

25 Japan's Joseph among 26 invited to apply for All Blacks coach role

26 India's Pant currently 'one-trick pony': Jones

27 Lin Dan vows to plough on in pursuit of fading Olympic dream



LeBron sparks Lakers in comeback triumph

Nuggets' Harris, Millsap exit in win over Heat



CHICAGO: Wendell Carter Jr. #34 of the Chicago Bulls fights for the rebound against the Los Angeles Lakers at United Center in Chicago, Illinois. — AFP

CHICAGO: LeBron James registered a triple-double with 30 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists, and the Los Angeles Lakers stormed back from a 19-point second-half deficit for a 118-112 win over the host Chicago Bulls on Tuesday night. Quinn Cook added 17 points off the bench for Los Angeles, which won its sixth game in a row. Anthony Davis finished with 15 points, seven rebounds and three blocked shots in his return to his hometown. The Lakers outscored the Bulls 38-19 during the fourth quarter. Zach LaVine led the Bulls with 26 points on 9-for-18 shooting, adding seven rebounds and seven assists. Otto Porter Jr. and Coby White had 18 points apiece, and Wendell Carter Jr. posted a double-double with 11 points and 11 rebounds. Cook drained a 3-pointer from near the left corner to wipe out the huge second-half deficit as part of a 16-0 run that put the Lakers on top

96-93 with 8:12 to go in the fourth quarter.

CELTICS 119, CAVALIERS 113

Gordon Hayward highlighted his career high-tying 39-point performance by making all nine shots he attempted in the first half as Boston recorded a road victory at Cleveland. Hayward finished 17 of 20 from the field and added eight assists and seven rebounds to propel the Celtics to their fifth straight win. Kemba Walker went 6 of 8 from 3-point range to highlight his 25-point outing. Collin Sexton scored 21 points, Tristan Thompson added 19 and 13 rebounds and Kevin Love contributed 17 points and nine rebounds for the Cavaliers, who have lost three in a row.

HORNETS 122, PACERS 120 (OT)

Devonte' Graham, fouled on a 3-point shot attempt, made two of three free throws

to break a tie with 1.7 seconds left in overtime and cap a career-best scoring effort, giving Charlotte a victory over visiting Indiana. After Indiana's Jeremy Lamb forged the fourth tie of the extra session by hitting a 19-footer with 5.2 seconds remaining, Graham drew a foul from JaKarr Sampson outside the arc and calmly produced the game-winning points. Graham finished with 35 points off the bench, easily eclipsing his previous best of 24, set earlier this season. Brogdon finished with 31 points for the Pacers, two fewer than team leader T.J. Warren, who scored a season-high 33.

NUGGETS 109, HEAT 89

Jamal Murray scored 21 points, Will Barton had 15 points and 10 rebounds in his return to the lineup, and host Denver beat Miami by 20. Denver won without Millsap and Gary Harris for most of the second half.

Harris missed the entire second half due to a left ankle injury. Millsap was cut on his forehead in a third-quarter collision. He got it wrapped, came back and hit his free throws but then went to the locker room and did not return to the game. Jimmy Butler led Miami with 16 points. Kelly Olynyk had 13, Kendrick Nunn 11 and Justise Winslow and Meyers Leonard had 10 each for the Heat, whose three-game winning streak ended.

HAWKS 108, SPURS 100

Trae Young returned from an ankle injury to score 28 of his 29 points in the second half and help Atlanta beat visiting San Antonio. Young was 5-for-10 on 3-pointers and had 13 assists in his return. He scored 16 points in the fourth quarter. The Hawks were playing without power forward John Collins, who was suspended for 25

games for violation of the NBA anti-drug policy. San Antonio got 22 points from DeMar DeRozan, 17 points from Bryn Forbes and 16 from Patty Mills. Trey Lyles had a game-high 12 rebounds. The Spurs have lost three of their last four.

THUNDER 102, MAGIC 94

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 24 points, and Chris Paul added 20 as host Oklahoma City continued its dominance of Orlando. Gilgeous-Alexander shot 9 of 14 from the field, and Paul made clutch free throws down the stretch for the Thunder, who have won 14 of their past 17 encounters with Orlando. Aaron Gordon had 15 points and four other players finished with 13 for the Magic. Orlando, which fell to 0-3 on the road, also remained the lone NBA team that has yet to score 100 points in a game this season. — Reuters

Kuwait wins Gold in Asian shooting tourney

DOHA: Kuwaiti shooter Talal Al-Rashidi yesterday won the gold medal in the trap individuals' competition of the 14th Asian shooting tournament currently held in Qatar.

His fellow national Khaled Al-Mudhaf came second and the Kuwaiti champion, Nasser Al-Muqalled ranked third in the teams' trap competition. The Indian team came second, followed by the Qataris.

President of the Kuwaiti Shooting Club Duaij Al-Otaibi, in remarks to KUNA, expressed pride for this distinguished victory in this tournament involving 34 countries represented by top notch shooters. He dedicated it to



Talal Al-Rashidi

His Highness the Amir, His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the premier. The Kuwaiti shooter Al-Rashidi "won the third qualifying ticket for Kuwait for the Tokyo Olympic games after Kuwait won two tickets in previous tournaments," he added. — KUNA

France out to spoil Australian Fed Cup party

PERTH: France might be on Australian soil as they attempt to win a third Fed Cup tennis crown in Perth this weekend, but they feel right at home and brimming with confidence. Team captain Julien Benneteau has kept faith with the five women who sealed their semifinal win over Romania, led by Kristina Mladenovic, ranked 40 in the world.

She is backed by Caroline Garcia (45), Alize Cornet (60), Fiona Ferro (63) and Pauline Parmentier (122) as they target a first title since 2003. As well as an Australian team spearheaded by world number one Ashleigh Barty and veteran Sam Stosur, they will have to deal with a crowd at Perth Arena willing their home

country towards a first title since 1974. But returning to the Australian west coast city has brought back fond memories for Mladenovic and Cornet, who separately led France to Hopman Cup titles before the mixed team event was axed this year for the new ATP Cup. Mladenovic hopes that bodes well.

"From the first time I stepped on the court yesterday, I had such great memories and great vibes," Mladenovic, who partnered Richard Gasquet to win the Hopman Cup in 2017, told reporters on Wednesday.

"It's definitely an advantage when you know the court and where you've won in the past. "When you've won a tough competition somewhere it's always a great place for you where you feel confident and you feel like you can repeat the story," she added.

Cornet won the Hopman Cup with Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in 2014. Garcia also represented France at the tournament, in 2016 when Australia won. Seven-time Fed Cup champions Australia hold a 5-1 record over two-time winners France, although the French

triumphed in the most recent tie between the two nations in 2000.

While the odds might be stacked in Australia's favour, Mladenovic said her team had the advantage of playing a Fed Cup final before, in 2016, and that could prove invaluable. Mladenovic, Garcia and Cornet all featured in that tie, which they agonisingly lost 3-2 to the Czech Republic.

"Even though the last one was at home, I still think it's a big advantage to know how it feels to be up there with all the pressure," Mladenovic said. "I'm optimistic and positive about this aspect."

France, who also won the Fed Cup in 1997, qualified for the final with a thrilling 3-2 win over Romania in Rennes in spite of losing two singles matches to Simona Halep.

Garcia and Parmentier both won in the other singles to set up a deciding doubles match in which Garcia and Mladenovic beat Halep and Monica Niculescu. Benneteau has yet to indicate who will play in Perth on Saturday and Sunday. — AFP