



BROOKLYN: Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors drives to the basket during the game against the Brooklyn Nets on Tuesday at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York. — AFP

## Curry fires Warriors as Nets routed

### Dubs put offensive, defensive masterclass in key NBA clash

NEW YORK: Stephen Curry produced a three-point masterclass as the Golden State Warriors thrashed the Brooklyn Nets 117-99 to underscore their championship credentials on Tuesday. Curry led the scoring with 37 points — 27 of them from outside the arc — to give the Warriors an emphatic win on the road over the Nets and former Golden State teammate Kevin Durant.

It was a superb all-round effort from the Warriors, who combined potent offense with a steely defensive display marshalled by Draymond Green. Andrew Wiggins added 19 points and Jordan Poole 17 for the Warriors, who took the lead late in the first half and never relinquished it.

The Dubs' defense also had a big night, combining for eight blocks and four steals to keep the Nets offense at bay. James Harden led the Brooklyn scoring with 24 points while Durant finished with 19 points. Bruce Brown added 14.

The win cemented Golden State's lead at the top

of the Western Conference with a 12-2 record, and suggested that Steve Kerr's side are genuine championship contenders once more after missing out on the playoffs for the past two seasons.

"We're a good team and we're off to a great start," Curry said afterwards. "We're building our identity and our chemistry. It's a great defensive team that can also put the ball in the basket obviously." Curry was also pleased with the Warriors' performance following a 106-102 loss to Charlotte on Sunday.

"This was a nice bounce back game for us," he said. "It's great for our young guys to see what it means to bring this type of effort every single night.

Coming off a tough loss, how do you bounce back, how do you respond? Tonight we showed it."

#### 'Championship DNA'

Curry said the Warriors are also playing with a "chip on our shoulder" after difficult campaigns last season and in 2019-2020 hampered by injuries to key personnel as well as the departure of Durant to Brooklyn.

"Coming in healthy this year we wanted to set our own narrative and our own agenda, which was playing Warrior basketball," he said. "We have so many talented guys that haven't even been available yet so it's going to be a great year

for us to keep building. We have that chip on our shoulder — come out every single night because we have championship DNA but it's been two years since we've been able to prove it."

Brooklyn head coach Steve Nash meanwhile believes his team still have work to do if they are to challenge for an NBA title this season. The Nets have been beaten by a slew of heavyweight opponents this year, with Tuesday's loss following defeats to Milwaukee, Chicago and Miami.

"I just don't think we're in that category yet, we got a lot of work to do," Nash said. "We're trying to improve as a group, get better. Hopefully we can find a way to overcome some of our deficiencies by the end of the year. I think the guys have been great as far as buying in to what we want to do defensively. I think tonight it was a great lesson for us that we got to double down on some of our principles when the going gets tough." — AFP



We have  
championship  
DNA



### Lakers' Staples Center to be renamed in reported \$700m deal

LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Lakers' famed home, the Staples Center, is to be renamed next month in a deal worth a reported \$700 million with Singapore-based cryptocurrency platform Crypto.com, a statement said Tuesday. As of Christmas Day, the venue will be known as the Crypto.com Arena, a Staples Center statement said. It is the first time the 20,000-seat venue has undergone a name change since it opened in 1999.

Crypto.com is a company dedicated to promoting the use of cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin on a wider scale. The company's chief executive, Kris Marszalek, told the Financial Times the Staples Center deal

— which spans 20 years — would eventually be seen as "the moment that cryptocurrencies kind of crossed the cosmos into the mainstream."

"There may be some initial resistance to the idea of (the name) change, I think that's quite natural," he was quoted as saying. "But we are ready to work with the local community and prove to them that this is a change for the better and help build a better future for LA and the fans."

The Staples Center is owned by Anschutz Entertainment Group. AEG chief executive Dan Beckerman described the naming rights deal as a "match made in heaven" in comments to the Los



LOS ANGELES: In this file photo taken on March 14, 2021 people take photos in front of the Staples Center where the 63rd Annual Grammy Awards took place in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Angeles Times. While the rebranding would take effect on December 25, signage at the venue would only change in June 2022.

While the Staples Center is synonymous with the Lakers, the arena is also home to the

Los Angeles Clippers, the WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks and the National Hockey League's Los Angeles Kings. It is one of the best-known entertainment venues in the US alongside New York's Madison Square Garden. — AFP

### NBA to stage first preseason games in UAE

LOS ANGELES: The NBA will stage preseason games in the United Arab Emirates next year for the first time, the league said in a statement on Tuesday. The league said two exhibition games will take place in Abu Dhabi in October 2022, with teams involved to be confirmed at a later date.

"Hosting NBA and NBA 2K League games and events in Abu Dhabi builds on our commitment to growing basketball around the world," NBA deputy commissioner and chief operating officer Mark Tatum said in a statement. The games are part of a multi-year agreement between the NBA and Abu Dhabi's Department of Culture and Tourism.

"Through this partnership, we will bring the authentic NBA

experience to fans in the UAE and support basketball development in the region by providing more opportunities for young boys and girls to learn and play the game," Tatum added. The NBA has a long history of staging pre-season and regular season games outside North America.

The first official overseas game took place in 1978. Since then, games have been staged throughout Europe and Asia, with Japan hosting the first overseas regular season games in 1990, and China regularly staging games up until 2019. Relations between the NBA and China ruptured in October 2019 after former Houston Rockets chief Daryl Morey posted a tweet expressing solidarity with protesters in Hong Kong. — AFP