

Sports

South Korean rising star Kim wins Players title



Pak win thriller for first Windies series victory



TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2017

IOC 2024 BID INSPECTORS IMPRESSED AFTER PARIS TOUR

Page 19



OAKLAND, California: Kawhi Leonard #2 of the San Antonio Spurs throws up a shot against the Golden State Warriors during Game One of the NBA Western Conference Finals at ORACLE Arena on Sunday. — AP

WARRIORS RALLY TO STUN SPURS

SAN FRANCISCO: Stephen Curry scored 40 points and Kevin Durant 34 to power a stunning second-half comeback that lifted Golden State over San Antonio 113-111 Sunday in an NBA playoff thriller. The Spurs squandered a 25-point lead and might have lost star forward Kawhi Leonard, who left the game for good with a sprained left ankle early in the third quarter.

Golden State seized a 1-0 edge in the best-of-seven Western Conference final, which continues Tuesday in Oakland. The winner plays defending champion Cleveland, Boston or Washington in the NBA Finals. "We just controlled what we could control and played smarter," Curry said. "It's the playoffs. You've got to take a win any way you can get it."

Curry credited the reversal of fortunes in the dying minutes to "aggressiveness, paying attention to details and obviously we've got to make shots." The much-anticipated matchup between the most productive NBA scoring attack of Golden State, which led the league with 67 wins, and the top NBA defense of the Spurs, next best at 61 wins, met high expectations.

Kawhi Leonard scored 18 of his 26 points in the first half and LaMarcus Aldridge added 17 of his 28 in the opening two quarters as the Spurs seized a 62-42 half-time lead. But Leonard left the contest for good with 7:53 to play in the third quarter, limping to the locker room with a left ankle sprain. "Just very painful because I tweaked it before," Leonard said. "It's hard to tell (about

Tuesday). I definitely couldn't go (the rest of Sunday's game). But we'll see how I get better each day."

Leonard is expected to undergo an MRI on Monday and his status for game two is questionable. The Warriors responded by scoring the next 18 points, pulling within 78-73 on Durant's fast break slam dunk. "We were smart when we got out and pushed the basketball. We were disciplined when we ran," said Warriors assistant coach Mike Brown, guiding the team in place of idled coach Steve Kerr.

The Warriors were given a half-time pep talk by Kerr, who has given way to Brown since the second playoff game due to complications from back surgery. Curry scored 19 points in the third quar-

ter to ignite the fightback, going 5-of-6 from 3-point range, but the Warriors still trailed 90-81 entering the fourth quarter. Curry being treated on the bench for a right arm issue.

HEROICS BY DURANT, CURRY

Two Durant 3-pointers and a dunk trimmed the Spurs' lead to 96-93. And after two baskets by Shaun Livingston and some Spurs misses, Durant dunk with 4:09 remaining put Golden State ahead 101-100, their first lead since 8-7 in the opening minutes. Draymond Green's three-point play put the Warriors ahead 109-106 and after an Aldridge miss, Curry made a driving layup to lift the Warriors ahead 111-106.

Argentina's Manu Ginobili responded with a

dunk for the Spurs and Australian Patty Mills, starting in place of injured Tony Parker, made a steal and two key free throws to pull San Antonio within 111-100. Curry made a shot over Aldridge for the final Warrior points and a 113-110 edge, Aldridge missed a tying 3-pointer but Mills was fouled with a half-second remaining. He made the first free throw but missed the second, hoping for a game-tying tip in basket.

Instead, the Warriors swatted away the ball and the clock expired. We had to "be aggressive and be decisive," Curry said. "In the first half we were trying to do too much. We weren't willing to take ugly shots. I got it going in the third, KD got it done in the fourth, everybody contributed and we got it done." — AFP

RITCHIE STRIKES AGAIN AS DUCKS EVEN SERIES

ANAHEIM, United States: Nick Ritchie scored the eventual winning goal as the Anaheim Ducks defeated the Nashville Predators 5-3 Sunday to even their Western Conference finals series at 1-1. Ritchie took a long pass off the boards and his shot glanced off the side of goalie Pekka Rinne's head into the net in front of a crowd of 17,000 at the Honda Center. "Ryan Getzlaf tipped it and that messed up their defense a bit. I just shot it at the net," he said.

It was the third goal of the playoffs for Ritchie, and while it allowed Anaheim to overcome another poor start, it wasn't the biggest one he has scored in this postseason. Ritchie also scored the winner in game seven against the Edmonton Oilers to advance the Ducks to the NHL semifinals. Sweden's Jakob Silfverberg, Sami Vatanen, Ondrej Kase and Antoine Vermette, into an empty net, also scored for the Ducks, who avoided going into an 0-2 hole for the second straight series with the win.

Filip Forsberg, James Neal and Ryan Johansen scored for the Predators, who continued their Cinderella run through the NHL postseason by winning game one in Anaheim. Game three of this series is scheduled for Tuesday in Nashville.

'HOPE THE KETCHUP BOTTLE IS OPEN'

The overachieving Predators have been going full steam through the postseason and it appeared for awhile on Sunday that they weren't going to take their foot off the gas. "Tonight's

response after getting down 2-0 is a character builder for our group," said Anaheim coach Randy Carlyle. Vatanen's goal came on the powerplay which has been weak part of the Ducks' game lately. "We haven't scored many goals on the powerplay so far, but let's hope the ketchup bottle is open now and we can keep scoring," said Finland's Vatanen.

A pair of Anaheim blunders allowed Nashville to take a 2-0 lead in the first 10 minutes of the game. Johansen opened the scoring on a breakaway after Ducks defenseman Hampus Lindholm got caught out of position after making an ill-time pinch at the Nashville blueline. The Predators took a 2-0 lead when Anaheim goalie John Gibson lost track of the puck and allowed Canadian Neal to get in behind him and score into an empty cage.

But the Ducks fought back, scoring two goals just 99 seconds apart to tie it 2-2. Vatanen ripped a shot over the shoulder of Rinne late in the first period and Silfverberg one-timed a beautiful pass from Rickard Rakell from in close just 39 seconds into the second. "They're a good team. They found a way to claw back," said forward Johansen. After the game Johansen accused Ducks forward Ryan Kesler of being dirty player. "It doesn't make sense how he plays the game. I am just trying to go out there and play hockey and it sucks when you get pulled a stick out of your groin every shift," said Johansen of American Kesler. — AFP



ANAHEIM, California: Nashville Predators' Mattias Ekholm (14) collides with Anaheim Ducks' Ondrej Kase (86) as they battle for the puck by the goal during the first period of Game 2 of the Western Conference final in the NHL hockey Stanley Cup playoffs on Sunday. — AP

FEDERER TO SKIP ROLAND GARROS

PARIS: Roger Federer has pulled out of this month's French Open as he feels he needs to avoid playing on clay this season in order to prolong his career. The Swiss, who defied logic to lift his 18th grand slam title at the Australian Open in January after being out of tennis for six months, will be absent from the clay-court major, which starts on May 28, for the second year running after missing last year's edition through injury.

"Regrettably, I've decided not to participate in the French Open," Federer said on his Facebook page yesterday. "I've been working really hard, both on and off the court, during the last month but in order to try and play on the ATP World Tour for many years to come, I feel it's best to skip the clay-court season this year and prepare for the grass and hard-court seasons," added the 35-year-old, who won his sole Roland Garros title in 2009.

"The start to the year has been magical for me but I need to recognize that scheduling will be the key to my longevity moving forward. Thus, my team and I concluded today that playing just one event on clay was not in the best interest of my tennis and physical preparation for the remainder of the season." — Reuters



Roger Federer