

Donovan Mitchell-led Cavaliers rally from 18 down, win series over Magic



● REUTERS

Donovan Mitchell scored 39 points to fuel the host Cleveland Cavaliers to the Eastern Conference semifinals with a 106-94 victory over the Orlando Magic on Sunday in Game 7 of their first-round series.

Mitchell, who scored 17 points in the third quarter, made 15 of 17 free-throw attempts and added nine rebounds. His scintillating performance came on the heels of a 50-point effort in Cleveland's 103-96 loss in Orlando on Friday, reported Reuters.

Caris LeVert scored 15 points off the bench and Max Strus added 13 for the fourth-seeded Cavaliers, who overcame an 18-point deficit to record their fourth win at home in the series.

Cleveland, which posted its first playoff series win in six years, will visit the top-seeded Boston Celtics in Game 1 of the conference semifinals on Tuesday. The Celtics captured two of the three meetings in the regular season. The Cavaliers won despite playing without All-Star center Jarrett Allen (rib contusion) for the third straight game.

Orlando's Paolo Banchero collected 38 points and 16 rebounds while playing in his first career Game 7.

Wendell Carter Jr. scored 13 points and Jalen Suggs had 10 points and nine rebounds for the fifth-seeded Magic, who mustered just 15 points in the third quarter.

Franz Wagner made just 1 of 15 shots to finish with six points while dealing with early foul trouble for the Magic.

The Cavaliers shaved an 18-point deficit to 10 at half-time before Mitchell erupted for 17 points in the third quarter, capped by a driving layup to stake Cleveland to a 68-66 lead with 3:08 left. Suggs answered with a pair of free throws before Strus sank back-to-back 3-pointers.

Mitchell and Darius Garland each made a 3-pointer to increase the Cavaliers' lead to 88-77 with 5:53 left in the fourth quarter. The Magic trimmed their deficit to seven before Garland sank a pair of free throws and a short jumper to send Cleveland on its way.

Orlando scored 13 and nine straight points at separate junctures to seize a 33-18 lead early in the second quarter. The Magic pumped that advantage up to 18 at 47-29 following a 3-pointer from Gary Harris before the Cavaliers answered with a 14-6 run to end the quarter.

Roma to seek discount on Sardar Azmoun from Bayer Leverkusen

Roma football club wants to make Sardar Azmoun's deal from Bayer Leverkusen permanent.

The capital club is said to be satisfied with the striker's usage and output, RomaPress wrote.

The player seems to have impressed Daniele De Rossi and is considered a good enough back-up option for next season.

The Giallorossi are said to be

extremely pleased with the Iranian striker, not only by his performances but his attitude and general dedication to the team.

According to La Gazzetta dello Sport, Roma has a €13 million buy option which so far it has refused to activate.

In recent months, the capital club have initiated contact with Bayer

Leverkusen in order to discuss the possibility of keeping Azmoun beyond the expiry of his loan.

Daniele De Rossi is the first one to be delighted at the prospect of Azmoun staying around beyond this season.

The player's future, however, remains closely linked to Roma's chances of qualifying to next year's Champions League.

● ROMA PRESS



Iran's Noshad Alamiyan into Saudi Smash 2024 round of 16



● TASNIM

Noshad Alamiyan from Iran advanced to the Round of 16 of the World Table Tennis (WTT) Saudi Smash 2024 on Monday.

Alamiyan defeated Jingkun Liang of China 3-2 (12-14, 11-6, 8-11, 11-9, 11-5) in the Round of 32, reported Tasnim News Agency.

He had earlier defeated players from Egypt, Belgium and Austria in the event. The competition is being held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from May 1 to 11.

The event consists of a 64-player men's and women's singles main draw alongside a 24-pair main draw for men's, women's, and mixed doubles. A series of thrilling showdowns are locked in across each competition after Thursday's draw, with some of world table tennis stars in action.

Lopetegui agrees to become West Ham manager

Julen Lopetegui has agreed a deal to become West Ham manager at the end of the season.

Current Hammers boss David Moyes has come under increasing pressure after a poor run of results that has seen his side win one win of their past nine Premier League games and exit the Europa League in the quarter-finals, BBC wrote.

West Ham were thrashed 5-0 by Chelsea on Sunday to leave them ninth in the table.

Moyes, who is out of contract in the summer, has repeatedly fended off questions about his future at the club, saying talks will not take place until after their final game at Manchester City on May 19. Former Spain and Real Madrid coach Lopetegui has been linked with numerous jobs since and is thought to be keen on returning to the Premier League after guiding Wolves to safety last term, having joined them when they were



● GETTY IMAGES

bottom of the table.

He won the Europa League with Sevilla in 2020 before moving to Molineux two years later.

Wolves finished 13th under Lopetegui last season but he had become frustrated by the club's financial situation before resigning.

Moyes, meanwhile, presided over three succes-

sive European campaigns for the first time in the club's history and last June ended the Hammers' 43-year wait for a trophy with a last-minute victory over Fiorentina in the Europa Conference League final.

But many fans are critical of what they view as Moyes' negative tactics.

Palma retain UEFA Futsal Champions with Iranian players

Mallorca Palma Futsal which has two Iranian players proved their UEFA Futsal Champions League triumph as hosts on debut last season was no fluke as they defeated Barça 5-1 to retain the title in Yerevan.

Missing the suspended Ernesto, Palma still began the game the brighter and Didac Plana was soon made to work by Chaguinha, Bruno Gomes (back from a semi-final ban) and former Barça man Mario Rivillos, according to UEFA.

For all the holders' vim, however, it was Barça who took the lead late in the first half, Catela sending Adolfo clear on the right to place his shot inside the far post. With just under two minutes left in the first half, Rômulo levelled as he connected perfectly with Chaguinha's deep corner - but Palma were not out of the woods yet. On five fouls, they then conceded two ten-metre penalties, swapping in captain Carlos Barrón for Luan Muller to deny both Catela and Ferrao. Getting to half-time at 1-1 seemed enough for the reigning champions, yet with seven seconds to go before the break they



● UEFA

struck again, Vilian Lourenço powering in a low free-kick.

Barça piled on the pressure in the second half, with Sergio Lozano (aiming for a record fifth personal title) smashing the ball against the crossbar. Palma kept holding out even as Mamadou Touré hit the post with a shot as powerful

as Lozano's, and Catela seemed certain to score but was denied by a sensational Luan Muller reflex save.

Not long afterwards, it was 3-1 as Luan Muller began an attack that ended with Vilian Lourenço squaring for Neguinho to stretch and poke home. Barça tried ev-

erything, with Lozano on as a flying keeper, but he was to receive a red card with just over a minute left for handball.

Now Palma pressed home their advantage as Chaguinha, named Player of the Tournament, rolled the ball into an empty net. Neguinho then added another in

the final seconds to truly begin Palma's party.

Iranian international players Hossein Tayyebi and Moslem Oladghobad are members of AE Palma Futsal in Spain.

Antonio Vadillo, Palma coach said "What's better than winning a second time in a row? To win a third! Seriously, I couldn't be prouder of my players because what we achieved was unbelievable. It's not easy at all to play at the level we played tonight and against such a strong opponent like Barça. We fully deserved to win the final and I think we were by far the better team."

Also, Chaguinha, Player of the Tournament said: "To win the Champions League last year was already like a dream come true, but to do it twice in a row? I can't even put it into words. Of course, I'm happy with this award, but I think every single one in the team deserves it and I'm not talking only about the players. It took a lot of hard work from everyone to get here, and tonight we left it all on the pitch because that was the only way we could be celebrating right now."