

## Sports

# Giannis scores 42, lifts Bucks over Celtics as Warriors rout Grizzlies

## Painful defeat as Morant limps out with knee injury

SAN FRANCISCO: Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 42 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and passed off eight assists to spark defending champion Milwaukee over Boston 103-101 on Saturday in the NBA playoffs. The Greek superstar center also had two blocked shots and two steals for the Bucks, who seized a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference second round series, which continues at Milwaukee on Monday. In Western Conference action, the Golden State Warriors went up 2-1 on the Memphis Grizzlies with a 142-112 blowout in San Francisco.

The defeat was even more painful for the Grizzlies as they saw star Ja Morant limp out with an apparent knee injury late in the fourth quarter. Morant had been sensational in defeat, scoring 34 points with three rebounds and seven assists. He appeared to hurt his knee in a tussle for a loose ball in the final period.

But the Grizzlies couldn't slow a Warriors team that connected on 63.1% of their shots, with Stephen Curry leading the way with 30 points and Jordan Poole adding 27 off the bench. Klay Thompson scored 21 for the Warriors, who had six players score in double figures in a comprehensive victory. Memphis got off to a hot start, leading by as many as 13 on the way to a 28-26 lead at the end of the first quarter.

But the Warriors responded and pulled ahead in the second quarter, building a 64-57 halftime lead that would have been bigger but for Morant's buzzer-beating three-pointer from halfcourt. The Warriors took a 21-point lead into the final quarter and were never threatened. "We were a little bit more composed," Curry said. "They got off to a hot start, like six threes in the first quarter. We had to settle in. We still had too many turnovers. "But our shot selection, moving the ball, let us settle in the game a little bit, helped our defense, helped us run away with the game."

In Milwaukee, the Celtics rallied from 14 points down to pull within 103-100 with 4.6 seconds remaining, and Boston's Marcus Smart sank the first of two free throws to lift the visitors within the final margin. Smart missed the second free throw with



MILWAUKEE: Giannis Antetokounmpo #34 of the Milwaukee Bucks is defended by Al Horford #42 of the Boston Celtics during the second half of Game Three of the Eastern Conference Semifinals at Fiserv Forum on May 07, 2022.— AFP

hopes of grabbing a rebound and making a tying inside shot, but Robert Williams missed a tip-in try and Al Horford's tip-in was ruled to have come after the final buzzer, giving Milwaukee the victory. "It was very close," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer acknowledged of the Horford tip-in.

Celtics coach Ime Udoka said the foul by Jrue Holiday on Smart, ruled before a shot attempt, should have been seen as coming in the act of shooting and brought three free throws, which would have given Smart a chance to tie the game at the line. "He was going into the shot," Udoka said. "Poor no-call. It's a shot. He's curling into a shot. Bad missed call." Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said the Bucks were "fortunate it was two free throws but we were not trying to foul him."

### Sloppy Celtics

Udoka also said it should not have come down to that. "We were sloppy in the third execution-wise and allowed them to get that lead, then battled back in the fourth," he said. "But we can play a lot better." Holiday had 25 points for the Bucks, while Lopez added 13 points and 10 rebounds. Antetokounmpo, meanwhile, bounced back from a poor shooting night in game two, connecting on 16 of 30 shots. "I know what my strengths are," Antetokounmpo said. "Just try to read what's in front of me and just play with my instincts." Jaylen Brown led Boston with 27 points and had 12 rebounds, while Horford had 22 points and 16 rebounds for the Celtics, but Jayson Tatum went 4-of-19 from the floor and scored only 10 points.— AFP



BUDAPEST: Team BikeExchange Jayco Mitchelton's British rider Simon Yates competes during the second stage of the Giro d'Italia 2022 cycling race, a 9.2 kilometers individual time trial in Budapest, Hungary, on May 7, 2022.— AFP

## Yates wins Giro time-trial, Van der Poel retains lead

BUDAPEST: British rider Simon Yates of BikeExchange-Jayco won stage two of the Giro d'Italia on Saturday, crossing the Budapest finish line of the 9.2km time-trial 03sec faster than Mathieu van der Poel, who retained the overall lead, while Tom Dumoulin was third. Dutch maverick Van der Poel holds onto the pink jersey by 11 seconds from Yates while the 2017 champion Dumoulin is third at 16sec after the inner-city run, the second of three stages in Hungary before a switch to Italy. Yates timed 9min 50sec round the picture-postcard run around the monuments and sights of the city with its Gothic parliament, the Danube river and thermal baths.

The circuit, with its tight bends and varying surfaces and gradients, made the stage a test of bike-handling skills, although the forecast rain held off. "It was pretty special," said van der Poel. "There were a lot of fans yesterday and again today again and I was surprised by the beauty of the city, to be honest." Third in the Giro last year, Yates has never been known for time-trialing, but with only 26km of the discipline on the 2022 route the mountains are the more important terrain.

"I've only won two time trials. I've done some good ones and some bad ones. But I'm sure this is my best," said Yates, who flew over the cobbled section where

others appeared to bounce around. This was Yates' fifth stage win on the Giro. "We'll celebrate this tonight but it's a tiny section of the Giro, with all those mountains coming up," he said. "It was a 12-minute effort today, from Etna on, it will be an hour-long effort. Of course, I'm thrilled to have gained time and not lost any."

Yates led the Giro for almost two weeks in 2018 before a late meltdown and has promised to be more patient this time round. Van der Poel was rueful of his narrow miss of a second stage win in two days following his triumph at the Visegrad Citadel Friday. "I would have loved to win, the difference between winning and second is very close, isn't it?" said the Alpecin-Fenix rider who wore the Tour de France yellow jersey, as race leader, for six days last year.

"The best time-trial specialists are not here," he said. "I knew there was a good chance of keeping the jersey. That was the main goal." "It's a discipline I don't really spend much time on, so I think I can be happy." Pre-Giro favorite Richard Carapaz came 19th at 28sec, while another fancied rider Romain Bardet was 17th at 24sec. Astana Qazaqstan's Miguel Angel Lopez and Mikel Landa of Bahrain-Victorious both dropped more time than expected.

Sunday's stage, the last of the Hungarian trio, is a flat 201km race from Kaposvar to Balatonfured. It should end in a mass bunch sprint when Mark Cavendish and the fast men can unleash their speed. The Giro then goes home to Italy where stage four takes the peloton up the volcanic slopes of Mount Etna on the Island of Sicily of for the first meaningful skirmish between the overall contenders. "If things go as expected, I should be able to keep the pink jersey until Etna, but then, I think, I will lose it," said van der Poel.— AFP

"This is my first 100 in a few years. So I put a lot of expectations on myself, and so I feel like I give myself a B+ overall." Japan's Yuki Koiike took second place in 10.22sec, and Australian Rohan Browning came third in 10.23sec. The 100m season best is held by Kenya's Ferdinand Omanyala, who ran it in 9.85sec on Saturday in Nairobi. Spectators were barred from Olympic athletics events over Covid-19 concerns, but on Sunday fans filled the stadium's lower stands, clapping enthusiastically for their favourites.

"To come here and compete in the Olympic Stadium is always exciting, and it's a blessing," said Coleman, who in March took silver in the 60m at the World Indoor Championships, losing out to his rival Lamont Marcell Jacobs. American athletes dominated the main events on Sunday, including Rai Benjamin, who took silver in the 400m hurdles at last year's Olympics with a blistering time of 46.17sec.

On Sunday he came first in the same event, clocking in at 48.60sec. "Time was slow, I'll say that much, but it felt really good to be back out there," he said. And US runner Michael Norman won the men's 400m, but said he was not happy with his time of 44.62sec.— AFP

## Lucknow crush Kolkata to top the IPL table

PUNE: Fast bowler Avesh Khan helped Lucknow Super Giants hammer Kolkata Knight Riders by 75 runs on Saturday to go top of the IPL table as teams jostle to secure a play-off spot. Lucknow bundled out Kolkata, who were chasing 177 for victory, for 101 to replace fellow newcomers Gujarat Titans at the summit, with the Twenty20 tournament moving towards its business end.

In the first match of the day, Rajasthan Royals beat Punjab Kings by six wickets to improve their chances of making the final four. The result meant five-time winners Mumbai Indians crashed out of the play-off race after eight losses in 10 matches. Quinton de Kock, who made a 29-ball 50, and Deepak Hooda, who hit 41 off 27 deliveries, put on 71 runs to lay the foundation of Lucknow's 176 for seven after being put in to bat first in Pune.

Kolkata were never in the chase after they lost their top four including skipper Shreyas Iyer, for six, and Aaron Finch, for 14, early. They fell to 25-4. "Having skill is good, but bowling well under pressure and being brave, trusting the best ball on the wicket without being worried about who's playing makes our bowling unit commendable," said Lucknow skipper KL Rahul. "I can't think of any game where we've had a complete performance, and no team will find the perfect performance. We are sticking to our plans and winning which is great."

### West Indies power

West Indies big-hitter Andre Russell gave them some hope during his 19-ball 45 but the innings fell apart after his departure. Russell attempted to turn the tide with three fours and five sixes but was caught at third-man off Avesh who finished with figures of 3-19. West Indies' Jason Holder wrapped up the Kolkata innings with two successive wickets and a run out.

The left-right batting pair of De Kock and Hooda set up victory after they took the attack to the opposition bowlers following Rahul's run out for nought in the first over. Marcus Stoinis, who hammered 28 off 14, and Holder, who made a four-ball 13, also added to the total with their breezy cameos and hit five sixes between them in a 30-run over from Shivam Mavi.—AFP

## Alcaraz downs Djokovic in thriller to reach final

MADRID: Carlos Alcaraz believes the sky is the limit after becoming the first player to beat Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic at the same tournament on clay as he stormed into the Madrid Open final on Saturday. The 19-year-old Spaniard reached his second ATP Masters final in five weeks and claimed his first win over a reigning world number one, overcoming Djokovic 6-7 (5/7), 7-5, 7-6 (7/5) in front of a sell-out home crowd at the Caja Magica.

Alcaraz has a tour-leading seven wins against top-10 players this season. He enters Sunday's final against Stefanos Tsitsipas or defending champion Alexander Zverev—carrying a nine-match winning streak, having triumphed in Barcelona a couple of weeks ago. He is the youngest player to beat a world number one in 17 years. Asked if he sees a limit to what he can achieve, Alcaraz said: "I don't think so. Tomorrow I will go for the final as I did in Miami. I'm really happy to be able to play a second Masters 1000 final."

"I would say that I feel ready to compete against them (the top players) in every single tournament, in every single surface," added the Miami champion. A calm and collected Alcaraz kicked off the match with a service break, thanks to a well-timed cross-court backhand passing shot. He was soon up 3-1 on the top seed. Djokovic, who turns 35 this month, struck back to draw level at 4-4 as the set went to a tie-break. A fired-up Djokovic sped to a 5-1 advantage and soon got his hands on four set points.

Alcaraz saved the first with an aggressive return and another with an ace. The Spaniard saved a third with a spot-on drop shot to narrow his deficit to 5-6 but Djokovic closed out the set on his fourth opportunity after 62 minutes. The players were neck and neck in the second set, until Alcaraz upped the ante in game 12, winning key battles at the net and perfectly using his drop shot when he needed to. The Murcia native claimed a break and the set with a sensational get, running down a Djokovic drop shot and hitting a winner from outside the doubles alley.



MADRID: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz celebrates after winning against Serbia's Novak Djokovic during their 2022 ATP Tour Madrid Open tennis tournament men's singles semi-final match at the Caja Magica in Madrid on May 7, 2022.— AFP

### Djokovic cuts hand

Djokovic staved off three break points on his serve in game four of the decider, digging deep for a 2-2 hold. The world number one fell during the next game and needed some medical attention for a wound on his right hand. Two more break points came and went for Alcaraz on his opponent's serve as Djokovic battled to hold for 3-3. It was Djokovic's turn to put pressure on the Alcaraz serve, but the seventh seed successfully sidestepped a break point to hold in game seven.

The crowd went wild as Alcaraz blasted a forehand winner for his first match point. Djokovic responded with a steely ace and dug deep to level at 5-5. It all came down to a final-set tie-break and the Caja Magica was shaking with "si se puede" ("Yes you can") chants. Alcaraz drew first blood, opening up a 4-2 gap. Djokovic saved a second match point for 5-6 but Alcaraz was third time lucky, claiming a statement three-hour 35-minute victory with another forehand winner—his 35th of the match.—AFP

## World champion Coleman wins first 100m after ban

TOKYO: US sprint star Christian Coleman took first place in his 100-metre debut after returning from a ban for breaching anti-doping rules, clocking a "pretty decent" 10.09sec in Tokyo on Sunday. The reigning 100m world champion made his comeback in January after the 18-month suspension for failing to adhere to whereabouts requirements, which kept him from last summer's Tokyo Olympics. On Sunday the 26-year-old finally hit the track in Japan's National Stadium for his first 100m this season—an experience that left him feeling "pretty good" overall. "I feel excited to have opened up my season with a pretty decent time... it's definitely something I can continue to build off," Coleman said after the race at the Golden Grand Prix 2022.



TOKYO: USA's Christian Coleman (right) and Australia's Rohan Browning compete in the men's 100m final during the Golden Grand Prix 2022 athletics competition at the National Stadium in Tokyo on May 8, 2022.— AFP