

Sports

# Blues march to first final since 1970, rested Bruins open at home

## The two hardest, heaviest teams are in the final: DeBoer

LOS ANGELES: The St. Louis Blues are enjoying a storybook turnaround, going from the worst team at the start of the season to facing Boston in their first Stanley Cup final since losing to the same Bruins in 1970. It has been 49 years since the Blues were swept by Boston in a series that culminated with Bobby Orr's iconic overtime game winning goal.

St. Louis won three straight games to eliminate the San Jose Sharks and reach the final which begins with game one on Monday night in Boston. They ousted a weary and banged up Sharks' team with a 5-1 victory in game six of the NHL's Western Conference final, part of an improbable run from last in the league on January 3 to the championship series.

The reversal came after Craig Berube replaced Mike Yeo as head coach in November and goaltender Jordan Binnington took over the starting role in January. St. Louis finished the regular season on a 28-8-5 run and carried that momentum through the Western Conference playoffs.

"We were trying to get on the right track," Berube said. "Once we got going in January and February, I knew we had a good hockey team. Once you get into the playoffs anything can happen, and it did." Said Blues general manager Doug Armstrong, "They turned it around and just haven't stopped going."

The Blues were 300-1 long shots to win the Stanley Cup early in the season and despite their turnaround they still enter the finals as underdogs against the Bruins. The Bruins will have had a 10-day break after sweeping Carolina in four straight in the Eastern Conference final. "It's the Stanley Cup final, game one," said Bruins defenceman Charlie McAvoy. "Just the emotion and the excitement in the city and the feeling in the building is going to be contagious."

### HEAVY HITTERS

Sharks coach Peter DeBoer said it will be a hard-hitting, physical, grinding series. "The two hardest, heaviest teams are in the final," DeBoer said. "Everyone talks about skill and all the small players, and there is room for that, but I don't think it's an accident."

"They're (Blues) heavy, hard and organized. There wasn't any room out there for our guys." The Bruins are in the final for the third time in the past 10 years and the 20th time in their franchise history. Should they win, Boston will be the first city in 83 years to simultaneously hold the championships of Major League Baseball, the NFL and the NHL.

A statue outside the Boston Garden pays tribute to Orr's high-flying goal and while they don't have a defenceman of Orr's stature in their lineup they are expected to get back captain Zdeno Chara for game one.

Boston are led at forward by veteran Patrice Bergeron who helped lead the Bruins to a Stanley Cup title in 2011. The two-time all-star Bergeron has a strong all around game and has eight goals and 13 points in 17 playoff games.

For the Blues, forward Brayden Schenn is looking to play a bigger offensive role in the final. Schenn is one of the best two-way players in the league. He was in a playoff scoring slump up until he finally potted a goal in the series-clinching game six against the Sharks.

In order for Schenn to continue to capitalize on scoring chances, he is going to have to make that extra move around the net instead of just hammering away at the puck. "I'm a guy that gets put in offensive situations, whether it's power play or playing with the top players on this team," Schenn said. "I did it throughout the regular season but playoffs, it's tough."



LOS ANGELES: The victorious St. Louis Blues will play in their first Stanley Cup Final since 1970.

Unheralded forward Jaden Schwartz has helped make up for Schenn's offensive struggles by scoring 12 goals in the playoffs so far, one more than he scored all regular season. One of the more interesting finals matchups is the goaltending battle between Boston's red-hot netminder Tuukka Rask and the Blues' Binnington.

Finland's Rask gives the Bruins the decided edge, leading all goalies in the playoffs with a 1.84 goals against average. The Bruins know Canada's Binnington better than any other team in the league as he spent last season on loan with their Providence farm team in the AHL after refusing the Blues request to go down to the lower division ECHL farm league. — AFP

## Zain celebrates Girgian at Al Roudhan tournament



Al Roudhan fans.

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading digital service provider in Kuwait, celebrated Girgian at Martyr Fahad Al Ahmad Hall in Daiya Area as part of its daily presence at the 40th edition of Abdullah Meshari Al Roudhan Ramadan Football Tournament. The company is the Diamond Sponsor of the tournament for the fourth year running, which comes under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Zain's support to this unique event comes in line with the company's belief in the importance of supporting the youth and sports sectors in Kuwait, as well as encouraging the various sporting initiatives that cater to young people. The event witnesses impressive participation of football enthusiasts from across Kuwait and the GCC, and Zain will remain committed to supporting and sponsoring sports, emphasizing its dedication to the elevation of Kuwaiti youth and sports.

Zain and Al Roudhan's organizing committee, both being Kuwaiti organizations proud of their national identity, organized a Girgian celebration where candy was distributed to the attending crowds while hosting a traditional performance. The event also witnessed a special friendly match between ministers and members of the parliament, which was held under the patronage and attendance of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem. The match ended with a 3-2 win for the parliament team.

This year, Al Roudhan tournament witnessed the participation of Italian legend Francesco Totti and Ivorian legend Didier Drogba, who both took part in a special Iftar banquet along with Zain customers who won a competition on the company's social media channels. The event will also host Croatian legend Luka Modric, who won the Ballon d'Or as world player of the year 2018, as well as Portuguese legend Luis Figo.

Al Roudhan Ramadan Football Tournament is considered the most prominent sporting event in Kuwait during the Holy Month of Ramadan of every year. Football fans in Kuwait and the GCC look forward to it with



Drogba with Al Khashti, Al Roudhan, and Hazem Imam during the Iftar banquet.



Zain volunteers offering Girgian to Al Roudhan fans.

great passion, given the fact that it witnesses high levels of professionalism through both the competing local teams as well as the international football stars hosted.

As it does every year, Zain will be present at Al Roudhan Tournament on a daily basis, where it will be interacting with the audiences through various competitions, activities, and entertainment programs. The company will also be distributing valuable prizes and hold-

ing daily challenges and competitions on its official social media channels, and more.

Zain believes in the support of the various initiatives that contribute to the development of the Kuwaiti sports and youth sectors. The company reflects this belief through its support to such distinguished sports events as well as through its support to Kuwaiti athletes in various sports who proudly represent Kuwait in local and international arenas.

## Royal Enfield's 'OneRide 2019' in the streets of Kuwait

KUWAIT: Royal Enfield bikers from Kuwait were out riding on Friday, 26 April, for 'One Ride' the brand's flagship ride event across the globe.

Their global mission: To promote brotherhood and togetherness among bikers. The ride covered over 77,000 Km ridden across 305 cities through 500+ organized group rides.

Kuwait saw over 40 bikers decked out in riding finery assemble for the ride. The noise, the exhaust notes, the bikes, can all get pretty exhilarating. There were all models of Royal Enfield bikes on the ride - Classics, Himalayans, Interceptors, continental GTs. They rode about 40 km around different areas of Kuwait, celebrating the biking spirit - the feeling of freedom and independence.

Their start point was at the best place it can be, at KAICO, Kuwait Automotive Imports Company, Al Shaya & Al Sagar, are the proud authorized distributors of Royal Enfield in Kuwait since 2014 and their showroom in Al Rai served as the starting point for the bikers gathering. And just like previous years, Kaico was the main sponsor of OneRide 2019.

On this occasion, Ashish Tandon, General Manager of Kaico, stated "We at Kaico support & encourage events

that reflect the brotherhood image and make members of society closer. Such events, driven by a cause, can help increase community awareness and create a buzz among societies."

As well Nader Salmeh, senior divisional manager, added "Royal Enfield motor bike is considered as collective machinery. The craftsmanship and design is attractive to the naked eye. And with a competitive price amongst other bikes, everybody can own this piece of art"

While brotherhood is great, such a huge movement of bikers is always heading towards a great cause. And this year, their cause was a charity event in which they participated during RAJATHOTSAV 2019 (Harvest festival & mega carnival). Royal Enfield bikers joined other riders in the bikes & vintage cars motor show.

It was essential for bikers to turn up with safety gear. Such events help promote wearing of safety gear and following rules. Royal Enfield has various adventure rides that are planned through the year, where riding groups head out on different tours. It also has an annual event.

When you ride a Royal Enfield, you ride a piece of history. Royal Enfield enjoys cult status in the global motor biking world. People who own Royal Enfield swear by them, while those who don't, look forward to owning one. When you ride a Royal Enfield on the tour, take time to get to know the bike, admire the passion, the history and the people behind the machine. A tour on a Royal Enfield will make you want to come back and experience the thrill of motorcycling through the long streets.

