Sports

NBA PLAYOFFS: WESTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

Lillard finds his shot as Blazers force deciding Game 7 at Denver

By Anne M. Peterson
AP Sports Writer

PORTLAND — The shots were finally falling for Damian Lillard.

Lillard had 32 points, including 17 in the third quarter, and the Portland Trail Blazers staved off elimination to force a decisive Game 7 in their series with Denver with a 119-108 victory on Thursday night.

Lillard had been fairly quiet for the previous two games in the semifinal series, both Portland losses.

"I think over the course of the series, at least after Game 1, I just haven't seen the ball go in consistently enough," Lillard said. "My job is to stay aggressive, keep doing what I do, and tonight, shots fell."

The series now shifts to Denver, where the Nuggets will have a chance to make it to the Western Conference finals for the first time since 2009. Denver has been to the conference finals three times in franchise history.

The winner of Sunday's game will face the winner of the series between the Golden State Warriors and the Houston Rockets. The defending NBA champion Warriors have a 3-2 advantage in the series after a 104-99 victory on Wednesday night. Game 6 is set for Friday in Houston.

CJ McCollum added 30 points for the Blazers, who haven't advanced to the conference finals since the 2000 playoffs. Rodney Hood came off the bench with a career playoff-high 25 points and fans at the Moda Center drowned out his postgame on-court interview by chanting "Rodney! Rodney!"

Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 29 points and 12 rebounds, while Jamal Murray added 24 points and 10 rebounds.

"We'll go back home, regroup, like we did for San Antonio, come back with energy and just be ready to play," Murray said.

Seth Curry's 3-pointer gave the Blazers a 101-88 lead with 7:24 left. Things got heated midway through the final period after Jokic was called for an offensive foul and the players got into a shoving match and had to be separated. After a review, there were offsetting technicals involving Denver's Will Barton and Torrey Craig, and Curry and Zach Collins for Portland.

Lillard hit an off-balance jumper that put Portland up 106-93. The Nuggets got within 113-103 with 1:04 left, but Craig and Jokic fouled out and Portland closed out the win.

The Nuggets were in this situation before: They lost on the road to San Antonio in Game 6 in the opening round, forcing that series to return to Denver for the deciding game.

After Portland won the quadruple-overtime marathon of Game 3, Denver beat Portland at home to even the series. Then Paul Millsap had 24 points to spark Denver's 124-98 blowout of the Blazers on Tuesday night — and put Portland on the verge of elimination.

"I thought our Game 6 here in Portland was better than our Game 6 in San Antonio," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. "Now we go home and have the best home-court advantage in the NBA."

Denver led by as many as 10 points in the opening quarter but Portland went on an 11-4 run to start the second quarter that closed the gap to 38-37.

After his 3-pointer gave Portland the lead, Lillard added a layup to extend it and Portland led 58-54 at halftime after outscoring the Nuggets 32-20.

Jokic's third-quarter 3-pointer briefly gave the Nuggets a 76-75 lead, but Lillard answered with his own 3 to reclaim it.

Lillard's sixth 3-pointer of the game put Portland up 83-78. He had 17 points in the third quarter alone and the Blazers led 87-80 going into the fourth.

NBA PLAYOFFS: EASTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

Philadelphia wins to set up Game 7 at Toronto

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jimmy Butler lived up to his Jimmy Buckets nickname.

With "Jimmy! Butler!" chants ringing from the rafters, he helped Philadelphia force a seventh game against Toronto in the Eastern Conference semifinals, hitting big baskets in bunches and scoring 25 points in the 76ers' 112-101 victory over the Raptors on Thursday night.

"I play to win," Butler said. "Right now, this is what I have to do in order to give us a great chance at winning."

Game 7 is Sunday night in Toronto. The Milwaukee Bucks await the winner.

Kawhi Leonard, who scored 30-plus points in the first four games in the series, was finally tied up early by the Sixers and hit 29 points well after the game was out of hand.

Leonard and the Raptors had no answers for Butler and All-Star guard Ben Simmons. Simmons broke through and scored 21 points — more than his combined total of Games 4 and 5 — and helped show the Sixers still had some fight after a brutal Game 5 loss.

BAKER CITY DOWNTOWN SPONSORS

UnWINEd event donating to project that feeds students

■ The event is set for Thursday, May 16, and proceeds will go to the Baker City Backpack Program

The Baker City Backpack Program will be the recipient of money raised during this month's UnWINEd event.

UnWINEd is run by the Baker City Downtown association. Each month organizers choose to help support a nonprofit organization, a press release announcing the event stated.

UnWINEd takes place from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, which this month falls on May 16.

The event starts at HATCH Baker at 2019 Main St. Glasses are sold until 7:30 p.m.

The Baker City Backpack Program is a community organization that helps provide weekend food for students throughout Baker City who experience food insecurity. The school district helps identify students who might be in need.

Volunteers fill "backpacks" with food items each Thursday to send home with students for the weekend.

Nearly 50% of students in the school district are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.

"Research shows that adequate nutrition helps kids show up to school ready to learn," Kris Borgen, a member of the Baker City Backpack Program, stated in the press release. "Providing food insecure children with additional food over the weekend is a valuable and greatly appreciated service to our community."

The Baker City Backpack program will serve 5,171 students in Baker City this school year. Volunteers already have contributed more than 500 hours of support to the program.

The average cost of a backpack is $5 per week. The backpacks contain a variety of foods, including fresh fruit from the Baker Food Co-Op.

Baker City Downtown is a nonprofit organization that follows the Main Street Approach, a comprehensive method to downtown commercial district revitalization.

Baker City Downtown schedules the UnWINEd event on the third Thursday of every month to encourage visitors to shop at downtown businesses and to enjoy wine and beverages at shops along the way, organizers said.

Proceeds of the event are then distributed to selected nonprofit organizations throughout the community.

REAL ESTATE AUCTION
FRI. MAY 10TH AT 2PM

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STERLING: Sterling shaker sets ~ Sterling 10" and 12" serving trays ...
ANTIQUES: Early 1900's Victorian ladies chair with hand carved rose wood ~ Early 1900's needle-point picture ~ Early 1800's-early 1900's Journal and memorabilia book ~ malard tv lamp ~ 1920's The Sessions Clock Co. Mantle clock …
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