

Embiid dominates as Sixers beat Clippers

Utah rallies without Mitchell • Durant powers Nets past Hornets

LOS ANGELES: Joel Embiid scored 36 points and grabbed 14 rebounds as the NBA East-leading Philadelphia 76ers snapped the Los Angeles Clippers' seven-game winning streak with a 106-103 win on Friday.

Embiid became the first Philadelphia player since 2006 to score 35-plus points in three straight games as the Cameroonian center has carried the offensive load since returning to the starting lineup two weeks ago.

Over the past half dozen games Embiid is averaging over 30 points and nine-plus rebounds per game with his best performance coming Wednesday when he ran roughshod over the Brooklyn Nets for 39 points and 13 boards.

But it is in the last three that Embiid has really shined. The last Sixer to score more than 35 points in three straight contests was Allen Iverson in 2006. Embiid heard muted chants of "MVP, MVP" on Friday from the crowd of 4,100 at the Wells Fargo Center, the number of spectators limited due to COVID-19 health restrictions in Philadelphia.

"I don't think teams really know what to do when guarding him," teammate Ben Simmons said of Embiid. "I think he's clearly the MVP this season. He's been so dominant. I don't know how to stop him."

Furkan Korkmaz finished with 18 points on five-of-12 shooting from beyond the arc as Philadelphia snapped Los Angeles' seven-game win streak. Simmons added 12 points, nine rebounds and six assists, and Danny Green had 11 points and seven assists in the win.

Paul George paced the Clippers with

37 points, nine rebounds and six assists. Kawhi Leonard missed his fourth straight game for the Clippers with a sore right foot. "I thought we did a good job," Clippers coach Tyrone Lue said. "Overall, I like the way we fought and competed."

Philadelphia roared out to a 20-3 lead in the first quarter, but the Clippers clawed their way back in the third to cut the margin to just three points with 2:50 left. Los Angeles then took their first lead of the game in the fourth when Patrick Patterson nailed a three to make it 91-90. But the 76ers dominated the game on the boards and in the paint and shooting guard Shake Milton drained a three pointer with 3:38 remaining to make it 97-94 as they never trailed again.

In Salt Lake City, Utah's two-time All-Star Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points before leaving with a sprained right ankle early in the third quarter, but the Jazz still stormed back to beat the Indiana Pacers 119-111. Bojan Bogdanovic led the Jazz with 24 points, and Jordan Clarkson scored 18 as Utah won for the 13th time in 16 games.

Utah rallied for the win despite Mitchell leaving less than four minutes into the third quarter after landing awkwardly on this right foot while attempting to steal a pass. Mitchell walked gingerly to the dressing room with the help of some of his teammates. The Jazz said that Mitchell would undergo an MRI to determine the severity of the injury.

'Makes us go'

"Donovan is so important to our team," point guard Mike Conley said. "He's what makes us go. I was proud of



PHILADELPHIA: Joel Embiid of the Philadelphia 76ers reacts during a game against the Brooklyn Nets on Friday at Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. — AFP

the way we responded with Donovan going down."

Elsewhere, Norman Powell drained the clutch game winner with 22 seconds remaining as the short-handed Portland Trail Blazers came from behind to beat the host San Antonio Spurs 107-106. CJ McCollum scored 29 points while Powell delivered 22 for Portland, who had lost four of their last five games.

Blazers six-time all-star Damian Lillard sat out Friday's game due to a right hamstring injury. Lillard is having a standout season averaging 28.7 points and 7.7 assists. Anfernee Simons added 16 points for the Blazers, who snapped a two-game losing streak. DeMar DeRozan finished with 26 points and added 10 assists for the Spurs, who have lost two straight.

Also, Joe Harris scored 26 points and Kevin Durant poured in 25 points as the second place Brooklyn Nets defeated the Charlotte Hornets 130-115 to keep pace with the Sixers atop the standings. Josh Jackson scored a team-high 29 points as the Detroit Pistons beat the struggling Oklahoma City 110-104, handing the Thunder their ninth consecutive defeat. — AFP



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