

Sports

LeBron scores 57, Cavaliers top Wizards 130-122 to end skid

Irving's big second half leads Celtics past Thunder

WASHINGTON: LeBron James scored 57 points - the second-highest total of his career and an NBA-best this season - and the Cleveland Cavaliers stopped a four-game slide with a 130-122 victory over the Washington Wizards on Friday night. James hadn't scored this much since getting a career-high 61 for the Miami Heat on March 3, 2014, against the Charlotte Hornets. And the four-time league MVP did it efficiently Friday, making 23 of 34 field-goal tries and all nine free throws, while adding 11 rebounds and seven assists. James did it with style, too. He hurdled over a seated Bradley Beal while dribbling, swatted a shot by John Wall off the backboard, and looked for a camera to wag both index fingers in the midst of a three-point play. Beal had 36 points for Washington, and Wall finished with 13 points and 15 assists. But Wall was 4 for 13 from the field and 5 for 12 at the line.



Phoenix lost forward Warren to a head injury

Charlotte's 64-16. Jeremy Lamb led Charlotte with 27 points. The Hornets had won three in a row.

KNICKS 120, SUNS 107

Kristaps Porzingis scored 37 points, and Knicks coach Jeff Hornacek got his first victory over his former team. Porzingis fell just shy of the career-best 38 points he scored Monday against Denver, getting his final points with a highlight-reel, end-to-end possession with just under 5 minutes remaining. He raced back in transition for an emphatic block on rookie Josh Jackson, and then got the ball back in transition for a powerful dunk while being fouled. The Suns swept the two-game series last season, Hornacek's first coaching the Knicks. He spent 2 1/2 seasons coaching the Suns from 2013-16. Devin Booker scored 34 points for the Suns, who had won four of five. Phoenix lost forward T.J. Warren to a head injury in the first half, a game after he scored a career-best 40 points.

ROCKETS 119, HAWKS 104

James Harden scored 21 of his 29 points in Houston's high-scoring first half, and the Rockets handed the Hawks their eighth straight loss. Eric Gordon and Luc Mbah a Moute each scored 20 points for Houston, which improved to 6-1 on the road. Kent Bazemore scored 18 points for the Hawks (1-8), who have not won since their season-opening victory at Dallas. Houston led 69-51 at halftime with its highest-scoring half of the season. The Rockets went 11 for 22 from 3-point range in the first half and 16 for 47 from beyond the arc for the game. Dennis Schroder and Taurean Prince each had 16 points for Atlanta.

PELICANS 99, MAVERICKS 94

Anthony Davis had 30 points and 13 rebounds. DeMarcus Cousins added his second 20-20 game of the season and the Pelicans started a four-game trip with a victory over the last -place Mavericks. Harrison Barnes scored a season-high 26 points for the Mavericks, who are 1-9 for the first time since 1993-94. Cousins had 20 points, 22 rebounds and seven assists for the Pelicans, who were coming off two straight home losses. The 6-foot-11 center, who tied his career high with 20 defensive rebounds, had season highs of 41 points and 23 rebounds in a win at Sacramento last week.

NUGGETS 95, HEAT 94

Paul Millsap had 27 points for Denver, including three straight free throws with 11.9 seconds remaining. Nikola Jokic added 19 points and 14 rebounds as the Nuggets shook off some late struggles at the line to win their second straight on a six-game homestand.

CELTICS 101, THUNDER 94

Kyrie Irving scored 22 of his 25 points in the second half, and the Celtics rallied from 18 down for their seventh straight victory. Al Horford scored 17 of his 20 points after halftime and Jaylen Brown added 10 points and 12 rebounds for the Celtics. Boston has allowed 94 or fewer points in every game during its winning streak. Paul George had 25 points and 10 rebounds, and Russell Westbrook added 19 points and 11 assists for the Thunder. Carmelo Anthony had 10 points and 14 rebounds but shot just 3 of 17.

76ERS 121, PACERS 110

J.J. Redick scored 31 points, Ben Simmons had a triple-double and Philadelphia moved above .500 for the first time in nearly four years. Redick was 8 of 12 from 3-point range, including the go-ahead shot with 2:06 left, another 3 to barely beat the shot clock with 1:08 remaining and a third from the left corner to make it 119-110 with 46 seconds left. Simmons had 14 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists for his second triple-double in a rookie season delayed a year because of injury. The Sixers (5-4) hadn't had a winning record since they were also 5-4 on Nov 13, 2013, but their painful rebuild appears near an end as they won their fourth straight game. Victor Oladipo had 31 points for Indiana, which had won three in a row.

SPURS 108, HORNETS 101

Bryn Forbes had 22 points, helping San Antonio stop a four-game skid. The Spurs played without Kawhi Leonard and Tony Parker, who are out with quadriceps injuries. Charlotte was without Nicholas Batum and Michael Carter-Williams, who also have not played this season, along with Michael Kidd-Gilchrist. Rudy Gay scored 20 points and Dejounte Murray had 10, joining Forbes to help San Antonio's reserves outscore



WASHINGTON: Washington Wizards forward Kelly Oubre Jr., left, reaches for the ball against Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James, right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game. — AP

Millsap delivered at a key moment. After missing three of his previous four foul shots, the Nuggets' big offseason acquisition was fouled at the 3-point line by James Johnson and sunk each of his free throws. Dion Waiters nearly won it for Miami on the other end with a 3-pointer that rattled in and out in the final second. Goran Dragic scored 23 points for the Heat.

LAKERS 124, NETS 112

Brook Lopez hit six 3-pointers and scored a season-high 34 points against his former Brooklyn teammates, and rookie Kyle Kuzma had 21 points and 13 rebounds during his first career start in the Lakers' victory. D'Angelo Russell had 17 points, seven rebounds and seven assists in his first game against the Lakers since they traded him to Brooklyn last summer in the four-player deal that brought Lopez and Kuzma to Los Angeles. Allen Crabbe scored 25 points for the Nets in the opener of a five-game road trip, and Rondae Hollis-Jefferson added 21.

PISTONS 105, BUCKS 96

Andre Drummond scored 14 of his 24 points in the third quarter, powering Detroit to the win. Drummond, who has shot under 40 percent from the free-throw line in his career, went 10 of 12 in the third, drawing a roar of approval from fans. He went 14 for 16 on the night, the most he's ever made in his career, and is shooting 78 percent from the line this season. Avery Bradley scored 19 of his 23 points in the first half for the Pistons,

who went on a 21-5 run late in the second quarter and led 59-48 at halftime. Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 29 points for Milwaukee.

RAPTORS 109, JAZZ 100

DeMar DeRozan scored a season-high 37 points, and Toronto finished its longest road trip of the season with a victory. DeRozan made all 14 of his free throws and added a trio of 3-pointers to complement his mid-range offensive game. His 17 third-quarter points helped stake the Raptors to a lead they never relinquished in handing the Jazz their first loss in six home games. Toronto went 3-3 on its Western Conference road swing. Rookie guard Donovan Mitchell scored 25 points for Utah, and Rodney Hood had 17 on 6-for-19 shooting.

BULLS 105, MAGIC 83

Justin Holiday scored 19 points, Robin Lopez had 11 points and 10 rebounds, and the Bulls earned their first road win of the season. Chicago had seven players score in double figures. David Nwaba had 16 points, and rookie Lauri Markkanen made three 3-pointers on his way to 13 points. Evan Fournier led Orlando with 21 points, and Nikola Vucevic had 14 points. Aaron Gordon added 11 points and seven rebounds. The Magic led 45-44 at halftime, but the Bulls pulled away with a big second half. Lopez scored each of his 11 points in the third as Chicago outscored Orlando 29-15 in the period. — AFP

England fight off Lebanon as Kiwis set up showdown

SYDNEY: England wore down Lebanon for their first win at the Rugby League World Cup while New Zealand and Tonga set up an explosive showdown with victories yesterday. England downed Brad Fittler's Lebanon 29-10 in Sydney in a match marred by a biting allegation lodged by Lebanon's skipper Robbie Farah against England winger Jermaine McGillivray in the second half.

McGillivray was placed on report for allegedly biting Farah's arm after Farah made an official complaint on-field. Wayne Bennett's team led early after a try by centre Kallum Watkins before Lebanon hit back with a Farah grubber kick leading to Nick Kassis pouncing on the loose ball to level at 6-6.

The prospect of a possible boilover soon dissipated when England scored three tries in eight minutes, setting up England's 16-point advantage going into the break. Lebanon can make the quarter-finals out of Pool A if England down winless France in Perth next weekend. Tonga set up a combustible Pool B showdown with New Zealand next week when they held off fast-finishing Samoa to take the much-anticipated clash of the Pacific island heavyweights 32-18 in Hamilton.

The star-studded Tongans remain unbeaten after they put 50 points on Scotland last week and have already qualified for the last eight along with New Zealand. Tonga were in control at 26-6 midway through the second half but the Samoans closed the gap to eight points with two converted tries before Manu Ma'u scored three minutes from time to secure the outcome for Tonga.

After a week of street violence involving fans from both sides in the lead up to the match, the players calmed tension when they hugged and joined in prayer before kick off and the match was played in a lively atmosphere. New Zealand's classy off-loading proved too much for a hapless Scotland as they ran in 14 tries in a commanding 74-6 victory in Christchurch.

The Kiwis pulled off an amazing 40 off-loads, with Martin Taupau and Nelson Asofa-Solomona prominent, to inflict the heaviest defeat ever suffered by a Scotland team. — AFP

Wallabies hit 60 against Japan in European warm-up

YOKOHAMA: Injury-hit Australia crushed Japan 63-30 in Yokohama yesterday to kick off their northern hemisphere tour in impressive style. The Wallabies ran in nine tries in a lopsided encounter as they followed up wins against world champions New Zealand and the Barbarians with a clinical display against the 2019 World Cup hosts.

Tevita Kuridrani muscled over for a hat-trick of tries and Samu Kerevi added two more, while utility back Reece Hodge slotted a perfect nine from nine with the boot in his first test at flyhalf. "We were really happy with probably about 60 minutes of our game," said Australia captain Michael Hooper.

"Japan's players fought hard and were really strong in the breakdown. They turned us over too many times and put 30 points on us - we've got to be better than that. "But it was a great experience playing here," he added. "The fans were loud and you can feel how big it's going to be here for the World Cup." Kerevi's second provided the game's highlight, the bulldozing centre collecting a no-look pass from Kurtley Beale to cap a stunning move started by Henry Speight deep in Australia's own half. Japan lost 47-27 to a world select side last week in a butter-fingered display but ill discipline cost the Brave Blossoms against the Australians, who scored further tries through Speight, Tatafu Polota-Nau, Nick Phipps and Rob Simmons.

The Asian champions were left stunned when Speight burst clear to score Australia's second try after just 11 minutes as the floodgates threatened to spring open. Trailing 35-3 at halftime, Japan improved after the break with locks Wimpie van der Walt and Amanaki Mafi grabbing tries before Kazuki Himeno bundled over after the final buzzer to help Japan hit the 30-point mark, to the joy of 43,000 in Yokohama.

'DIFFERENT LEVEL'

Japan captain Michael Leitch pulled no punches in summing up the match. "We were up against one of the top four teams in the world and we felt the difference between our level and theirs," he said. "Discipline in that first 20 minutes hurt us and we have to improve in a lot of areas before the World Cup."



YOKOHAMA: Scott Sio (C) of Australia is tackled during the rugby union test match between Japan and Australia in Yokohama, suburb of Tokyo, yesterday. — AFP

Despite missing key players, Australia were never threatened at the venue for the 2019 World Cup final in what proved to be a gentle workout for tougher tests away to Wales, England and Scotland this month. Hodge was calmness personified with regular flyhalf Bernard Foley out sick and made several pinpoint passes that led to tries, while second-choice scrumhalf Phipps looked solid in place of the injured Will Genia. "Between the last game and this game we lost five or six players but our mindset and attitude were very good from the start," said Australia head coach Michael Cheika, whose side take on Wales in Cardiff next week-

end. "We dropped off a bit toward the end but Japan played very well. It was a fantastic atmosphere and a great place to play rugby." Japan, who were destroyed 91-3 by Australia the last time they met at the 2007 World Cup, have struggled since winning three games at the 2015 tournament under Eddie Jones.

"It was a really disappointing start to the game," said Japan coach Jamie Joseph. "We gave penalties away in the first half and couldn't really get our game going. But in the second half we showed what we can do when we create some pressure on the opposition and play our type of rugby. — AFP