



**SAN ANTONIO:** Los Angeles Lakers center Tarik Black (28) reaches for a rebound between San Antonio Spurs defenders LaMarcus Aldridge, left, and Kawhi Leonard (2) during the first half of an NBA basketball game. —AP

# SPURS DEMOLISH SLUMPING LAKERS

**LOS ANGELES:** Kawhi Leonard poured in 31 points in just three quarters as the San Antonio Spurs dominated in every facet of play Thursday with an emphatic 134-94 blowout of the Los Angeles Lakers. San Antonio's 134 points were a season high, as were the 72 points scored by the Spurs in the first half and the overall margin of victory of 40 points. Pau Gasol added 22 points for San Antonio, while LaMarcus Aldridge and Tony Parker added 13 each, all in just three quarters of the lopsided game.

The Spurs also got 12 points from Jonathan Simmons and 10 from DeJuan Murray and a game-high 12 rebounds from Dewayne Dedmon. San Antonio was a bad mood heading into Thursday's home game after losing by three points to the Milwaukee Bucks on Tuesday. The Spurs took out their frustrations on a meek Laker team as four of San Antonio's starters finished in double figures at AT&T Center.

"I respect the way the Spurs played tonight—granted we didn't put up a ton of fight—but it's beautiful to see championship teams and the way they came out after one loss," Lakers coach Luke Walton said. "How (that loss) made them play and how sharp they were—there's a lot to learn from being in this game, from watching them. I didn't think we showed up to meet the challenge." All 13 players who took the floor for San Antonio scored, and the Spurs (31-8) outshot Los Angeles 60 percent to 41 percent.

"You always want to handle a loss by bouncing back the next night," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said. The lowly Lakers dropped to 15-28 on the season. They were once the "Showtime" darlings of the NBA but have been on a steady downward spiral ever since the passing of club owner and team architect Jerry Buss in 2013. The Lakers were led Thursday by Julius Randle's 22 points, but the rest of Los Angeles' starters managed just 20 total points.

## **KNICKS 104, BULLS 89**

Carmelo Anthony had 23 points, nine rebounds and six

assists, Derrick Rose and Joakim Noah delivered big games against their former team, and the New York Knicks beat the short-handed Chicago Bulls 104-89 on Thursday night. Rose scored 17 points in his return to Madison Square Garden after skipping the last game here, and Noah finished with 12 points and 15 rebounds as the Knicks snapped a three-game losing streak. Rookie forward Mindaugas Kuzminskas had a season-high 19 points. The Knicks bounced back from a loss at the buzzer in Philadelphia on Wednesday to win for the first time this season on the second night of back-to-back games. Dwyane Wade scored 22 for the Bulls, who were missing star swingman Jimmy Butler, Nikola Mirotic and Denzel Valentine, all because of illness. They dropped their third straight. Playing without starting forward Kristaps Porzingis, New York won for just the second time in 11 games.

## **WARRIORS 127, PISTONS 107**

Klay Thompson returned from a one-game absence for rest and had 23 points as Golden State got more balanced scoring to beat Detroit. Stephen Curry scored 24 points, Kevin Durant had 25 points, nine assists and six rebounds, and Draymond Green dished out 13 assists for his fifth game in the last eight in double digits. Marcus Morris scored 21 points to lead the Pistons. Curry, Durant and Thompson scored at least 20 points in the same game for the 13th time this season. The Warriors notched their NBA-leading 27th game with 30 or more assists and won their seventh straight at home against the Pistons dating to Feb. 27 2010.

## **MAVERICKS 113, SUNS 108**

Deron Williams had 23 points and 15 assists, and Dallas defeated Phoenix in the fourth NBA regular-season game played in Mexico. Williams shot 9 for 15 from the field in a matchup of struggling Western Conference teams. Harrison Barnes added 22 points and Dirk Nowitzki scored 18 for the Mavericks, who broke a three-game losing streak. Devin

Booker scored 29 of his 39 points in the fourth quarter for the Suns. Tyson Chandler had 14 points and 19 rebounds against his former team. Dallas and Phoenix are tied for the worst record in the West at 12-27. The game was the first of two that the Suns will play south of the border. Mexico is hosting two games in one season for the first time in NBA history.

## **NUGGETS 140, PACERS 112**

Nikola Jokic had 22 points and 10 rebounds, and Denver emphatically ended a five-game losing streak by beating Indiana in the NBA's Global Games series at O2 Arena. Wilson Chandler added 21 points, and Danilo Gallinari had 18 for the Nuggets. They outscored the Pacers 39-20 in the third quarter, shooting 73.7 percent in the period to put it away. Denver trailed only once, when Kevin Seraphin gave the Pacers a 31-30 lead early in the second quarter, and finished with a season high in scoring. CJ Miles had 20 points, and Jeff Teague added 14 points and nine assists for Indiana. The Pacers had won five in a row, scoring at least 120 points in each victory.

## **PELICANS 104, NETS 95**

Tyreke Evans scored a season-high 29 points and New Orleans, playing without All-Star big man Anthony Davis, handed Brooklyn its eighth straight defeat. Terrence Jones added 24 points and 12 rebounds for New Orleans (16-24), which improved to 6-13 on the road by winning both games during its stay in New York City. Jrue Holiday scored 21 and Solomon Hill had 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Pelicans, who closed the game on a 13-1 run. Davis sat out with a bruised left hip sustained during Monday night's win over the Knicks at Madison Square Garden. He is second in the NBA in scoring, averaging 29.1 points, and ranks sixth with more than 12 rebounds per game. Brook Lopez led the Nets with 20 points, but Brooklyn (8-30) has dropped 13 of 14 and owns the worst record in the league. — Agencies