

GYMNASTICS

ACCUSERS ASK USOC TO DECERTIFY USA GYMNASTICS

LOS ANGELES: An attorney representing more than 70 women gymnasts who say a national team doctor sexually abused them called upon the US Olympic Committee (USOC) on Thursday to decertify USA Gymnastics as the sport's governing body.

The move by lawyer John Manly came as the USOC board of directors met in Los Angeles amid speculation officials want USA Gymnastics president Steve Penny to resign.

"The reasons for our request for the decertification of USA Gymnastics by the USOC are straightforward, clear and indeed required under federal law," Manly said in a statement.

"Without question, the serial rape and molestation of hundreds of girls, by coaches, trainers and other USA Gymnastics' staff materially inhibits these

women's ability to participate in their sport and is discriminatory.

"If that is not enough to justify the decertification of USA Gymnastics, then what is?"

Asked on Twitter what such a move would mean, 1996 US Olympic gold medal gymnastics team member Dominique Moceanu—who at 14 was the youngest Olympic gold medalist ever—replied, "It means it's a clean slate. Everybody goes ... USOC appoints new governing body."

More than 50 alleged victims of Larry Nassar have filed lawsuits against USA Gymnastics in state and federal courts. Nassar, the national team doctor from 1996 to 2015, is in jail after being charged with criminal sexual conduct with a pre-teen and violating federal child pornography laws.

Nassar, who is jailed in Michigan, was charged last month on 36 counts of criminal sexual conduct. He has denied the claims by former US gymnasts, saying he only provided proper medical treatments. Manly called the notion of Penny's resignation being a sufficient punishment "too little too late."

CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS

While the USOC cannot fire Penny, it can bring pressure upon USA Gymnastics, whose board can dismiss Penny, who stands accused of failing to immediately report sex abuse allegations against Nassar brought to his attention in 2015.

In a letter to USOC president Larry Probst, Manly said the 80 criminal allegations of sexual abuse pending against Nassar are "despicable." —AFP

BASKETBALL

WESTBROOK TRIPLE-DOUBLE LEADS THUNDER OVER SPURS

OKLAHOMA CITY: Russell Westbrook had his 31st triple-double of the season to help the Oklahoma City Thunder beat the San Antonio Spurs 102-92 in the NBA on Thursday night. Westbrook had 23 points, 13 rebounds and 13 assists to match Wilt Chamberlain's 1967-68 campaign for the second-most triple-doubles in a season. Victor Oladipo scored 20 points, and Enes Kanter added 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Thunder. They snapped a four-game losing streak. Kawhi Leonard scored 19 points for the Spurs, who had won nine straight. San Antonio dropped two games behind the Golden State Warriors in the race for the best record in the NBA. Tony Parker, Manu Ginobili and Kyle Anderson sat out for the Spurs. Ginobili rested, Parker had back stiffness and Anderson had a sprained right knee.

PISTONS 106, CAVALIERS 101

Andre Drummond had 20 points and 16 rebounds, and



OKLAHOMA CITY: Oklahoma City Thunder center Enes Kanter grabs a rebound between San Antonio Spurs center Pau Gasol (16) and forward LaMarcus Aldridge (12) during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Thursday. Oklahoma City won 102-92. — AP

NBA results/standings

LA Lakers 122, Phoenix 110; Portland 114, Philadelphia 108 (OT); LA Clippers 114, Memphis 98; Oklahoma City 102, San Antonio 92; Detroit 106, Cleveland 101.

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	41	24	.631	-
Toronto	38	26	.594	2.5
NY Knicks	26	39	.400	15
Philadelphia	23	41	.359	17.5
Brooklyn	11	52	.175	29

Central Division

Cleveland	42	21	.667	-
Indiana	33	31	.516	9.5
Detroit	32	33	.492	11
Chicago	31	33	.484	11.5
Milwaukee	30	33	.476	12

Southeast Division

Washington	39	24	.619	-
Atlanta	35	29	.547	4.5
Miami	31	34	.477	9
Charlotte	28	36	.438	11.5
Orlando	24	41	.369	16

Western Conference

Northwest Division

Utah	41	24	.631	-
Oklahoma City	36	29	.554	5
Denver	29	35	.453	11.5
Portland	28	35	.444	12
Minnesota	26	37	.413	14

Pacific Division

Golden State	52	12	.813	-
LA Clippers	39	26	.600	13.5
Sacramento	25	39	.391	27
Phoenix	21	44	.323	31.5
LA Lakers	20	45	.308	32.5

Southwest Division

San Antonio	50	14	.781	-
Houston	44	21	.677	6.5
Memphis	36	29	.554	14.5
Dallas	27	36	.429	22.5
New Orleans	25	40	.385	25.5

Detroit scored the first 13 points of the fourth quarter before holding off injury-plagued Cleveland. LeBron James had 29 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists - and threw down over a half-dozen tremendous dunks - but the Cavaliers have now lost three straight and five of their last seven. J.R. Smith played for Cleveland after a thumb injury had kept him out since December, but Kevin Love and Kyle Korver were out, and the Cavaliers lost Andrew Bogut earlier in the week with a broken leg. Cleveland led 80-73 after finishing the third quarter with a 22-5 run, but the Pistons started strong in the fourth, and a tip-in by Reggie Jackson gave Detroit an 82-80 advantage. Kyrie Irving had 27 points for Cleveland.

CLIPPERS 114, GRIZZLIES 98

Austin Rivers scored 20 points and Chris Paul added 19 points and seven assists to lead Los Angeles past Memphis. The Clippers solidified their hold on the fifth seed in the Western Conference, while Memphis continued a skid that has reached four straight. J.J. Redick scored 15 points, Jamal Crawford and Blake Griffin had 14 apiece, and Griffin added 12 rebounds. Marc Gasol led Memphis with 20 points, and Zach Randolph had 18 points and 11 rebounds.

LAKERS 122, SUNS 110

D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points, including six 3-pointers, as the Los Angeles Lakers snapped an eight-game losing streak by beating Phoenix. Jordan Clarkson added 19 for the Lakers, who stopped an 11-game skid in Phoenix, where they hadn't won since Jan. 5, 2011. Los Angeles lost 137-101 in its previous game in Phoenix on Feb. 15, the most one-sided Suns win in the series' history. The Lakers took the lead to start the second half and were up by as many as 21 Thursday night. A late Phoenix run made it a seven-point game before Los Angeles scored the final five points. Devin Booker scored 23 for the Suns. Marquese Chriss added 18, and T.J. Warren finished with 17.

TRAIL BLAZERS 114, 76ERS 108 OT

Jusuf Nurkic had a career-high 28 points and 20 rebounds as the Portland Trail Blazers beat the Philadelphia 76ers in overtime. Nurkic also had eight assists and six blocks in Portland's fourth straight win. Damian Lillard finished with 24 points but did not make a 3-pointer, snapping a streak of 42 games with at least one 3. Philadelphia rookie Dario Saric had a season-best 28 points, while Robert Covington added 24 in the 76ers' sixth loss in seven games. — AP