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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2017

# SPORTS

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## Aldridge leads Spurs' charge past Knicks, 119-107

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — LaMarcus Aldridge had 25 points and every San Antonio starter scored in double figures as the Spurs beat the New York Knicks 119-107 on Thursday night.

Pau Gasol added 17 points,

11 rebounds and seven assists for San Antonio.

The Spurs improved to 17-2 at home while winning their third straight overall.

The Spurs were without Kawhi Leonard and lost Rudy Gay to a foot injury only two nights after playing with a full roster for the first time all season. Leonard sat out for rest. Gay exited the game late in the third quarter with a sore right heel.

Kyle Anderson had 16 points and eight rebounds starting in place of Leonard. Tony Parker scored 14 points, including 10 in the first quarter as San Antonio bolted to an early lead.

The Spurs led by as many as 17 points in an uncharacteristically high-scoring game for them. San Antonio was limiting opponents to 98 points per game, but New York was able to increase the pace.

San Antonio shot 51 percent from the field while New York shot 46 percent.

Reserve forward Michael Beasley led New York with 23 points. Courtney Lee and Kristaps Porzingis had 18 points apiece, but Porzingis fouled out late in the fourth.

Danny Green was 5 for 8, all on 3-pointers, in adding 15 points for the Spurs.

### TIP-INS

Knicks: G Tim Hardaway Jr. missed his 14th straight game with a stress injury to his lower left leg. . The Knicks are 5-9 in back-to-back games this season after losing both games for the third time. Chicago defeated New York 92-87 on Wednesday night. . Porzingis was averaging 7.0 points per game in the fourth quarter, third in the league. He had two points in the fourth against the Spurs before fouling out with 2:30 remaining. . Knicks are 2-12 on the road this season, having won Oct. 29 at Cleveland and Dec. 14 at Brooklyn.

Spurs: Leonard was a late scratch from the lineup as his playing time remains limited following his return from a quad injury. It was the fourth time Leonard has sat out for what the Spurs listed as "return from injury management." . Parker has scored in double figures in 930 career games.



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Mississippi State guard Roshunda Johnson (11) shoots past Mississippi Valley State guards Sydney Floyd (13) and Kristy Parker (4) during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game in Starkville, Miss., Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017.

(AP Photo by Rogelio V. Solis)

# Miss. St. falls just short of record vs. Miss. Valley St.

STARKVILLE, Miss. (AP) — Tearia McCowan’s career-best scoring night could have been even better.

Facing the helpless defenders of winless Mississippi Valley State, the 6-foot-7 McCowan towered over the Devilettes to score 41 points, and No. 5 Mississippi State scored the second-most points in school history in a 112-36 victory.

“Teaira could have had 100,” coach Vic Schaefer said. “She is making some really tough shots. She’s getting better. She’s developing a real soft jumper, a real touch off the glass and

smoothing things out.”

McCowan put together the 12th 40-point game in Mississippi State history and the first since Morgan William scored 41 in last season’s NCAA Tournament. She added 13 rebounds for her sixth straight double-double and ninth this season.

“(All of the accolades) are nice but I’m going to continue to just play my game and work hard at practice,” McCowan said. “When I play my game, all of the other stuff will come.”

The 112 points were just five shy of the school record set in 1986 against Judson.

The Bulldogs (14-0) put the game away in the second quarter with a 24-0 run, holding the Devilettes scoreless for nearly 8 minutes. Mississippi State outscored Valley 30-4 in the quarter for a 59-20 halftime lead. The Bulldogs added an 18-0 run early in the third and led 88-26 after three quarters.

“I spent the entire first quarter trying to get people to play hard. The second and third quarter were more indicative of what I want,” Schaefer said. “We held them to four and six points in the second and third quarter.”

# Hachimura, Perkins lead No. 20 Gonzaga over Pacific 81-48

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Rui Hachimura scored 19 points, Josh Perkins added 16, and No. 20 Gonzaga beat Pacific 81-48 on Thursday night, winning its 22nd consecutive West Coast Conference opener.

Zach Norvell Jr. scored 13 points for Gonzaga (11-3, 1-0 West Coast), which has beaten Pacific 11 consecutive times.

Jahlil Tripp scored nine points to lead Pacific (5-9, 0-1), which has lost five games in a row.

Pacific was undone by 33 percent shooting and lost the rebound battle 46-32 against the taller Zags.

Pacific scored the first six points of the game, but Gonzaga replied with a 13-2 run to take the lead. Perkins scored 11 points in the first 9 minutes as Gonzaga pushed the lead to 20-10. Both teams had trouble shooting in the first half. Gonzaga fell into a 2-of-12 shooting slump, but the Tigers could not make up much ground and still trailed 24-15. Gonzaga led 31-21 at halftime, after holding Pacific to 29 percent shooting and no 3-pointers. The Zags

shot just 38 percent in the first.

The teams traded baskets early in the second half until the Zags went on a 17-4 run for a 61-39 lead. The Zags hit four consecutive 3-pointers, by Perkins, Norvell, Corey Kispert and Killian Tillie, during the run. The Tigers did not threaten again. Gonzaga coach Mark Few’s career record in WCC games is 244-29.

## BIG PICTURE

Pacific: The Tigers were coming off a 39-point loss at No. 3 Arizona State. Pacific fell to 1-12 all-time versus Gonzaga

Gonzaga: Few, in his 19th season, has never lost a WCC opener, and the Zags have won 16 of the past 17 league championships. Gonzaga is coming off a narrow loss at San Diego State, where their high-powered offense was held to 70 points, 20 below their average.

All five Gonzaga starters average in double figures.

## UP NEXT

Pacific hosts Loyola Marymount on Saturday

Gonzaga hosts Santa Clara on Saturday.



Gonzaga head coach Mark Few, second from the right, speaks with teammates during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game against Pacific in Spokane, Wash., Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017.

(AP Photo/Young Kwak)

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# Nicholls routs Northwestern State 87-46 in Southland opener

THIBODAUX, La. (AP) — Kimani Jackson and Tevon Saddler scored 14 points apiece and Nicholls never trailed in beating Northwestern State 87-46 in their Southland Conference opener Thursday night for the Colonels' largest margin of victory in conference play.

Jahvaughn Powell scored 13 points with three 3-pointers and four steals and RoFriday, December 29, 2017 Peters added 10 points and nine rebounds off the bench for the Colonels (7-7), who made 10 of 20 3-pointers, forced 26 Demons turnovers, including 23 steals. Legend Robertin blocked six shots.

Jackson's dunk sparked Nicholls' 14-2 opening run, Powell and Peters hit consecutive 3s for a 36-11 lead, and the Colonels led 48-18 at halftime after Lafayette Rutledge's back-to-back 3-pointers.

Stevie Repichowski's consecutive 3s put Nicholls up 63-28 early in the second half and the Colonels cruised.

Ishmael Lane scored 11 points with 10 rebounds for the Demons (3-9), who have dropped four straight and lost to Nicholls for the first time in their last nine games.

# No. 12 Ohio State women top Nebraska in Big Ten opener

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Kelsey Mitchell tossed in 25 points and Linnae Harper added 14 points and eight rebounds as No. 12 Ohio State opened Big Ten Conference play with a 73-61 victory over Nebraska on Thursday night.

Sierra Calhoun scored 13 and has made at least three 3-pointers in five straight games, while Stephanie Mavunga snared 10 rebounds for the Buckeyes (12-2), who held Nebraska to one free throw over the final 3:54 of the second quarter to take a 34-24 lead at halftime. Asia Doss had a career-high seven steals for OSU.

Maddie Simon and Kate Cain scored 14 apiece to pace the Cornhuskers (9-5). Simon added six boards and four assists and Cain grabbed eight rebounds. Hannah Whitish totaled 12 points, five rebounds and four assists for Nebraska, but she also had six of the Cornhuskers' 23 turnovers.

Mitchell and Calhoun scored seven apiece as the Buckeyes shot 56 percent from the floor in the third period to open up a 57-40 lead. Mitchell needs two points to pass Penn State's Kelly Mezzante for second place on the Big Ten career scoring list. Ohio State beat Nebraska for the fifth straight time and has won five in a row on the season.



Vegas Golden Knights left wing Brendan Leipsic, right, celebrates his goal with right wing Alex Tuch during the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Los Angeles Kings, Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017, in Los Angeles. The Golden Knights won 3-2 in overtime.

(AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)

# Golden Knights keep rolling with 3-2 win over Kings in OT

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The rest of the hockey world may be waiting for the expansion Golden Knights to come crashing back to reality. Vegas is having way too much fun to be concerned.

The Golden Knights' remarkable inaugural season kept getting better Thursday night with their sixth consecutive victory, a 3-2 overtime win over the Los Angeles Kings.

David Perron's goal 3:30 into OT won it for the Knights, who have points in 11 consecutive games (10-0-1), an expansion team record. The victory increased their lead over the second-place Kings in the Pacific Division to three points.

"We just keep playing our game," Perron said. "We don't look at who's on the other side. For us tonight was one of the bigger games of the year, knowing the standings situation."

Brendan Leipsic and Jonathan Marchessault also scored for the Knights, who got 26 stops from veteran goalie Marc-Andre Fleury.

The Knights continue to play like a team that's been together for years, not one recently assembled.

"It was something I was worried about coming into camp," Fleury said. "But right from the start, we're all in the same boat. All coming from different teams. We have to make it work. It's just been fun. We have a great group of guys. It's fun to come to the rink and play together."

The Kings scored first off a shot from Derek Forbort that deflected off the stick of Marchessault, and then apparently, off the shoulder of the Kings' Marian Gaborik.

Gaborik was credited with his sixth goal.

But in the Knights completely dominated the second period, outshooting the Kings 15-3 and tying it on Marchessault's goal.

"I thought the second period was our best period of the year," said Knights coach Gerard Gallant.

Leipsic's first goal of the season midway in the third period gave Vegas a 2-1 lead, but Los Angeles tied it late when Jake Muzzin's shot deflected off Drew Doughty and past Fleury.

Vegas outshot the Kings 39-28. Los Angeles goalie Jonathan Quick stopped 36 shots.

The Kings put plenty of pressure on Fleury to start the overtime, but it was Perron who finally found the back of the net to win it.

"We were lucky to get one point," Doughty said. "(Quick) obviously had to play well. They outshot us by a pretty big margin. We had a really, really bad second period. In some ways, I don't even think we deserved a point."

"We are obviously kind of lucky, and happy now that we got it, but that wasn't a very good performance by us."

The Knights were playing on consecutive nights, beating the Anaheim Ducks on Wednesday, while the Kings rested.

"Probably one of the most disappointing games this year," said Kings coach John Stevens. "A lot of east-west plays, a lot of frustration at the referees instead of ourselves."

"The intention to play the game the right way wasn't there, especially in the second period against a team that played last night. We started chasing the game a little big. Disappointing."

NOTES: The Knights now have 52 points, tops in the Western Conference and second overall only to Tampa Bay's 56. . The Kings activated Kyle Clifford from the injured reserve prior to Thursday's start. . Leipsic's goal was not only his first of the season, but the second of his career. Gallant on his teammates' reaction: "They were just so excited for him. They were jumping all around. It was a big moment for him." . The Kings held a pregame ceremony honoring Dustin Brown for playing in 1,000 career games, all with Los Angeles.

**UP NEXT**

Golden Knights: Return home Sunday to play Toronto.

Kings: Begin a three-game road trip Saturday in Vancouver.



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# Hartford holds off late rally, upsets Rutgers, 60-58

PISCATAWAY, N.J. (AP) — Hartford had just upset a Big Ten team on its home court, but coach John Gallagher was already looking ahead.

The Hawks stunned Rutgers, 60-58 on Thursday night, handing the Scarlet Knights a second consecutive home court loss to a team from the America East Conference.

“We’re rolling pretty well right now,” Gallagher said. “The reality is we have to go to the No. 1 team in our league next Wednesday in Albany. We’ve won four of five and we’re starting to establish a great identity. We’re embracing the defense and we’re on the right track.”

Meanwhile, Rutgers has fallen off track. John Carroll scored 17 points and grabbed nine rebounds and Hassan Attia scored 11 points to go with another nine rebounds to lead the Hawks to their first win at Rutgers. The Scarlet Knights needed a late 20-5 run to recover from a 13-point deficit late and hold off Hartford last season.

Hartford (7-7) took at 39-35 lead with 15 minutes left in the game and pushed it to 43-36. Rutgers eventually took the lead at 55-53 with 2:34 left on a Mike Williams 3-pointer. Hartford tied the game at 55 before taking the lead on a dunk by Attia. Corey Sanders, Rutgers’ star guard, was benched for the second time this season after missing a team flight. The first benching was for poor practice habits, coach Steve Pikiell said.

“He didn’t start,” he said. “He likes to start and I know Corey didn’t want to miss it. It happens. It’s a busy travel day. That wasn’t why we lost the basketball game today. And sometimes as the head coach you make decisions like that and he apologized to the team and you move forward. Guys miss flights. Guys get injured. Guys are sick. So we move forward.”

Sanders and Williams both came off the Rutgers bench and combined to score 30 points.

Sanders, who finished with 17 points, hit three free throws to get the Scarlet Knights (10-5) within a point in the final minute, but missed a jumper with :14 seconds left for the lead.

J.R. Lynch and Jason Dunne each had 14 points and combined to hit six 3s for the Hawks.

“There’s a lot more basketball to be played,” Williams said. “You can’t let these two losses - these two losses don’t define us. We know we’re a great ball club. We showed that. We just got to get back to playing Rutgers basketball.”

**UP NEXT**

Hartford: Open America East Conference play at Albany

on Wednesday.

Rutgers: Returns to Big Ten play at No. 14 Purdue on Wednesday.

**BIG PICTURE**

Hartford: The Hawks got back to .500 with a big win heading into conference play with a win over a Power 5 team, their fourth win in the last five games.

Rutgers: Since upsetting No. 23 Seton Hall, Rutgers now has lost two back-to-back non-conference games, including an overtime loss to Stony Brook, where second-year Steve Pikiell last coached. The Scarlet Knights are 0-2 in Big Ten play and after winning three games last year and just six overall since entering the conference three years ago.



Rutgers head coach Steve Pikiell holds up a sign with a play call during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game against Seton Hall, Saturday, Dec. 16, 2017, in Piscataway, N.J.

(AP Photo/Julio Cortez)



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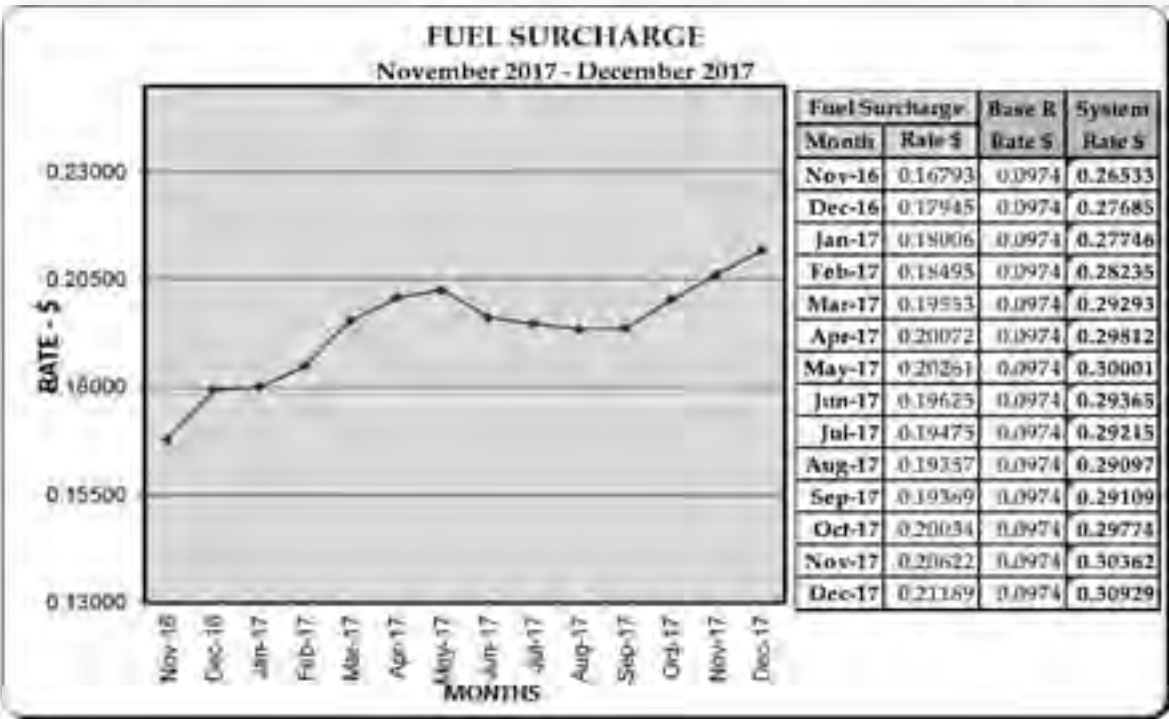
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## Monthly Fuel Surcharge Notification

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The fuel surcharge rate changes monthly due to fluctuating fuel costs. The fuel surcharge is approximately 70%-75% of the total kWh price. This is considered a “pass-through” revenue because it goes directly to pay the local fuel suppliers for diesel fuel consumed at the five power plants in Tutuila, Manua and Aunuu.



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Fuel Surcharge	0.21189	0.21189	0.21189
Fixed Electric Base Rate	0.09740	0.10650	0.08960
Electric System Rate (kWh)	0.30929	0.31839	0.30149

Reduction” savings. There are seven active sites, with more sites in progress to increase ASPA’s renewable energy portfolio. As ASPA increases renewable energy capacity, more savings will be realized and passed on to customers.



Texas' Lashann Higgs (10) looks to pass past Oklahoma's Gabbi Ortiz (21) and LaNesia Williams (1) during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in Norman, Okla., Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017.

(AP Photo/Garett Fisbeck)

# Slovakia scores late to upset US 3-2 at world juniors

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Samuel Bucek scored an unassisted goal with 2:08 remaining in the third period to give Slovakia a 3-2 victory over the United States at the world junior hockey championship on Thursday.

Filip Krivoski scored the other two goals for Slovakia, and Roman Durny made 43 saves in his world junior debut.

Casey Mittelstadt and Brady Tkachuk had goals for the U.S., which had won nine straight world junior games entering the night. The U.S. began its streak with the 2016 bronze medal game and went undefeated in winning the gold medal last year in Toronto. The previous American record was eight consecutive victories from 2004-05.

The U.S. faces Canada in

an outdoor game at the Buffalo Bills' New Era Field on Friday afternoon.

In other preliminary-round games, Sweden beat the Czech Republic 3-1, Russia pulled away in the third period for a 5-2 victory over Switzerland and Finland defeated Denmark 4-1.

Slovakia is 4-13-1 all-time against the U.S. in the world junior championship and had lost six straight preliminary-round meetings since last defeating the U.S. in a 2009 quarterfinal.

Bucek made an outstanding individual effort to score the winning goal, maneuvering around three defenders and circling behind the net before slipping the wraparound past Joseph Woll, who stopped 22

shots for the U.S.

Mittelstadt tied the game for U.S. with 3:11 left in the third period.

Following a 9-0 rout of Denmark on Tuesday, the U.S. got off to a sluggish start in a game it never led.

Krivosik gave Slovakia a 1-0 lead five minutes into the second period. He put Slovakia ahead 2-1 on a backhand with 4:45 left in the third period.

Ryan Poehling set up Tkachuk for the tying goal on a 2-on-1 midway through the second period.

Earlier, Alex Nylander had a goal and an assist and defenseman Rasmus Dahlin, the expected top pick in next year's NHL draft, had two assists to lead Sweden.

# Higgs' career game lifts No. 8 Texas past Oklahoma 88-78

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — Most everyone inside Texas women's basketball program knew the Longhorns had lost seven straight games at Oklahoma, so coach Karen Aston chose not to address that elephant in the room as the Longhorns prepared to visit Norman.

That strategy worked.

Lashann Higgs scored a career-high 25 points and No. 8 Texas won at Oklahoma for the first time since the 2009-10 season, beating the Sooners 88-78 on Thursday night in the Big 12 Conference opener for both teams. Ariel Atkins added 15 points and nine rebounds and Brooke McCarty had 12 points for Texas (10-1, 1-0 Big 12). The Longhorns never trailed and led by as many as 20 points, slowing an Oklahoma offense that had averaged 85.6 points in five previous home games.

The Longhorns also survived a late rally by Oklahoma (5-7, 0-1) that pulled the Sooners within eight points in the final minute. Aston said thoughts of ending the streak probably seeped into her players' heads.

"I mean, it's not a secret that we haven't won here in a long time," Aston said. "I tried to keep it a secret so we wouldn't talk about it or think about it, but I have a feeling maybe late in the game we got a little antsy and tried not to lose instead of continuing to try to win. I'm pleased that we got a win in Norman and we haven't done that in a long time." Oklahoma (5-7, 0-1) had won its last 12 Big 12 openers and is now 19-3 in such games under coach Sherri Coale. The Sooners' last loss in a league opener was on Jan. 5, 2005, at Texas Tech. Shaina Pellington scored 16 points - all in the second half - and Ana Llanusa and Maddie Manning each added 14 to lead the Sooners, who are 1-3 this season against ranked foes, with a win over South Florida but losses to Oregon, Connecticut and Texas. "Texas has a really good basketball team and they

played really hard tonight," Coale said. "We were affected by their speed and their athleticism, which surprised me a little. Their speed and the way they attack in transition just really took us out of any sort of rhythm or tempo. I don't know that we ever really found it."

Texas raced to an 8-0 lead in the first 2 1/2 minutes, taking advantage of four early Oklahoma turnovers. The Sooners proved unable to close the gap, struggling to score both inside against the Longhorns' large frontline and outside, where Oklahoma went 3 of 17 from 3-point range. Texas led 26-13 after the first quarter and 41-24 at halftime. By that point, Oklahoma already had committed 11 turnovers - more than twice as many as Texas. Oklahoma pulled within 12 twice early in the third quarter and was within 62-49 after Vionise Pierre-Louis hit two free throws with 9:25 left, but Atkins converted a three-point play, then hit a 3-pointer to rebuild Texas' lead to 19 points. Llanusa's basket with 37 seconds left got Oklahoma within 84-76, but two late baskets by Jada Underwood - her only points of the game - gave Texas some late cushion.

"I thought we really got off to a great start," Aston said. "I was very pleased with our execution of the game plan. Our focus was really good and I just thought we were terrific in the beginning. You know we lost our flow a little bit and I'll look back at that and see if it was substitution patterns or just them changing their philosophy of their game plan and us not adjusting very well. That will be on me if we didn't."

## BIG PICTURE:

Texas: The Longhorns ended their mystifying losing streak at the Lloyd Noble Center, posting a road win against a quality foe - one receiving votes in this week's Associated Press poll - that could loom large in the Big 12 standings as the season develops.

**SOUTHBOUND**

**ARRIVAL**

VESSEL	VOY	SEA	L/BEACH	OAK	PPT	NUKUALOFA	APIA	PAGO
Cap Taputapu	038	TBA	02/18	02/20	03/03	---	04/08	04/08
Cap Taputapu	036	TBA	SAILED	SAILED	12/29	---	01/03	01/03
Polynesia	492	TBA	01/02	01/04	01/15	---	01/20	01/20
Cap Taputapu	037	TBA	01/18	01/20	01/31	---	02/05	02/05
Polynesia	493	TBA	02/03	02/05	02/16	---	02/21	02/21

**SOUTHBOUND**

**ARRIVAL**

VESSEL	VOY	PPT	N/ALOFA	APIA	PAGO
Cap Taputapu	038	03/03	---	04/08	04/08
Cap Taputapu	036	12/29	---	01/03	01/03
Polynesia	492	01/15	---	01/20	01/20
Cap Taputapu	037	01/31	---	02/05	02/05
Polynesia	493	02/16	---	02/21	02/21

**Note:** All Schedule dates are estimated

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# Oklahoma State hits milestones in Camping World Bowl win

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Mason Rudolph threw for 351 yards and a pair of touchdowns, and James Washington became No. 17 Oklahoma State’s career receiving yards leader in a 30-22 victory over No. 22 Virginia Tech in the Camping World Bowl.

Washington caught five passes for 126 yards, giving him 4,472 for his career and passing Rashaun Woods for the school mark. Justice Hill ran for 120 yards and another score for the Cowboys (10-3), who have won 10 games in each of the last three seasons — another Oklahoma State first.

Josh Jackson ran for two scores and threw for another for the Hokies (9-4), including a rush that got Virginia Tech within 27-21 with 5:40 remaining. Deshaun McCleese ran for 124 yards, a Virginia Tech season-best, but the Hokies were hurt

by two turnovers in Oklahoma State territory.

Hill came through with perhaps the play of the night. Facing a third-and-11 with 3:30 left, Hill took a handoff, went left, waited for a lane to open — and broke loose for a 31-yard gain down to the Hokies’ 18. Matt Ammendola’s 38-yard field goal with 2:34 left put the Cowboys up by nine, essentially sealing the outcome.

Virginia Tech actually out-gained the high-octane Cowboys, 518 yards to 492.

## MILITARY BOWL NAVY 49, VIRGINIA 7

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (AP) — Backup quarterback Zach Abey scored five touchdowns, Malcolm Perry ran for 114 yards and two scores and Navy beat Virginia in a surprisingly lopsided Military Bowl.

After Virginia’s Joe Reed took the opening kickoff 98

yards for a touchdown, the Midshipmen (7-6) got two TDs apiece from quarterbacks Perry and Abey in taking a 28-7 half-time lead.

Perry left in the third quarter with a foot injury, leaving Abey to score on runs of 5 and 20 yards to make it 42-7 in a game Navy entered as a 1½-point favorite.

Abey added a 1-yard touchdown with 11:11 remaining, then sat for the remainder of the game.

The Midshipmen rolled up a Military Bowl-record 452 yards rushing, including 101 by Chris High and 88 by Abey, who began the season as the starter before losing the job.

Playing in their first bowl since 2011, the Cavaliers (6-7) could not contain Navy’s triple option and had no success moving the ball.

# Jacksonville State rolls in OVC opener, beats ECU 76-58

JACKSONVILLE, Ala. (AP) — Marlon Hunter scored 20 points, Norbertas Giga had 14 points and 13 rebounds, and Jacksonville State beat Eastern Kentucky 76-58 on Thursday night in an Ohio Valley Conference opener.

Hunter was 8 of 14 from the field and Giga was 4-of-9

shooting. Jason Burnell added 11 points for Jacksonville State (10-4), which has won three of its last four games.

Zach Charles led Eastern Kentucky (6-8) with 13 points. DeAndre Dishman and Nick Mayo added 11 points apiece.

Jacksonville State opened the game on a 17-2 run and built

a 32-14 halftime advantage. Hunter scored nine points and Giga added eight while Eastern Kentucky shot 18 percent from the floor and missed all 11 of its 3-point attempts in the first half. The Gamecocks stretched their lead to 25 points with 10 minutes left.

# Thomas Vanek powers Canucks past Blackhawks 5-2

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Thomas Vanek thought it was going to be one of those nights after he was robbed by Anton Forsberg on two point-blank opportunities in the first period.

He was right — just not the way he envisioned.

Vanek had two goals and three assists, rookie Brock Boeser added a goal and three assists, and the Vancouver Canucks snapped a four-game losing streak with a 5-2 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks on Thursday.

Sam Gagner chipped in with two goals and an assist to round out the line’s 12-point performance that featured a number of jaw-dropping passes, helping the Canucks (16-17-5) to just their second victory in the last 10 games. Jacob Markstrom made 30 saves.

“We played well as a team overall, and our line ... we created a lot of chances,” said Vanek, who recorded the third five-point night of his career. “Tonight was just one of those games where all three of us clicked.”

Chicago (17-14-5) has lost three in a row after winning five straight. Nick Schmaltz and Ryan Hartman scored for the Blackhawks, and Forsberg made 26 saves while subbing for injured starter Corey Crawford.

Blackhawks coach Joel Quenneville credited Vanek, Boeser and Gagner for their big performance, but was also critical of his team’s defensive structure.

“All three of them have a lot of skill and they have good patience,” Quenneville said. “It was a bang-bang play on all of (the goals).”

“Pucks going through us down low like Swiss cheese ... it was too easy.”

The Canucks snapped a 1-1 tie with seven minutes left in the second period. Boeser played the puck behind the net to Gagner, and he set up Vanek’s 11th goal with a no-look pass to the forward in front.

Gagner then gave Vancouver a two-goal cushion 1:27 into the third when he took a pass from Vanek and beat Forsberg for his sixth of the year. Forsberg got the start after the Blackhawks put Crawford on injured reserve Wednesday with an upper-body injury.

“I thought early on it was going to be one of those nights where it goes the other way,” Vanek said. “He made some great saves. As a line, we stuck with it.”

Gagner, who once had an eight-point game against Chicago when he played for Edmonton in 2012, has two goals and four assists during his four-game point streak after recording just a goal and an assist over his previous nine outings.

Vanek got his second of the night with 3:31 left when Boeser, who retook the NHL rookie scoring lead with his four points, fed a behind-the-back pass in front to set up his linemate’s 12th of the season.

NOTES: Crawford also missed three games earlier this month with a lower-body injury. ... Chicago lost forward Artem Anisimov to an undisclosed injury in the first period.

## UP NEXT

Canucks: Host Los Angeles on Saturday night. Blackhawks: Visit Edmonton on Friday night.



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# Magic beat Pistons 102-89 to snap nine-game losing streak

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — The Orlando Magic got their first win in more than three weeks thanks to major contributions from some unlikely sources.

Point guard Elfrid Payton and reserve centers Bismack Biyombo and Marreese Speights teamed up to spark the Magic to a 102-89 victory over Detroit that ended a nine-game losing streak.

Payton had 19 points, eight assists and eight rebounds, while Biyombo and Speights combined for 28 points and 18 rebounds as subs for injured starting center Nikola Vucevic.

Evan Fournier scored 17 points and Aaron Gordon had 14 for Orlando, but it was the Magic's backup centers who made the difference in the game.

"The last couple of games it's been about other guys trying to pick up the scoring load," Magic coach Frank Vogel said. "Biz and Mo were both great tonight. We had our best passing game in a few weeks and it resulted in better shooting.

"And that stretch toward the end of the third quarter and into the fourth where the ball was really moving, the guys were

not looking to force things and we got the payoff."

Speights helped the Magic seize control of the game at the end of the third period and start of the fourth. He scored Orlando's last nine points in the third quarter, nailed a 3-pointer to start the fourth quarter, then handed out an assist D.J. Augustin for another 3-pointer as the Magic turned a five-point deficit into an 86-73 lead.

"When you're in this league, you have to find something you're really good at and that's something I think I'm good at," Speights said after scoring 16 points and grabbing five rebounds. "Now that (Vucevic) is out, I know I'm going to get the opportunity to play every night. So when you know you'll get to play, your routine can be good and you'll have confidence."

The Pistons, who rallied successfully from double-digit deficits early in the game, never got closer than eight points in the final nine minutes of the game. Tobias Harris scored 21 points for Detroit, which had won five of six. Andre Drummond had 17 points and 18 rebounds, and Ish Smith contributed 13 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

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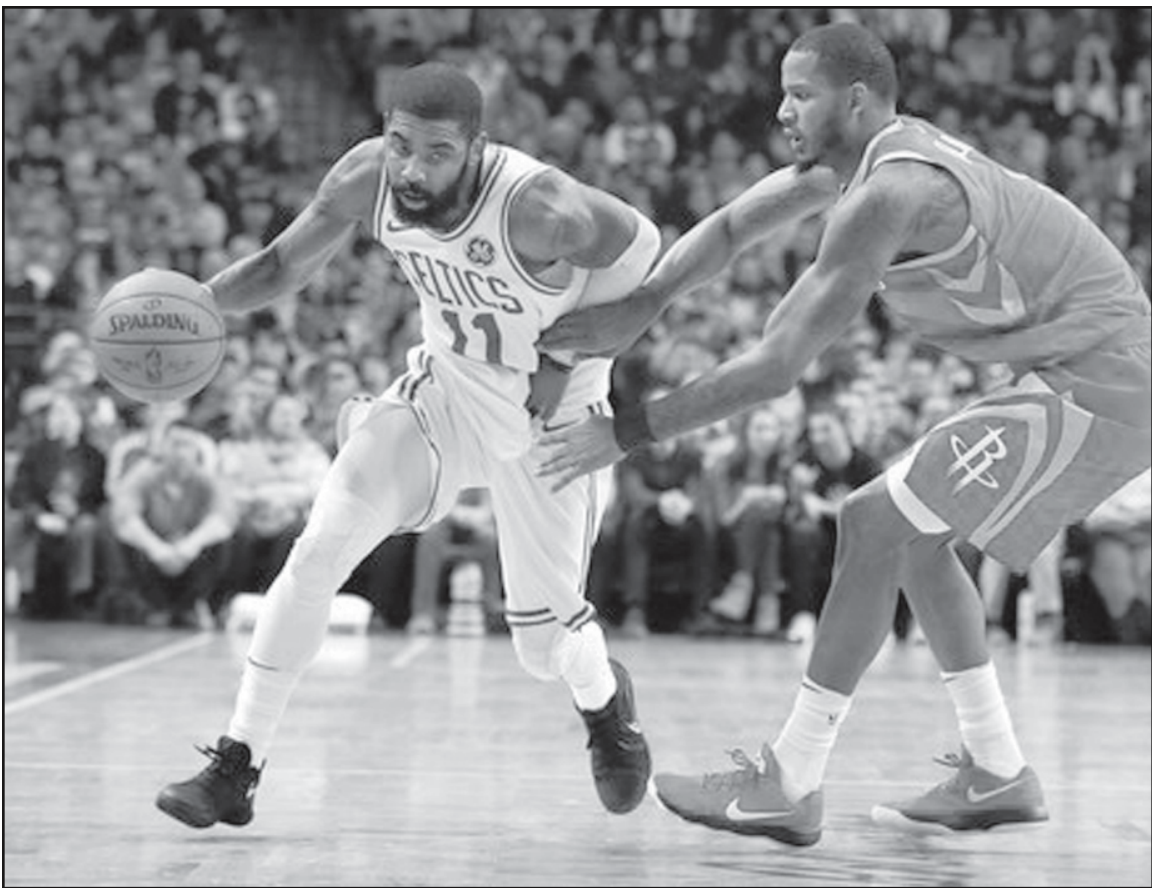
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Boston Celtics' Kyrie Irving (11) drives past Houston Rockets' Trevor Ariza during the second quarter of an NBA basketball game in Boston, Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017. (AP Photo/Michael Dwyer)

# Celtics rally from 26 down to stun Rockets 99-98

BOSTON (AP) — Al Horford made a hook shot with 3.7 seconds left to give Boston its only lead of the game, and the Celtics rallied from a 26-point deficit to beat the Houston Rockets 99-98 on Thursday night.

Kyrie Irving scored 26 and Jayson Tatum finished with 19 for the Celtics, while Marcus Smart drew two offensive fouls against James Harden in the closing seconds to help Boston complete the comeback.

Smart and Terry Rozier had 13 points apiece.

Tatum made a layup with seven seconds left to pull the Celtics within 98-97, then Smart had position on Harden for an offensive foul that gave Boston the ball and a chance to win it. Horford converted from the lane to put Boston up for the first time in a game Houston had led throughout and dominated until midway through the third quarter.

Harden finished with 34 points and 10 assists. Eric Gordon scored 24 points for Houston, which shot 25 percent (9 of 36) in the second half and lost its fourth straight.

## BUCKS 102, TIMBERWOLVES 96

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Eric Bledsoe scored 26 points and Giannis Antetokounmpo added 22 to help Milwaukee rally from a 20-point deficit and beat Minnesota.

Bledsoe had six points and made two key assists down the stretch and the Bucks found their missing defense, holding the Timberwolves to a season-low 12 points in the fourth quarter. Minnesota went cold over the last 4:21 and had its five-game winning streak snapped.

Bledsoe took a pass from Antetokounmpo and made an open 3-pointer from the corner to give the Bucks their first lead of the game at 95-93 with 2:25 to go. Bledsoe followed with a three-point play and then found Antetokounmpo under the basket for an easy two points, pushing the lead to 100-93 with 1:04 left.

Minnesota perhaps wore down a night after a 128-125 overtime victory over Denver and had a four-game road winning streak snapped.

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 22 points for Minnesota and Andrew Wiggins added 21.

## SPURS 119, KNICKS 107

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — LaMarcus Aldridge had 25 points and every San Antonio

starter scored in double figures to beat New York.

Pau Gasol added 17 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists for San Antonio.

The Spurs improved to 17-2 at home while winning their third straight overall.

The Spurs were without Kawhi Leonard and lost Rudy Gay to a foot injury only two nights after playing with a full roster for the first time all season. Leonard sat out for rest. Gay exited the game late in the third quarter with a sore right heel.

Kyle Anderson had 16 points and eight rebounds starting in place of Leonard. Tony Parker scored 14 points, including 10 in the first quarter as San Antonio bolted to an early lead.

Reserve forward Michael Beasley led New York with 23 points. Courtney Lee and Kristaps Porzingis had 18 points apiece, but Porzingis fouled out late in the fourth.

## MAGIC 102, PISTONS 89

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Elfrid Payton had 19 points, eight rebounds and eight assists to help Orlando break a nine-game losing streak.

Evan Fournier scored 17 points and Aaron Gordon had 14 for Orlando, but it was the Magic's backup centers who made the difference in the game.

Bismack Biyombo had 12 points and 13 rebounds, and Marresse Speights scored 16 points as replacements for injured starter Nikola Vucevic.

Tobias Harris scored 21 points for Detroit, which had won five of six. Andre Drummond had 17 points and 18 rebounds, and Ish Smith contributed 13 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

## TRAIL BLAZERS 114, 76ERS 110

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Shabazz Napier, who started for injured guard Damian Lillard, scored 15 of his season-high 23 points in the fourth quarter and Portland rallied to beat Philadelphia.

CJ McCollum led all scorers with 34 for the Blazers, who snapped a six-game losing streak at home. Portland had a season-high 42 points in the fourth quarter.

The Sixers, who led by as many as 18 points in the third quarter, have lost 10 of their last 12 games. Joel Embiid finished with 29 points and nine rebounds, while Dario Saric had 25 points and nine rebounds.

# Sharks rally to beat Flames on Donskoi's shootout goal

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — San Jose rookie Joonas Donskoi wasn't very happy with his overall game. He felt he had to make up for a tripping penalty that led to Calgary's second goal of the first period.

Everything turned out all right in the end.

Donskoi scored the winning goal in a shootout, and the Sharks rallied to beat the Flames 3-2 on Thursday for their third straight victory. "You've got to put some streaks together," said Joe Pavelski, who scored his eighth goal of the season. "To win three in a row, you can't be satisfied. You've got to go for four or five. I don't know if this is the time or not, hopefully you can start creating a little separation." The Sharks were stymied for most of the night by Flames goalie David Rittich, but they got a late goal in the third period on Timo Meier's re-directed shot.

Pavelski, who scored San Jose's first goal, got the puck past Rittich in the first round of the shootout. After Calgary

missed its first two attempts, Donskoi deked Rittich and then wrapped a shot around the goalie for the game-winner.

It was a welcomed sight for Donskoi, whose tripping penalty set up a power-play goal by Mikael Backlund.

"That's a pretty big penalty to take, especially so when they score a PP goal after that," Donskoi said. "It never feels good. I didn't feel good about my game today at all. Good we got two points and that's all that matters." Martin Jones made 32 saves for San Jose. Both teams missed multiple scoring chances in the extra period, including a one-timer by Calgary's TJ Brodie that was stopped by Jones. Rittich made 30 saves in his fourth career start. Garnet Hathaway also scored for the Flames, and Jaromir Jagr took another step toward breaking Gordie Howe's record for games played.

Calgary lost for the first time this season when leading after two periods.

"We just need to manufac-

ture some extra points in the game so we can hold leads," Flames coach Glen Gulutzan said. "We had some real good looks in overtime. If we could have gotten a goal on one those other power plays we would have won this game."

Jagr entered early in the first period, tying Ron Francis for third place on the NHL's games list with 1,731. Jagr, who played 13 minutes, turns 46 in February and needs 37 games to break Gordie Howe's record of 1,767. Hathaway took advantage when the Sharks had trouble clearing the puck from in front of the net and tapped in his second goal of the season to put Calgary up 1-0 early in the first period.

After Pavelski tied it with a power-play goal, Backlund re-directed a power-play shot by Tkachuk past Jones to make it 2-1 Flames at 15:45 of the first.

NOTES: Pavelski's goal was his 200th since 2011-12, fourth-most in the NHL during that time. ... Jagr had missed the previous two games with a lower-body injury. ...

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# Lewerke, Spartans roll past Cougars 42-17 in Holiday Bowl

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Michigan State put a nice, big exclamation mark on its turnaround season.

Brian Lewerke threw for 213 yards and three touchdowns, and LJ Scott ran for 110 yards and two scores for No. 18 Michigan State, which took advantage of Luke Falk’s absence to rout No. 21 Washington State 42-17 in the Holiday Bowl on Thursday night.

Lewerke also rushed for 73 yards for Michigan State (10-3), which rebounded from a dismal 3-9 record last year to reach double digits in wins for the eighth time in program history.

“We were ready to play. We were fresh,” said Mark Dantonio, who earned his 100th victory in 11 seasons as Spartans coach. “It wasn’t good enough to win nine games. We needed to win 10. We needed to have a great bowl game. This was a national stage. Holiday Bowl is an outstanding bowl. It’s catapulted us up the rankings at least a little bit further.

“We reaffirmed our stature a little bit in college football. This has been a good football team and should continue to be a good football team.”

Falk, who was photographed earlier in the week with a cast on his left wrist, went through warmups but came out in street clothes at game time. He was replaced by redshirt sophomore Tyler Hilinski, who made his first start and eighth appearance of the season. It’s unclear precisely when Falk injured the wrist on his non-throwing hand, but he had issues with it throughout the season.

Coach Mike Leach refused to give specifics during the week and was condescending afterward when asked about Falk’s injury.

“Luke is doing exactly what we want Luke to do and Luke has had a fine career here and also done a great deal for this program, probably more than most people will ever realize,” Leach said. “Tyler was the ideal guy to start with our lineup today.”

Pressed on Falk’s injury, Leach said: “You will remain unclear on it. Next question.”

Hilinski led WSU (9-4) to a 45-yard field goal by Erik Powell on the Cougars’ second drive, but the Cougars were overpowered by the Spartans.

Lewerke threw the first of two TD passes to Cody White, a 7-yarder midway through the second quarter, when he was flushed to the left but found the receiver in the back of the end zone.

On MSU’s next possession, Lewerke took the snap and glanced at his running back, which froze the secondary and

allowed Felton Davis III to get wide open for a 49-yard scoring pass.

“The quick answer is our eyes weren’t in the right place,” Leach said. “But the answer is we didn’t do our job. I did think we unraveled a little bit after that play.”

Scott scored on a 3-yard run to give the Spartans a 21-3 halftime time.

Early in the third, Lewerke rolled left and had his pass tipped, but a sliding White caught it for a 7-yard touchdown.

Lewerke, who finished 13 of 21, was hit hard on a keeper in the third quarter and came out for a few plays. His backup, Damion Terry, scored on a 6-yard keeper to make it 35-3.

The Cougars closed the gap when Hilinski threw a 14-yard touchdown pass to Tay Martin late in the third quarter and a 15-yarder to Tay in the fourth quarter.

Scott scored on a 28-yard burst up the middle with about six minutes left to play.

Hilinski was 39 of 50 for 272 yards and two touchdowns, with one interception.

### QUOTABLE

Lewerke said he was “very careful” on his long throw to Davis. “I saw how wide open he was and I tried to throw it right at him and make sure.”

### THE TAKEAWAY

Washington State: It was the second straight lackluster Holiday Bowl for Leach’s Cougars, who lost 17-12 to Minnesota last year. Besides being without Falk, leading receiver Tavares Martin Jr. was kicked off the team after the regular season and third-leading receiver Isaiah Johnson-Mack left the squad. The Cougars, who started 6-0, were routed in their final two games, including a 41-14 loss to rival Washington.

Michigan State: Scott had his third 100-yard game of the season and ninth of his career. Felton had four catches for 118 yards.

### UP NEXT

Washington State: Falk will move on to the NFL Draft while Hilinski will take over the Air Raid offense. It was Hilinski who led the Cougars to a comeback victory against Boise State in triple overtime on Sept. 9 after Falk was knocked out of the game.

Michigan State: The young Spartans appear to be in good hands with Lewerke, who was just a redshirt sophomore this season. “We can build off the momentum this game brings us,” he said. “We’ve got a lot of young guys, still a lot of work to be done, a lot of potential to be reached. It’s very big for us.”



Portland Trail Blazers guard Shabazz Napier, left, and forward Maurice Harkless high-five during the second half of the team's NBA basketball game against the Philadelphia 76ers in Portland, Ore., Thursday, Dec. 28, 2017. (AP Photo/Craig Mitchell/der)

# Napier’s season-high 23 rally Blazers past 76ers, 114-110

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Shabazz Napier was struggling so much against the Philadelphia 76ers that Trail Blazers coach Terry Stotts sat him early in the third quarter.

Good thing for Portland that Napier returned in time for the fourth.

Napier, who started for injured guard Damian Lillard, scored 15 of his season-high 23 points in the fourth quarter and the Trail Blazers rallied for 114-110 victory Thursday night.

“The good thing about basketball is they say you’ve got the next game, but you always have two halves,” Napier said. “I felt like I was kind of lethargic out there in the first half and I felt like basically it can’t get any worse, so I just went out there and tried to be positive.”

CJ McCollum led all scorers with 34 for the Blazers, who snapped a six-game losing streak at home. Portland had a season-high 42 points in the fourth quarter.

The Sixers, who led by as many as 18 points in the third quarter, have lost 10 of their last 12 games.

Joel Embiid finished with 29 points and nine rebounds, while Dario Saric had 25 points and nine rebounds. The 76ers were hurt when Robert Covington went out in the third quarter with an injured finger on his left hand.

“It’s a disappointing loss. We had an opportunity without Damian being here. I give them credit. They did not roll over,” 76ers coach Brett Brown said. “We gave up 18 points when Covington went out. We really missed him, but we give them credit.”

JJ Redick and Embiid made consecutive 3-pointers to narrow the gap to 103-99 with 2:06 left. Jusuf Nurkic had a pair of free throws before McCollum’s pull-up jumper and it appeared the game was out of reach, but Embiid made another 3 that got the Sixers within 109-105 with 16 seconds left.

McCollum made free throws with 3.4 seconds to go before Embiid added another 3-pointer to make it 111-108, but the Sixers weren’t able to catch up.

Nurkic finished with 21 points and 12 rebounds, and Portland won its fourth straight against the Sixers at the Moda Center. Napier scored 22 points after halftime.

Lillard missed his third game with a strained right hamstring. Portland’s top scorer, averaging 25.2 points per game, was injured in a 102-85 loss to San Antonio on Dec. 20.

Lillard warmed up a couple of hours before the game and didn’t appear hampered by the injury.

On the other side, Embiid was questionable for the game with back tightness, but played. The 76ers were coming off a 105-98 victory over the Knicks at Madison Square Garden on Christmas that snapped a five-game losing streak.

Nurkic made a layup with nine seconds left to give Portland a 52-51 lead at halftime. But he was furious in the third quarter when officials did not stop the game when he had a bloody nose. He collected his fourth foul before heading for the locker room.

Nurkic knocked heads with Redick, who appeared to have a cut lip.

Nurkic said he was angry.

“The more I get mad I play better,” he said. “I’m not saying every game ‘Hit me in the nose’ but I just need to play with the same energy every game like this.”

The Sixers stretched the lead to 75-59 with five minutes left in the quarter, outscoring Portland 24-7. But Ed Davis capped a 10-1 Portland run with a dunk to pull the Blazers to 79-70.

Napier had a personal 7-0 run to close the gap to 88-81. Jerryd Bayless made a 3-pointer on the other end — but it was later ruled no good because of a shot clock violation.

Napier made two of three free throws and Nurkic added two more, before Napier’s layup got the Blazers within 88-87.

### TIP INS

76ers: The Sixers beat the Blazers 101-81 in Philadelphia on Nov. 22. Embiid had 28 points and 12 rebounds in that one. ... Embiid had six 3-pointers.

Trail Blazers: Portland is just 7-10 at home this season, but 10-6 on the road. Asked before the game if he’d ever been on a team with that kind of record disparity at home, coach Terry Stotts said simply “No.”

QUOTABLE: “We just need to be accountable. We need to hold each other accountable for everything. I think that’s what it comes down to. Making sure we stay on top of each other and make sure we’re getting better. Just talking to each other.” — Sixers guard Ben Simmons.

### UP NEXT

76ers: Visit Denver on Saturday.

Trail Blazers: Visit Atlanta on Saturday to kick off a three-game road trip.



Texas coach Tom Herman, center, lifts the trophy next to Michael Dickson, right, following the team's 33-16 win over Missouri in the Texas Bowl NCAA college football game, Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2017, in Houston.

(AP Photo/Eric Christian Smith)

# Texas coach Tom Herman's first season ends as a winner

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Tom Herman's first season at Texas started with a dud that had Longhorns fans fuming, and ended with an on-field shimmy that had them defending him.

Now, Herman looks to turn that shimmy into the full-blown Texas swagger that's been missing for so long.

At 7-6, there are signs it could be coming. At the very least, Herman's first team can be called a winner.

That's what made beating Missouri in the Texas Bowl so important. The Longhorns avoided a fourth consecutive losing season and Herman can legitimately say a rebuilding project is heading in the right direction.

"You can't overstate it," Herman said. "It's really important for these guys to call themselves winners."

That's a far different feeling from when Texas got thumped at home by Maryland in the season opener. And just a few weeks ago, Texas fans were wondering if Herman's locker room was in disarray after running back Chris Warren transferred and standout offensive lineman Connor Williams and Thorpe Award winner safety DeShon Elliott decided to skip the bowl game to prepare for the NFL draft.

"I think tonight, coach Herman won the locker room, 100 percent," said linebacker Breckyn Hager said after Wednesday night's 33-16 victory over the Tigers.

"He now has our hearts as a team. These past three weeks, it really felt like a whole new team, a whole new atmosphere. We all bought in," Hager said. "It's like you hit the light switch and everything has changed. It's definitely up from here. I know I've said that before but for real this time. This was big time."

Texas brought in Herman after firing Charlie Strong following three straight losing seasons. The program is starved to return to contending for Big 12 championships — Longhorns fans will want national titles too, but first things first — and gave Herman a contract that guarantees him more than \$25 million.

Herman's first nine months were full of tough talk about molding a tough team, recruiting and a \$10 million locker room redesign.

The Maryland loss staggered everyone and

caused the entire program to re-evaluate what would be possible this season.

"If we all thought we were going to come in here and in nine months sprinkle some fairy dust on this team and think that we've arrived, then we were wrong," Herman said after the first game.

Texas fought back behind a much-improved defense under coordinator Todd Orlando while the offense stalled more often than it started and had Herman defending coordinator Tim Beck most of the season. And frustration built over what might have been.

The defense kept the Longhorns in every game. Texas led Southern California, Oklahoma State and Texas Tech in the fourth quarter, only to lose each one. The defense will lose some of its best players in 2018. Defensive tackle Poona Ford was a force in the middle of the line as a senior and Elliott and cornerback Holton Hill are leaving for the NFL as underclassmen. Linebacker and leading tackler Malik Jefferson, a second-team Associated Press All-American, has yet to announce whether he will return for his senior season.

Offensively, the Longhorns have work to do.

Quarterbacks Shane Buechele and Sam Ehlinger rotated starting duties because of injury and because neither seemed to satisfy Herman with his play. Ehlinger's head-first running style delivered a key win against Kansas State and had Texas threatening to beat Oklahoma and Oklahoma State, but he also got a concussion injury.

Buechele started the first game, went out with a leg injury and struggled to truly command the offense when given the chance despite a record-setting passing season as a freshman in 2016.

What develops at quarterback between those two and standout recruits Casey Thompson and Cameron Rising in the spring will be the story of the offseason for the Longhorns.

Herman closed out the 2017 season with an on-field shimmy caught by TV cameras as the Texas Bowl win over Missouri ended. His moves appeared to mock an earlier celebration by Missouri quarterback Drew Lock.

The Texas fans who were quick to defend their coach on social media didn't see ridicule. They saw swagger.

They liked it. And they want more.

## Stretching for touchdown can backfire into costly fumble

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Derek Carr would do it all over again: stretch the ball toward the goal line for a potential winning touchdown, even though he knows the extra effort backfired and cost the Oakland Raiders a chance to win.

Carr's dramatic fumble that rolled through the end zone for a touchback ended Oakland's comeback hopes and most of its playoff chances in the closing seconds of a 20-17 Week 15 loss to the Dallas Cowboys.

He scrambled toward the end zone, stretched the ball forward as he dived only to have it jostled loose by Dallas safety Jeff Heath and roll out of the end zone for a turnover on a somewhat esoteric rule that has been used more than usual this year.

"I always think of it in basketball terms: I'd rather take the last shot and miss it than pass it off and try and do it another way," Carr said. "From a competitive standpoint, I'd try it but with better technique, two hands, I don't know, but something to where we don't lose the game."

Carr's play was just the latest example of a costly fumble near the goal line. Fumbles that go out of bounds on the field of play revert to the last team that had possession. If it goes through the end zone, it becomes a touchback and turnover.

Several coaches last week said they used Oakland's pain as a teaching tool for their players.

"As coaches it is important for us to talk about is this goal-to-go or like in last night's game, if you were watching it, you knew that Carr had gained the first down. He is trying to score, and yet at what cost?" Saints coach Sean Payton asked. "You could make a strong point to say 'Hey, the two scenarios are: desperate and I need to get in here, as opposed to it is not at all cost, then maybe it is not worth the risk of extending the ball. Because every weekend, we see great plays ... where players are diving for that landmark and extending the ball and getting a touchdown, but there is that balance of at what cost.'"

While there are countless examples of a player getting rewarded with a touchdown for stretching the ball over the goal line, the aggressive play has backfired more than ever this year. Carr's fumble was the seventh that went through the end zone for a touchback, the most league-wide for a season since at least 2000, according to Sportradar. There had been an average of just over two a year in that span before it plagued several teams this year.

"I just think it's too risky to do something like that," Jets offensive coordinator John Morton said. "I always try to say, 'Just lower your head and finish with the ball through the end zone.' That's the best thing to do to protect it, otherwise you might fumble it through

and now it's a touchback. What good does that do you? Then they have the ball and it could cost you, but it's hard. Guys are competing and they're trying to score, and it just happens."

The Jets were hurt by the rule earlier in the season against New England when tight end Austin Seferian-Jenkins had the ball knocked loose just short of the end zone and recovered it while out of bounds, leading to a touchback.

Seferian-Jenkins didn't stretch the ball but Tennessee's Corey Davis, Arizona's JJ Nelson, Todd Gurley of the Rams and Chicago's Bennie Cunningham all lost the ball while trying to extend it over the goal line in a similar fashion to Carr.

Washington coach Jay Gruden said it's difficult for players not to try to do everything they can to get into the end zone when they see an opportunity.

"You just got to hope they hold on to the ball if they do it," he said. "You've just got to tell them to be very careful and protect the ball. I know that if I was running and I was getting tackled and I saw that goal line, it's so important to score a touchdown."

Some teams are very strict on this play, with former Patriots executive Michael Lombardi saying coach Bill Belichick threatened to bench players who tried it.

But there are several examples of Patriots players successfully stretching for touchdowns with no ramifications from their coach. Offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels says it's a matter of knowing the situation and when a risk is worthwhile.

"Awareness, I think is the most important thing," he said. "Because there's a time and a place you may have to try and do that. And then there's a time and a place where it's not really worth the risk. Whether that's an early down play, a 2-point conversion, a fourth-and-goal — all those scenarios are different."

Players are very aware of the rule, with Detroit receiver Golden Tate saying fumbling while reaching for the end zone is one of his "biggest fears" as a receiver, especially after a fumble at the goal line by Calvin Johnson cost Detroit a game against Seattle in 2015, even if the Lions should have kept possession because the Seahawks illegally batted the ball out of the end zone.

But the lure of the touchdown is so great that players still try it even when they know better. Washington quarterback Kirk Cousins got away with it earlier this year against Minnesota when he reached across the goal line just before the ball was knocked loose.

"I was always coached, going back to college, never reach out unless it's fourth-and-goal, never reach out," Cousins said.

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**ARE YOU UNDER 18 AND NEED A PLACE TO STAY?** Do you feel unsafe at home?

Call 699-4357 (HELP) or message us on Facebook @PasefikaYouthProject. All contacts and information are strictly CONFIDENTIAL. Remember to call 911 if you have an emergency. American Samoa Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter.

**MANA COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICE** is now holding support groups for people who suffer from mental illness or any form of disability. Join me every Friday @ 12Noon @ the Alliance office in Nu'uuli. For more info call Liz Mailo @ 272-3257 or 699-0272.

**FEELING ALONE?** Come to SURVIVORS TAKING ACTION THROUGH SHARING, a support group for victims of violence (physical or sexual). Join me every Thursday at 12:00 noon @ the Alliance office in Nu'uuli. You don't have to do it alone. For more info, call Liz Mailo @ 272-3257 or 699-0272.

**PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK.** A parent to parent support group for families with children with disabilities. Contact Sandy 731-3959 (English), Ivorie 770-6678 (Samoan).

**SAMOAN SAINTS ORGANIZATION** Roadside Clean Up on the 21st and 29th of this month until the end of the year. All are welcomed. Meet in front of Lupelele Elementary School, 5:30pm, rain or shine. Do it for our beautiful island. Contact Jay @ 254-0651 for more info.

**URGENT HOMES NEEDED FOR ADULT DOGS** being trapped at Lyons Park!! Majority of adult dogs trapped are healthy & very friendly but will be humanly euthanized if no one claims them after 48 hours of being held. PLEASE HELP! Call Mona at 258-4116 or 699-9445.

**ASOA General Meetings.** Will be held each month on the 3rd Friday at 10am at ASOA Center in Tafuna on Tasi St. All seniors welcome. Questions, call 699-1131

**WHEELCHAIRS** Old, Battered or Banged up. Pls donate, in any condition to ASOA so we may be able to help someone in need. Call Marysita 770-1838 or 699-1131

**SCUBA FISHING BAN** It is unlawful to possess any spear while using SCUBA. Marine & Wildlife Resources. 633-4458 / 252-0445.

**WOMENS HOSPITAL AUXILIARY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS** of all ages to help in the Fale. Support your hospital, donate your free time by calling 633-1222 Ext. 199. All proceeds from Fale sales donated to purchase equipment for LBJ.[till]

**HUNTING BAN ON WILD BIRDS & BATS** is still in effect - it is unlawful to kill or hunt wild birds & bats. Dept. of Marine & Wildlife 633-4458 / 252-0445

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Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy Parker December 29, 2017

ACROSS

- 1 Ethiopian bills  
6 Pot fragment  
11 Voiceover artist Blanc  
14 "Til tomorrow," in Paris  
15 More healthy  
16 Singleton  
17 Most important  
19 Multipurpose truck  
20 "\_\_\_ now, when?"  
21 More nutty or bananas  
23 Hocked  
26 Shuttle's return  
27 Orb  
28 Moscow's country  
29 "Wheel of Fortune" buy  
30 Emulated a tailor  
32 \_\_\_ down (drops pounds)  
35 Smaller amount  
37 Drugged  
39 Hoped-for Christmas thing  
40 Non-glossy finish  
42 Not as prevalent  
44 Water tester

- 45 Aristocratic  
47 Thigh bones  
49 Said confidently  
51 "Grim" guy  
52 Male meter reader  
53 Play for time  
55 NYC winter hrs.  
56 Certain jewelry shade  
61 "Matrix" hero  
62 Palate part  
63 Christopher who played Superman  
64 Meas. for a chef  
65 Sad sack  
66 "Farm" ending

DOWN

- 1 Home run hitter?  
2 Coupling words  
3 Legendary Van Winkle  
4 Sing the blues  
5 Wave riders  
6 "Scat!"  
7 Male deer  
8 Boxing legend  
9 Makes a bow better  
10 Feature of deserts  
11 Peak  
12 Come in  
13 Suspicious

- 18 "... is a friend \_\_\_\_  
22 Blue dyes from plants  
23 Poem of King David  
24 Sleeping disorder, for some  
25 Small railroad station  
26 More impolite  
28 Satisfy, as a loan  
31 "As the \_\_\_ Turns"  
33 A 007 portrayer  
34 Say naughty words  
36 45-90 knot wind  
38 Bear the expense of  
41 Mistake in print

- 43 Staggering fishermen?  
46 Anew, to Caesar  
48 Xylophone hitter  
49 Star's representative  
50 Flower holders  
53 Half-off event  
54 Old Russian ruler (var.)  
57 Little pooch  
58 Writer Harper  
59 Eggs of old Rome  
60 Tie the knot

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	E	T	U	P	D	A	D	S	S	C	U	M
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											E	A

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# EUGENIA LAST

Friday,  
December 29,  
2017

THE LAST WORD IN  
ASTROLOGY

Happy Birthday: Don't get down; get moving. If something isn't the way you like, look for a way to make positive changes that will encourage you to live a better life. Focus on your health, personal relationships and home environment. Nothing is out of reach if you go about achieving your goals systematically. Your reasoning skills and hard work will bring good results. Your numbers are 7, 13, 20, 24, 31, 35, 44.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Research, ask questions and attend meetings or events that will give you a broader view of something you'd like to consider doing next year. Expand your knowledge, interests and relationships with people who have something to offer. \*\*\*

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Make plans to advance. Whether it's personal growth you are striving to achieve or upgrading your skills, go to the source and meet with people who can shed some light on the best way for you to move forward.\*\*\*

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Joint ventures should be handled openly and honestly. Do whatever it takes to take care of unfinished business. Make an effort to take better care of your health by limiting how much you eat and drink. Don't believe everything you hear. \*\*\*

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Any opportunity to socialize or to do things with family or friends should be taken. Expand your interests and you will encounter interesting new people who will enrich your life next year. Embrace the future with optimism.\*\*\*\*\*

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Too much of anything will lead to trouble. Overspending, emotional outbursts or doing things that worry your loved ones should be curbed. Walk away from anyone who is a poor influence and avoid bad habits that can lead to poor health. 2 stars

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Think big and consider all the possibilities that lay ahead. Expand your awareness and consider how you want to live your life. Mental, physical and emotional changes can be put into play that will ensure your success and satisfaction.\*\*\*\*\*

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** People from your past will come back into your life. Be wary of anyone trying to smooth-talk you into something you don't really want to pursue. Look over your financial situation and make last-minute adjustments. \*\*\*

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Let your emotions take over and your optimism grow. Greater opportunities are within reach, and partnerships will take on a new meaning. Reconnecting with people from your past will encourage you to resolve old issues and move forward in a positive manner. \*\*\*

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Go over your personal finances and figure out exactly what you owe and the best possible way to lower your debt and ease your stress. Ending the year with a positive plan will be worth celebrating. \*\*\*

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Open your doors and host a party or event. Your hospitality will encourage friendships and opportunities to explore new possibilities. Romance is on the rise and a promise will be honored. Avoid excessive individuals and unnecessary purchases. \*\*\*\*\*

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Getting along with friends and relatives will not be easy if you or someone else is indulgent or irresponsible. Avoid risky situations or following someone who isn't reliable. Protect against mishaps and letting others make decisions for you. \*\*

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Do whatever you can to help those less fortunate than you. Pitching in and offering your time, expertise and wisdom will put you in a prime position to figure out how you can get ahead professionally. \*\*\*\*\*

# Dear Abby

by Abigail Van Buren

PATIENT'S ROMANTIC FEELINGS FOR DOCTOR CAUSE CONFUSION

**DEAR ABBY:** I started seeing a new doctor six months ago to be treated for a serious medical condition. I respect his medical opinion and the fact that many doctors treating my condition would be judgmental and lack compassion. He has offered both.

While I appreciate his skills as a doctor, I have started to develop romantic feelings for him. I realize telling him would put him in an awkward position and possibly jeopardize our professional relationship because of the ethical implications. I don't want to move on to another doctor because I value his services. How do I get over it? -- ANONYMOUSLY IN LOVE

**DEAR IN LOVE:** Your romantic feelings for your doctor are not as unusual as you may think. When a person needs ongoing medical care as you do, it's natural to feel vulnerable and dependent. When that happens, something called "transference" can occur. The emotions associated with one person -- such as a parent -- become transferred to the doctor. If you keep this in mind, it may help you to better handle your emotions.

**DEAR ABBY:** I was adopted at a year old by loving parents. Through a lifetime of hard work, they have become wealthy. Their generosity allowed my husband and me to buy our first home and start married life debt-free.

My problem is, their community and friends, including some of my husband's and my own, often feel compelled to bring the subject up. I always thought it was rude to ask questions about other people's finances, and I don't know how to respond to their intrusive questions.

I'm very aware of our unique situation, and I'm extremely grateful to my parents for the generosity we have received. How do I respond to friends and acquaintances when they bring up such a sensitive subject? -- GRATEFUL IN CALIFORNIA

**DEAR GRATEFUL:** Remember this. You do not have to answer every question that is asked of you. When questions about your home or finances are raised, reply, "That's very personal. My parents are generous, and my husband and I are grateful." PERIOD!

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband and I disagree about how to handle taking our children shopping with us. I believe that, especially while our children are small (they are 3 and 5), the adult with them should keep them in sight at all times, or at least the majority of the time. If a child moves out of eyesight, the adult should find them within a minute. Are there guidelines on what is appropriate by age or developmental stage on this issue? -- HELICOPTER MOM AND FREE RANGE DAD

**DEAR HELICOPTER MOM:** Your husband is an optimist, while you are a realist. Common sense should prevail. When you take your children to a public place, they should remain under your or your husband's supervision at all times until they are aware enough that they can't be lured away by a stranger, and big enough to fight off a predator.

\*\*

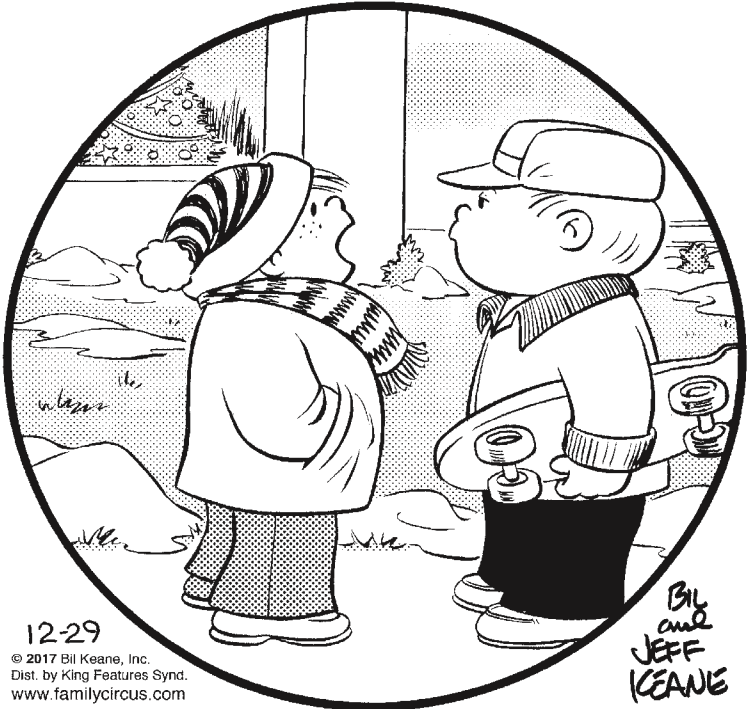
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12/29 PEAK PERFORMANCE By Timothy E. Parker

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61					62						63			
64					65						66			


THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane



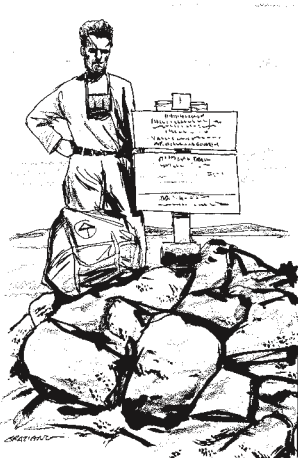
12-29  
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"My mom is mad 'cause my dad gave her a blender. She says she wanted one but not for Christmas."

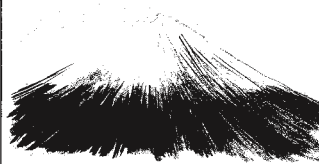
Ripley's Believe It or Not!



CORNFLAKES  
HAVE  
MORE GENES  
THAN  
HUMANS!



THE FIRST PERSON  
TO HIKE THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL  
LATER BECAME THE OLDEST WHEN  
HE HIKE IT AGAIN AT AGE 79.  
Submitted By Van Paulin, W. Lafayette, OH.



JAPAN'S  
MOUNT FUJI  
HAS  
FREE WI-FI!

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Calvin & Hobbes®



WHAP!



???

by Bill Watterson



I'M GLAD TO SEE  
*YOU'RE* INSIDE.



IT'S HANDY NOT TO HAVE  
BOOTS AND A COAT TO  
TAKE OFF.

PEANUTS®

by Charles M. Schultz



THIS IS OUR  
"HAPPY NEW  
YEAR" DANCE..



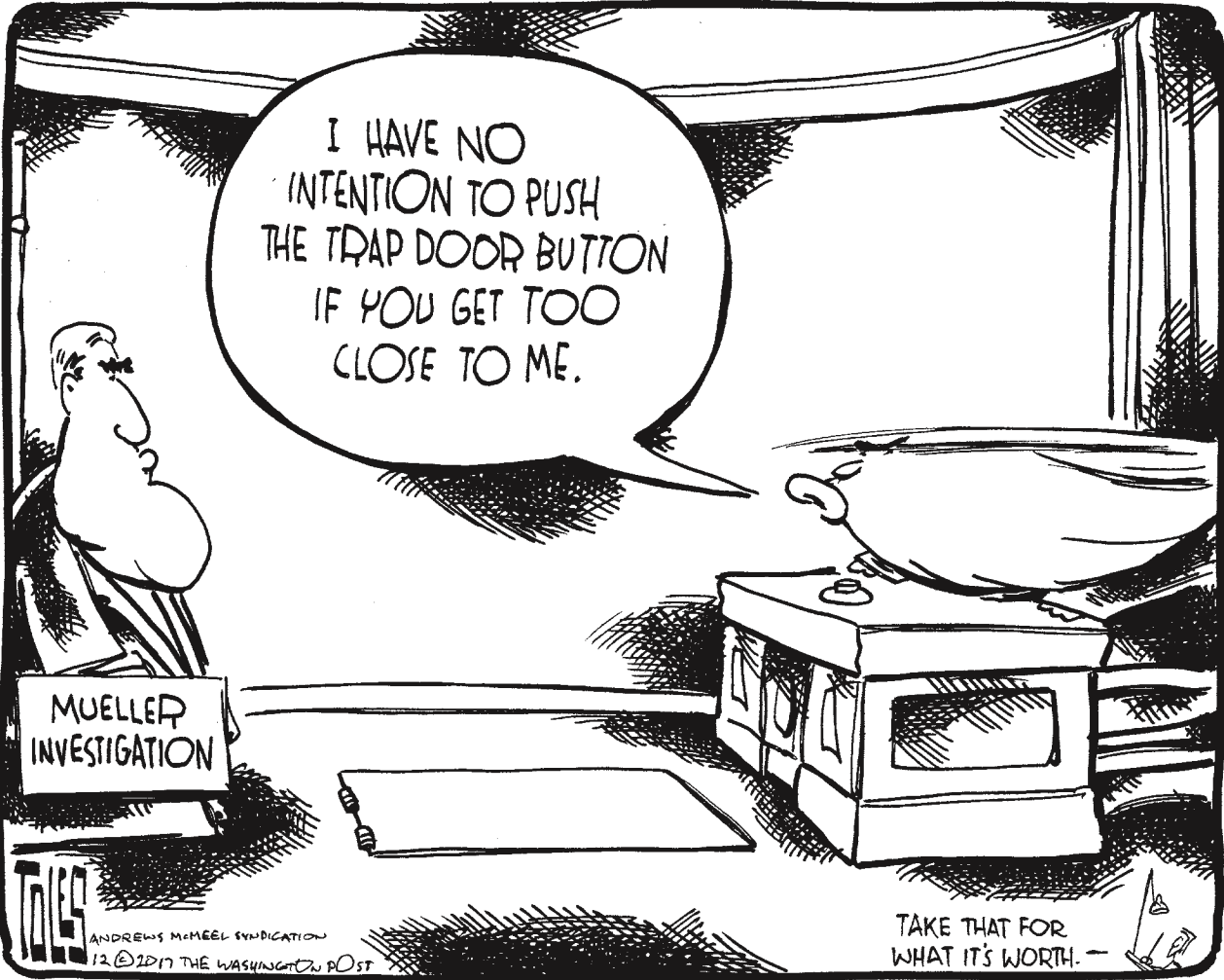
IT SYMBOLIZES OUR BEST  
WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL  
YEAR TO ALL CREATURES...



EXCEPT CATS!



HEE HEE HEE HEE!



I HAVE NO  
INTENTION TO PUSH  
THE TRAP DOOR BUTTON  
IF YOU GET TOO  
CLOSE TO ME.

MUELLER  
INVESTIGATION

TAKE THAT FOR  
WHAT IT'S WORTH.

12-29-17 THE WASHINGTON POST

ZIGGY®



...I SUPPOSE  
IT WAS ONLY  
A MATTER  
OF TIME!

COMING  
SOON  
HARRY  
POTTER  
VS.  
ALIEN

12/29

Hagar the Horrible®

by Chris Brown



THE DARK AGES! CAN  
THEY GET ANY *DARKER*?



ONE CAN  
HOPE

GARFIELD®

by Jim Davis



DO YOU HAVE ANY  
RESOLUTIONS FOR  
THE NEW YEAR,  
GARFIELD?

NOPE



YOU CAN'T IMPROVE  
ON PERFECTION



THACK

Sudoku Pacific

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

	4			9	6	8	1	
		8	4	3			5	6
				1				
		2			8			
	9	3		6		5	8	
			5			6		
				8				
4	7			5	1	3		
	5	1	3	4			6	

12/29

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Thursday's Puzzle Answer

12/28

5	6	4	8	7	2	3	9	1
8	9	2	6	3	1	4	5	7
7	3	1	5	4	9	2	8	6
2	4	8	7	9	6	1	3	5
6	7	9	3	1	5	8	2	4
3	1	5	4	2	8	6	7	9
9	2	6	1	5	3	7	4	8
4	8	3	9	6	7	5	1	2
1	5	7	2	8	4	9	6	3

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# NEW YEARS EVE

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**FEATURING**



**TUI & MAILE  
LETULI**



**JONITTA FRUEAN**



**MAL LAVATA'I**



Samoa Musika Foundation

Other Performers: Banned from the Sun (BFTS), Ulale Pusi Ulale, Failauga Peke Anoa'i, and other guest artist...

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