need to understand who is going to be critical to what is happening in Syria, itself."

Two Republican U.S. senators — Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, and John McCain, of Arizona — reiterated their call for Obama to deploy thousands of U.S. troops to fight the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq, in partnership with regional allies.

"We will turn to Assad and say, 'You must go,'" said Graham, who appeared with McCain on CBS' "Face the Nation" from the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. "Russia and Iran will be on the outside looking in to an entire regional army. They will fold like a cheap suit."

Iraq War vet, mother of two slain in shooting

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — An Iraq War veteran and a married mother of two were identified Sunday as the two civilians killed Friday when a gunman opened fire inside a Planned Parenthood clinic here.

The veteran, Ke'Arre Marcell Stewart, 29, was a DJ, an entrepreneur and, by all accounts, a devoted father to his two young daughters. "He was always trying to make things better for him and his family," said his aunt, Tronda Stewart.

Jennifer Markovsky, 35, also had two children, a son and a daughter. The Hawaii native had gone to the nearby Planned Parenthood clinic Friday to support a friend. "She was the most wonderful, kindest person you'd ever know," her father in Hawaii, John Ah King, told a reporter from the Colorado Springs Gazette.

The victims were identified by local authorities late Sunday. The attack also killed University of Colorado police officer Garrett Swasey and left nine other people wounded.

From The Washington Post

Osweler rallies Broncos past Patriots

Associated Press

DENVER — Filling in for Peyton Manning. Facing Tom Brady — and a two-touchdown deficit in the fourth quarter.

None of it bothered Brock Osweler.

The 25-year-old quarterback making his first career start in Denver felt right at home in the snow globe that was Sports Authority Field on Sunday night, where the Broncos handed the New England Patriots their first loss, 30-24 in overtime.

It all reminded him of his youth in Kalispell, Mont., where misfires in the backyard ended up in snowbanks “and you’d have to dust off all the snow,” Osweler said. “Fortunately, when you play in the NFL, there are guys on the sideline that dust off all the snow.

“But, yeah, it was fun.”

Not for Brady, who lost yet another one of his trusted targets when star tight end Rob Gronkowski injured his right knee with 2:49 left in the fourth quarter on a clean hit by safety Darian Stewart and was carted off the field.

Brady’s receiving corps already was depleted with injuries to Julian Edelman, Danny Amendola, Aaron Dobson and running back Dion Lewis. If Gronkowski’s injury is serious, it could be the biggest loss of all.

“He’s been through a lot, he’s a tough guy,” Brady said. “Hopefully, it’s not too serious. All of our fingers are crossed.”

Stewart swept in low, trying to break up the pass that fell incomplete.

“I hate to see it but it’s really the only way for defenders to hit now,” Brady said. “I bet if you ask a bunch of players they’d rather you go high than low. When you go low that’s what happens. I don’t think it’s dirty. I just think it’s the way football’s been played now.”

Gronkowski, who caught his ninth touchdown pass and led New England with six receptions for 88 yards before getting hurt, didn’t speak with reporters afterward. He walked to the team bus with a slight limp but no brace and coach Bill Belichick said he had no update.

The Broncos (9-2) won it when C.J. Anderson bounced a run outside and raced 48 yards down Denver’s jubilant sideline with 12:32 left in overtime after its top-ranked defense forced a three-and-out thanks to a big sack by Von Miller and a huge hit by Shane Ray.

Manning watched from the cozy indoors as his backup brought the Broncos back from a 21-7 fourth-quarter deficit and Denver handed the Patriots (10-1) their first loss since 2014.

New England’s last loss was a meaningless 17-9 defeat to Buffalo on Dec. 28 before the Patriots won three games to claim another Super Bowl trophy and then swept through their first 10 this season.

Now, the Carolina Panthers (11-0) are the NFL’s only unbeaten team.

The Broncos never led until Osweler threw a 3-yard touchdown pass to Bubba Caldwell with 1:09 left in regulation to put Denver ahead 24-21. But Brady needed just five plays to drive the Patriots 51 yards and into range for Stephen Gostkowski’s 47-yard field goal with no time left.

New England won the coin toss and Denver’s defense, which lost starters T.J. Ward and Sylvester Williams to ankle injuries on the same play in the first half,

had to go right back out.

“It didn’t look good at times,” Broncos coach Gary Kubiak said, “but we figured out a way to get it done.”

Anderson rushed for 113 yards and two TDs on 15 carries. Overall, the Broncos ran for 179 yards, particularly impressive given their double-digit deficit for most of the night and their 21-7 hole after Brady threw a 63-yard scoring pass to Brandon Bolden on the first play of the fourth quarter.

The Patriots managed just 39 yards on 16 carries.

Osweler completed 23 of 42 passes for 270 yards with one TD and one interception on a tipped pass. Brady also was 23-for-42 for 280 yards with three TDs and no interceptions.

With Manning sitting this one out in a walking cast on his left foot, the greatest quarterback rivalry was put on hold — perhaps forever.

Instead of a 17th meeting between the QB greats, it was Brady versus Osweler, which doesn’t have the same Hall of Fame ring to it.

It still had plenty of panache.

Things looked bleak for the Broncos after Bolden’s TD made it 21-7 and New England forced a three-and-out. But Chris Harper muffed the punt and Shaq Barrett recovered for Denver at the Patriots 36. That led to Anderson’s 15-yard TD run. A short field goal pulled them to 21-17.

Then, Demaryius Thomas, who didn’t catch any of the first 11 balls thrown his way, hauled in a 36-yard pass to midfield just before the 2-minute warning that ignited Denver’s go-ahead TD drive.

“That’s what great players do,” Osweler said. “No matter what happens in the first quarter, second quarter, third quarter or even early fourth quarter, big players step up in big times.”

Seahawks 39, Steelers 30: Russell Wilson threw a career-high five touchdown passes, including two TDs to Doug Baldwin in the final 8:12 as host Seattle held on for a wild victory over Pittsburgh and Ben Roethlisberger.

Wilson threw three touchdowns to Baldwin, including an 80-yard catch-and-run score with 2:01 left after Pittsburgh had trimmed Seattle’s lead to 32-30.

Baldwin caught a crossing route on third-and-10 at the 20, broke two tackles and raced for the clinching score. Baldwin caught a 30-yard TD midway through the fourth quarter after Pittsburgh had taken a 27-26 lead.

Wilson also threw two touchdowns to Jermaine Kearse and Seattle (6-5) picked up a huge victory in its hopes of getting back to the postseason.

Roethlisberger threw for 456 yards — the most ever against the Seahawks — but was pulled with 2 minutes left and taken to the locker room for concussion protocol. The Steelers (6-5) had a two-game win streak end.

Cardinals 19, 49ers 13: Carson Palmer ran for a go-ahead 8-yard touchdown with 2:28 left and tumbled after spiking the ball as Arizona squeaked by host San Francisco.

It was the Cardinals’ fifth straight win and first road victory in the series since September 2008.

Moments earlier, Palmer fell backward as he released the ball and completed a

34-yard pass to J.J. Nelson to put Arizona on the 1.

Chandler Catanzaro missed the extra-point try, and Blaine Gabbert and the 49ers (3-8) had one more chance with 2:21 left. Anquan Boldin caught an 18-yard pass on fourth-and-20 to clinch the win for Arizona.

David Johnson ran for a 1-yard touchdown in the third for the Cardinals (9-2), who have nine wins in their first 11 games in consecutive seasons for the first time in franchise history.

Texans 24, Saints 6: Brian Hoyer threw for 205 yards and two touchdowns and the host Texans held Drew Brees and New Orleans without a touchdown for the first time in 10 years in a win.

The Texans (6-5) have won four games in a row for the first time since winning six straight in 2012.

New Orleans (4-7) dropped its third straight on a day when the team didn’t score a touchdown and Brees’ streak of games with a touchdown pass was snapped at 45.

Hoyer went 7-for-7 on the opening drive, capped by a 10-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Griffin, to make it 7-0 and give Houston a score on the opening possession for the first time this season.

The last time the Saints didn’t score a touchdown was Dec. 24, 2005, against Detroit and Brees’ last game without a touchdown pass came on Nov. 29, 2012, against Atlanta.

Bengals 31, Rams 7: Andy Dalton threw three touchdown passes — two of them to A.J. Green — as the host Bengals ended their brief losing streak.

After dropping a pair of prime-time games, the Bengals (9-2) were back in sync against a team that struggles to score. The Bengals’ 31 points equaled the second-most against St. Louis this season.

The Rams (4-7) have dropped four in a row. Nick Foles returned as the starter and threw three interceptions, including one that Leon Hall returned 19 yards for a touchdown.

Dalton was 20 of 27 for 233 yards with touchdowns of 9 and 18 yards to Green. Tyler Eifert also had his NFL-leading 12th touchdown catch.

Vikings 20, Falcons 10: Minnesota’s Adrian Peterson ran for 158 yards and a pair of touchdowns, and host Atlanta’s Matt Ryan threw two more interceptions.

Bouncing back from a 30-13 loss to Green Bay, Minnesota (8-3) jumped ahead on Peterson’s 1-yard run in the opening quarter, and clinched it when he got loose on a 35-yard scamper down the sideline with 4:15 remaining in the game.

Atlanta (6-5) has lost five of its past six, including four straight, and is in danger of becoming one of the few teams in NFL history to start 5-0 and miss the playoffs.

Colts 25, Buccaneers 12: Matt Hasselbeck threw for 315 yards and two touchdowns, and Adam Vinatieri made four more field goals for the host Colts.

The Colts (6-5) won their third straight to remain tied atop the AFC South with Houston.

Tampa Bay rookie Jameis Winston threw for 245 yards and a touchdown, but was sacked five times — four coming during a second half in which the Bucs (5-6) were

shut out.

Jets 38, Dolphins 20: Ryan Fitzpatrick threw four touchdown passes, two to Brandon Marshall, as the host Jets gained some traction in the AFC wild-card race.

Fitzpatrick also connected with rookie Devin Smith and Eric Decker in New York’s fourth win in the last five meetings with Miami. The Jets (6-5) had lost four of their past five overall.

Miami (4-7) has dropped four of five and is 3-4 under interim coach Dan Campbell, who took over after Joe Philbin was fired following the Dolphins’ lopsided loss to the Jets in London.

Redskins 20, Giants 14: Kirk Cousins threw a 63-yard touchdown pass to DeSean Jackson and scored on a quarterback sneak, and host Washington intercepted Eli Manning three times as the Redskins pulled into a tie for the NFC East lead.

The Redskins and Giants are both 5-6. The Philadelphia Eagles (4-7) and Dallas Cowboys (3-8) are the other members of the mediocre division.

It was the 20th three-interception game of Manning’s career.

Trailing 20-0, the Giants made it close when Manning threw fourth-quarter TD passes of 40 yards to Rueben Randle and 21 yards to Odell Beckham Jr., who made a fantastic diving catch, corralling the ball with his left hand while parallel to the ground.

Raiders 24, Titans 21: Derek Carr threw a 12-yard touchdown pass to Seth Roberts with 1:21 left as visiting Oakland ended a three-game losing streak.

The Raiders (5-6) handed the Titans (2-9) their ninth loss in 10 games. Tennessee had taken a 21-17 lead and thought they had a game-saving play when safety Michael Griffin broke up a pass in the end zone on fourth down. But officials flagged B.W. Webb for holding on the other side of the field.

Two plays later, Carr hit Roberts for the winning touchdown. Carr finished with 330 yards and three TDs in his sixth 300-yard passing game this season.

Chiefs 30, Bills 22: Alex Smith threw for 255 yards and two touchdowns, and Spencer Ware ran for 114 yards and a score, as the host Chiefs won their fifth straight.

Jeremy Maclin had nine receptions for 160 yards and a touchdown, and Cairo Santos hit three field goals for the Chiefs (6-5).

Tyrod Taylor had 291 yards passing and three touchdowns for Buffalo (5-6), but he was mostly held in check in the second half.

Chargers 31, Jaguars 25: Philip Rivers threw four touchdown passes, two to Antonio Gates, as the visiting Chargers ended a six-game losing streak.

Rivers passed Joe Montana (273) and tied Vinny Testaverde (275) for 11th on the NFL’s TD pass list.

Rivers completed 29 of 43 passes for 300 yards. He was sacked twice and had his left ankle checked in the locker room at halftime. But his TD passes were enough against the Jaguars (4-7), who failed to recover an onside kick in the closing minutes. The Chargers are 3-8.



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Bryant to retire after season

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — After 20 years in a Lakers uniform and a lifetime in basketball, Kobe Bryant determined that his aching body and his passion for the game had both grown weaker than his excitement about the future.

That's when Kobe decided he could only wait a few more months to begin his life after the Lakers.

Bryant announced Sunday that he will retire after this season, ending a landmark 20-year NBA career spent entirely with Los Angeles. He was serenaded with cheers throughout the struggling Lakers' 107-103 loss to Indiana, beginning his farewell tour through the league with a clear mind and a burgeoning curiosity about his next chapter.

"I had to just accept the fact that I don't want to do this anymore, and I'm OK with that," the dry-eyed, smiling Bryant said after the game.

The 37-year-old Bryant made the long-anticipated declaration in a post on The Players' Tribune on Sunday, writing a poem titled "Dear Basketball."

"My heart can take the pounding. My mind can handle the grind. But my body knows it's time to say goodbye," wrote Bryant, the third-leading scorer in NBA history. "And

that's OK. I'm ready to let you go. I want you to know now. So we both can savor every moment we have left together. The good and the bad. We have given each other all that we have."

When the Lakers hosted the Indiana Pacers on Sunday night, fans expecting an unremarkable regular-season game for the struggling home team instead received a letter from Bryant in a black envelope embossed with gold.

"What you've done for me is far greater than anything I've done for you," Bryant wrote. "I knew that each minute of each game I wore purple and gold."

The theatricality of Bryant's announcement fit a dramatic career that has included five championship rings and 17 All-Star selections during two decades with the Lakers, giving him the longest tenure with one team in NBA history.

Bryant went straight from high school in suburban Philadelphia to his favorite childhood team in 1996. He became the top scorer in Lakers history with offensive creativity and resourceful athleticism that inspired the generation of fans and players who missed Michael Jordan's peak, but grew up on the dynamic exploits of the Lakers' latest superstar.

But Bryant's last three seasons have ended early due to injuries, and he played in

only 41 games over the previous two years.

In recent months, Bryant repeatedly said he didn't know whether he would play another season, clearly hoping for a rebound in his health and the Lakers' fortunes.

Neither has happened, and the ever-impatient Bryant didn't wait any longer to decide his future.

"Kobe Bryant is one of the greatest players in the history of our game," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said. "Whether competing in the Finals or hoisting jump shots after midnight in an empty gym, Kobe has an unconditional love for the game."

Bryant surprised Lakers coach Byron Scott with his decision Saturday night. Scott, Bryant's teammate during the 1996-97 season, thought the star "had at least another year" in him.

Bryant disagreed, and he decided to make it public after talking with Jordan and other "muses."

"If I had a burning desire to continue to play, I would," Bryant said. "I wouldn't be second-guessing. I wouldn't be on the fence. I feel very solid in my decision."

Bryant is the NBA's highest-paid player this season with a \$25 million salary bestowed on him by grateful Lakers owner Jim Buss despite his recent injury problems, and he is keeping his vow never to play for another franchise.

Forbes, Spartans top Friars

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Tom Izzo is no fan of college basketball's new rules that sidelined the two best players from each team in the championship game of the DirecTV Wooden Legacy.

Michigan State's Denzel Valentine picked up his third foul early in the second half and Providence's Kris Dunn earned his fourth with 8 minutes remaining Sunday night. In all, three Spartans had three fouls each and the Friars had five players with four apiece.

"I don't think it's fun to have these guys sitting. I don't think it makes our game as good," said the Michigan State coach, who is at 503 career victories after the third-ranked Spartans beat the Friars 77-64 Sunday night.

"There is a difference between freedom of movement and touching a guy 30 feet from the basket. If you're impeding progress, that is a foul," Izzo said. "It's not the officials' fault. They're scared to death. That's the way they're mandated to call it."

The Spartans were called for 18 fouls and the Friars for 23 in a slow-down game that had none of the high scoring of Michigan State's earlier wins in the event. The Spartans were 18-for-26 from the free-throw line while the Friars were just 8-for-12.

With Valentine struggling, Bryn Forbes scored 18 points and Deyonta Davis had six of his 12 points in a game-ending spurt for the Spartans. Valentine added 17 points, six rebounds and five assists to earn most outstanding player honors, and Eron Harris had 12 points for the Spartans (7-0). They beat Boston College by 31 points in their opener and Boise State by 10 on their way to wrapping up the title.

No. 6 Duke 85, Utah State 52: Freshman Luke Kennard had the best game of his young career, scoring 22 points to help host Duke beat Utah State.

No. 7 Oklahoma 65, Wisconsin 48: Ryan Spangler had 20 points and 14 rebounds for host Oklahoma.

Spangler made 7 of 9 shots, including 2 of 3 three-pointers, and fell just short of his career high of 21 points. Isaiah Cousins added 14 points for the Sooners (4-0).

No. 11 Arizona 68, Boise State 59: Allonzo Trier and Kadeem Allen scored 13 points each and Arizona beat Boise State in the third-place game of the DirecTV Wooden Legacy.

Alabama 74, No. 17 Notre Dame 73: Retin Obasohan scored 19 points, including the winning layup with 8 seconds left, in Alabama's victory in the fifth-place game at the AdvoCare Invitational. Notre Dame (4-2) had a chance to win with 2 seconds left, but Demetrius Jackson's layup was off the mark.

Iowa 84, No. 20 Wichita State 62: Jarrod Uthoff scored 22 points, Adam Woodbury had 15 and Iowa beat Wichita State in the seventh-place game at the AdvoCare Invitational.

No. 23 Xavier 90, Dayton 61: Edmond Sumner had 14 points to help Xavier beat Dayton for the AdvoCare Invitational title.

Trevon Bluiett and Myles Davis had 12 points apiece, and J.P. Macura had 11en Reynolds and Remy Abel each had 1 for Xavier (7-0).

No. 25 SMU 77, Brown 69: Keith Frazier scored 23 points and made three three-pointers to break out of his three-point shooting slump and lead host SMU.

Brown's Steven Spieth scored 14 points in his Dallas homecoming. He is the brother of top-ranked golfer Jordan Spieth.

Sixers tie mark for worst start to season

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — Zach Randolph had 17 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Memphis Grizzlies to a 92-84 victory over Philadelphia on Sunday, sending the 76ers to their record-tying 18th straight loss to start the season.

The Sixers have lost an NBA-record 28 consecutive games dating to last season and at 0-18 matched the New Jersey Nets' start in 2009-10.

Mike Conley led the Grizzlies with 20 points, while Matt Barnes and Jeff Green finished with 13 apiece as Memphis won for the seventh time in its past nine games.

Isaiah Canaan led the Sixers with 16 points, while Robert Covington and Hollis Thompson scored 12 points apiece. Jerami Grant finished with 11 points.

The Sixers led 76-71 with 7:38 remaining and Memphis fans were booing their team. But the Grizzlies went on a 15-1 run to retake control of the game, with Randolph scoring eight points in the rally.

Neither team took care of the basketball,

with Memphis committing a season-high 26 turnovers and Philadelphia having 27.

Pacers 107, Lakers 103: Kobe Bryant scored 13 points on 4-of-20 shooting after declaring he will retire at the end of the season, before visiting Indiana hung on to send his Lakers to their sixth consecutive defeat.

Paul George scored the Pacers' final 11 points in the last 1:27, finishing with 39 as Indiana opened a four-game West Coast road trip with its fifth straight victory.

Clippers 107, Timberwolves 99: Blake Griffin scored 12 of his 26 points in the final 6:32 to lead host Los Angeles past Minnesota.

Chris Paul added 20 points and nine assists, and J.J. Redick had 18 points for the Clippers.

Suns 107, Raptors 102: Eric Bledsoe had 20 points and 11 assists, Mirza Teletovic also had 20 points as Phoenix beat host Toronto to end a four-game losing streak.

Rockets 116, Knicks 111 (OT): Trevor Ariza hit the tiebreaking three-pointer with

1:14 left in overtime and Marcus Thornton made two free throws with less than a second left in Houston's victory over host New York.

James Harden led Houston with 26 points. Arron Afflalo had 31 points for the Knicks, who played without leading scorer Carmelo Anthony because of an illness.

Hornets 87, Bucks 82: Kemba Walker scored 22 points as host Charlotte overcame the loss of center Al Jefferson to hold off Milwaukee.

Jefferson went out with a left calf strain with 5:09 remaining in the first quarter.

Nets 87, Pistons 83: Thaddeus Young had 19 points and 10 rebounds, and Brook Lopez scored 15 points as host Brooklyn beat Detroit to improve to 4-13.

Magic 110, Celtics 91: Victor Oladipo scored 19 points and Nik Vucevic added 18 points and 10 rebounds to help host Orlando beat Boston for its third straight victory.

Isaiah Thomas led Boston with 20 points and seven assists.

Panthers win fifth straight in Detroit

Associated Press

DETROIT — The Florida Panthers made themselves right at home at Joe Louis Arena — again.

Brian Campbell scored at 1:20 of overtime, lifting the Panthers to a 2-1 victory over the Red Wings on Sunday for their fifth straight win in Detroit.

Campbell helped set up Reilly Smith's tying goal at 14:38 of the third period as the Panthers earned at least a point in a seventh consecutive game at the Joe Louis Arena. They haven't lost in regulation at Detroit since Dec. 15, 2007.

"A gutsy effort," Smith said. "We had a goal taken away early, but it worked out

for us later. It's great to get two points."

Roberto Luongo made 28 saves for Florida, and Petr Mrazek had 30 for Detroit.

"It's not good," Detroit star Henrik Zetterberg said. "Overall, it was an ugly game. I think the puck was on the boards the whole time. "It was tough to get any flow going."

Detroit's Dylan Larkin intercepted a pass and scored his team-leading 10th goal, unassisted, at 7:02 of the second period for the game's first goal.

The Panthers had a goal waved off just 28 seconds into the game.

The call, which withstood a challenge by Florida coach Gerard Gallant, was made

when Jonathan Hubereau interfered with Mrazek before Smith's backhand crossed the line.

"When I looked at it, it was a 50-50 call," Gallant said. "It was early in the game and I wanted to create some momentum."

Nothing got past Mrazek after that, however, until Smith's tip-in at 14:38 of the third period. Smith was upended in front of the Detroit net, but got up just in time to get his stick on Campbell's shot.

"I don't think we were good enough tonight," Reds Wings coach Jeff Blashill said. "We can play much better than we played. It seemed like we just didn't have enough energy."