

## Sports

## Photo of the day



Cooper Webb competes in the AMA Supercross Series in Daytona Beach, Florida. —Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

# Mitchell's hot start fuels Jazz, Clippers beat 76ers

## Popovich third NBA coach to reach 1,300 regular-season wins

LOS ANGELES: Utah's Donovan Mitchell scored 35 points and handed out seven assists as the Jazz boosted their NBA-leading record Saturday with a 126-110 victory over the Memphis Grizzlies. With Mike Conley taking the night off to rest a hamstring injury, Mitchell took charge early. He made his first five shots on the way to scoring 28 first-half points — his most ever in a half.

He erased an early 8-2 deficit with a three-pointer and a drive to the basket for a three-point play, and his three-pointer at the buzzer to end the half put the Jazz up 70-53. Jordan Clarkson came off the bench to add 28 points and Rudy Gobert added 16 points and 14 rebounds for Utah, who pushed the lead to as many as 30 in the third quarter.

Joe Ingles added 15 points and seven assists and the Jazz notched their fifth straight victory and 33rd of the season. The Los Angeles Clippers, chasing Utah and the Phoenix Suns in the West, won their fifth straight game, 122-112 over the Eastern Conference-leading Philadelphia 76ers.

Kawhi Leonard led the Clippers with 28 points, Paul George added 24 and Terrence Mann chipped in 23 off the bench. "Just being aggressive," Mann said of the key to the Clippers' win over the Sixers, who were missing star big man Joel Embiid as he continues to recover from a bone bruise in his knee. "Guys getting downhill, setting the tempo right off the jump. That's what we've been doing for the past five games."

In New Orleans, Zion Williamson scored 38 points and the Pelicans rallied to beat the Dallas Mavericks 112-103. The Mavericks, missing ailing forward Luka Doncic and center Kristaps Porzingis who rested on the second night of a back-to-back, led 95-94 with less than four minutes remaining. But the Pelicans roared home on an 18-8 scoring run that included 10 points from Williamson.

Two days after being traded by Orlando, center Nikola Vucevic made his Chicago debut in the Bulls' 120-104 loss to the San Antonio Spurs. Vucevic scored 21 points with nine rebounds and four assists, struggling defensively against Jakob Poeltl who led the Spurs with 20 points, nine rebounds and three blocked shots.

DeMar DeRozan added 17 points for the Spurs, who ended a four-game losing streak and made coach Gregg Popovich just the third NBA coach to reach 1,300 regular-season victories after Don Nelson (1,335) and Lenny Wilkens (1,332).

## Barty, Tsitsipas, Rublev advance in Miami as Halep withdraws

MIAMI: World number one Ashleigh Barty looked sharp in a straight-sets victory over Jelena Ostapenko Saturday at the Miami Open, where men's second seed Stefanos Tsitsipas cruised past lucky loser Damir Dzumhur. Defending champion Barty defeated the former French Open champion from Latvia 6-3, 6-2 to set up a fourth-round clash with former world number one Victoria Azarenka.

Greece's Tsitsipas — ranked fifth in the world but seeded second behind world No. 2 Daniil Medvedev in the Masters 1000 event that is missing top-ranked Novak Djokovic, world number three Rafael Nadal and No. 4 Dominic Thiem as well as Roger Federer and Andy Murray — was untroubled in a 6-1, 6-4 over Bosnian lucky loser Damir Dzumhur. Tsitsipas, coming off a runner-up finish at Acapulco last week, hit 10 of his 18 winners off his forehand and committed only nine unforced errors as he relentlessly pressured his opponent.

"There isn't much I can tell you. It was a great match," Tsitsipas said. "I started the match very strong, breaking him twice and taking a big lead in the score, and I think the things worked out by themselves after that. "I created lot of opportunities with my serve, finding the right angles and executing it perfectly. Even with my second serve I felt like I did a lot of damage, not giving him a chance to press first and apply pressure with his shots."

The three-time Grand Slam semi-finalist next faces Japanese 28th seed Kei Nishikori, who outlasted Slovenia's Aljaz Bedene 7-6 (8/6), 5-7, 6-4. Rain was the only thing



SALT LAKE CITY: Rudy Gobert of the Utah Jazz dunks against the Memphis Grizzlies on March 27, 2021 at Vivent Arena in Salt Lake City, Utah. —AFP

New York's Alec Burks and RJ Barrett scored 21 points to lead the Knicks to a 102-96 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks, who were without two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Giannis Antetokounmpo. Antetokounmpo, nursing a sprained left knee, was joined on the sideline starters Khrist Middleton, Jrue Holiday and Donte DiVincenzo.

The Knicks, without Julius Randle because of a thigh injury, also lost center Mitchell Robinson to a broken right foot in the first quarter. Robinson, only recently returned from a broken hand, was hurt when he came down awkwardly while trying to defend Brook Lopez.

He stayed in the game for a few more minutes before limping off, the Knicks announcing the X-ray results shortly thereafter. "Mitchell's been terrific for us," coach Tom Thibodeau said. "You hate to see it. You feel for Mitchell because all the work that he's put in."

### Beal exits, Wizards win

The Washington Wizards, fueled by a triple-double from Russell Westbrook, beat the Detroit Pistons 106-92, but also saw league scoring leader Bradley Beal exit early with a right hip injury. Westbrook scored 19 points with 19 rebounds and 10 assists, his 15th triple-double of the season matching the franchise record established by Darrell Walker. Beal finished with 17 points and six assists, before departing after a hard fall in the third quarter.

One day after blowing a 19-point third quarter lead in a loss to Minnesota, the Houston Rockets bounced back with a resounding 129-107 victory over the Timberwolves. Kevin Porter scored 25 points for the Rockets and Kelly Olynyk added 16 in his first game for Houston since arriving from Miami in the trade for Victor Oladipo. —AFP



MIAMI GARDENS: Ashleigh Barty of Australia returns a shot during her women's singles third round match against Jelena Ostapenko of Latvia on Day 6 of the 2021 Miami Open presented by Itau at Hard Rock Stadium on Saturday in Miami Gardens, Florida. —AFP

that slowed down men's fourth seed Andrey Rublev in a 6-1, 6-2 victory over American Tenny Sandgren. Rublev, up 6-1, 5-2, was unable to convert three match points before the players had to leave the court for the second of two rain delays, but he wasted no time in closing out the match when play resumed.

Rublev, who took his tour-leading number of 2021 match

wins to 17, didn't face a break point, his dominance on full display as he held serve for a 4-1 lead in the opening set with a love game that lasted just 59 seconds. Canadian Denis Shapovalov also had to wait out the delay to finish off a hard-fought 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 6-4 victory over Ilya Ivashka. Shapovalov survived 11 double faults but persevered to win in three hours and 18 minutes.

## Star-studded Nets land free agent Aldridge

NEW YORK: The Brooklyn Nets, already stocked with the superstar trio of Kevin Durant, Kyrie Irving and James Harden, have landed NBA free agent forward LaMarcus Aldridge, ESPN reported Saturday. The US sports network, citing Aldridge's agent, said the seven-time All-Star was headed to Brooklyn after completing his buyout with San Antonio, which came after the Spurs failed to trade him before the league deadline on Thursday.

The Miami Heat were reported to be the "front-runner" to land Aldridge, but agent Jeff Schwartz told ESPN on Saturday that he would sign with Brooklyn, who are in second place in the Eastern Conference behind the Philadelphia 76ers. The Nets had already nabbed free agent Blake Griffin, the former number one NBA draft pick, after his exit from the Detroit Pistons.

The Spurs confirmed this month that they had "mutually agreed" to part ways with 35-year-old Aldridge, who had been with the team for six seasons. "He's been a great teammate, there was no problem there," coach Gregg Popovich said at the time. "We just think this is a win-win for both LaMarcus and the club."

San Antonio explored trade options but couldn't get a deal done before the deadline. Aldridge averaged 13.7 points and 4.5 rebounds in 25.9 minutes per game this season. But he missed eight of San Antonio's last 11 games before the All-Star break with hip and quadriceps injuries and came off the bench on the other three. —AFP

## Chen wins third straight figure skating world title as Hanyu slips

STOCKHOLM: American Nathan Chen landed five quadruple jumps in the men's free skate on Saturday to overhaul faltering Olympic champion Yuzuru Hanyu and collect a third consecutive world title. Chen, who started the day in third, was impeccable in his routine, scoring 222.03 for a total of 320.88 to apply pressure to the Japanese pair, 17-year-old Kagiyama Yuma and Hanyu, who followed.

Kagiyama scored a personal best of 190.81 for 291.77, but last man Hanyu put his hand on the ice at the end of his first two jumps and scored 182.20 for a total of 289.18. Chen added to his 2018 and 2019 world titles. The 2020 event in Montreal was cancelled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's amazing, the fact I'm able to be here at this world championships after this unprecedented year, it's amazing, I'm elated right now," Chen said on the ice at the victory ceremony. Chen needed to make up eight points on Hanyu who was skating last, and opted for a routine that included a daunting five quads.

"I just tried to remind myself to enjoy being here," Chen said. "I don't know how many more world championships I'll be able to compete at, so just every single one that I can be at just to embrace this moment. I'm very lucky to be here and I remind myself that and in doing that I'm able to be a lot more calm."

Chen landed all his quads with elegant athleticism, starting with a Lutz and following that with a flip, a Salchow and two toe loops. Chasing Chen's huge score, Hanyu, the double Olympic champion, wobbled several times to slide to third.

Kagiyama, skating to the "Avatar" soundtrack, succeeded with a quad Salchow, quad toe-triple toe and quad toe as well as four more strong triples. He only stumbled on a triple Axel and triple loop. "I wanted to make sure I landed on the podium. That's what I've trained for," said Kagiyama, making his debut at the worlds.

For Hanyu, it was back to training to iron out the problems in his performance. "It was very exhausting and it was like I was losing my balance," said the Olympic champion. "I realized that there were a lot of jumps one after another that were not clean."

He added: "I don't know when the next competition might be, but I just want to go back to practice, to train on my quad Axel and continue to work to land it." In ice dancing, Russia's Victoria Sinitsina and Nikita Katsalov claimed the title, filling the vacuum caused by the absence of four-time winners Gabriella Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron. European champions Sinitsina and Katsalov won with a score of 221.17 points.

America's Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donohue (214.71) were second with Canada's Piper Gilles and Paul Poirier (214.35) filling out the podium. French stars Papadakis and Cizeron opted to skip the tournament to focus on preparing for the Winter Olympics in Beijing next year. —AFP



STOCKHOLM: US' Nathan Chen performs during the men's free skating event at the ISU World Figure Skating Championships in Stockholm on Saturday. —AFP