



Germany's Ilkay Gundogan, (left), and Latvia's Arturs Zjuzins challenge for the ball during the international friendly soccer match between Germany and Latvia in Dueseldorf, Germany. Germany won 7-1. (AP)

Sports

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India post first victory in Group E

Syria advance to WC qualifying 3rd round

SEOUL, South Korea, June 8, (AP) — Syria became the second team to advance to the third round of Asian qualifying for the 2022 World Cup with a 3-0 win over Guam in Sharjah, their seventh successive win in Group A.

Meanwhile, Australia had a 5-1 win over Taiwan for their sixth straight victory in Group B, staying five points clear of Jordan. The Australians can move into the next round with a win on Friday over

SOCCER

Nepal. Goals from Harry Souttar, Jamie Maclaren, Trent Sainsbury and two from Mitchell Duke secured the points, with Gao Wei-Jie scoring for Taiwan after 62 minutes.

"The performance was very good," Australia's head coach Graham Arnold said. The Australians have a run of four games within two weeks, so squad rota-

FA chooses 1st female leader in 158-yr history

LONDON, June 8, (AP) — The English Football Association nominated Debbie Hewitt on Tuesday to be its first female leader of soccer's original national body created 158 years ago.

The experienced businesswoman is set to join the English FA in January, 14 months after Greg Clarke resigned in fallout from making offensive comments on race, gender and sexuality at a parliamentary hearing.

Hewitt said in an FA statement she would "relish the opportunity to chair an organisation that has the potential to be a very positive force for good throughout the game and across society."

The FA said its ruling council will be asked to formally ratify Hewitt's appointment at a July 22 meeting.

Hewitt will join an organization which is weighing a bid to host the 2030 World Cup jointly with the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

tion is part of the process. "We had a very inexperienced team that was given an opportunity - only a couple of senior players around them," Arnold said. "They handled everything really, really well."

Only the eight group winners progress automatically to the third round, which is set to start in September, along with the four best second-place teams.

China are eight points behind Syria and can only hope to finish second in Group A despite a 2-0

win against the Philippines. The goals came from Wu Lei and Wu Xinghan.

"It was a tough game and a good win," China coach Li Tie said. "There are still two games left but we are focused only on the next one."

Second-half goals from FC Zenit striker Sardar Azmoun and Mehdi Taremi of Porto gave Iran a 3-0 win over Bahrain. Iran are in second place in Group C and just two points behind Iraq, which beat

Cambodia 4-1.

Uzbekistan thrashed Singapore 5-0 to move two points behind Saudi Arabia in Group D, India posted their first victory in Group E with a 2-0 win over Bangladesh, and Vietnam stayed atop Group G with a 4-0 win over Indonesia in Dubai. United Arab Emirates moved into second, two points behind, after defeating Thailand 3-1.

Japan had already secured a place in the third round of qualifying.

Nets take 2-0 'lead'

Suns rally past Nuggets

NEW YORK, June 8, (AP) — Kevin Durant left Giannis Antetokounmpo in his tracks and got to the rim for a reverse layup, with James Harden coming way off his baseline spot to cheer.

Harden may be hurt, but the Brooklyn Nets are showing no hint that they miss him.

And the Milwaukee Bucks don't seem capable of stopping it. Durant scored 32 points in three

quarters of a top-to-bottom blowout that sent the Nets halfway to the Eastern Conference finals with a 125-86 rout on Monday night.

The Nets led by as much as 49 in their most lopsided playoff win ever and held the NBA's highest-scoring team 34 points below its season average.

Irving added 22 points and Bruce Brown filled in nicely for Harden with 13 points and six rebounds.

The Nets broke down the Bucks' defense off the dribble all night, setting up uncontested shots that they mostly made. Brooklyn shot 52% from the field and was 21 for 42 from 3-point range.

The Bucks swept their first-round series against Miami but need a big turnaround when they get back home to avoid being swept themselves now.

Antetokounmpo had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Bucks, but was thoroughly outplayed by Durant in a matchup of NBA MVP winners and sat dejected on the Bucks' bench early in the fourth quarter with the game long since hopelessly out of reach.

Khris Middleton added 17 points after a slow start to the series and Holiday had 13.

Game 3 is Thursday in Milwaukee, where the Bucks beat the Nets twice in May while Harden was out with a right hamstring injury.

He left Game 1 after 43 seconds with tightness of that hamstring, but the Nets shook that off to win 115-107. The Nets haven't given a timetable for his return, though he didn't appear too hurt going out under the backboard to holler toward Durant after his driving layup made it 95-65 after three.

The onslaught came quickly. A three-point game midway through the first quarter became 36-19 by the end of it after the Nets closed with a 23-9 surge. Durant scored 13 points, playing the entire quarter.

He and Irving sat to start the second but the Nets opened with a 7-2 burst to push the lead to 43-21 on Blake Griffin's 3-pointer.



Irving

BASKETBALL

Griffin had the highlight play of the half, cutting along the baseline to take a pass from Brown and swoop in for the slam, with Antetokounmpo turning his head away at the last second so the ball couldn't crash down on top of him.

Who could blame the Bucks for not wanting to lose?

The lead ballooned to 27 late in the half before Brooklyn took a 65-41 cushion to the locker room.

Suns 122, Nuggets 105

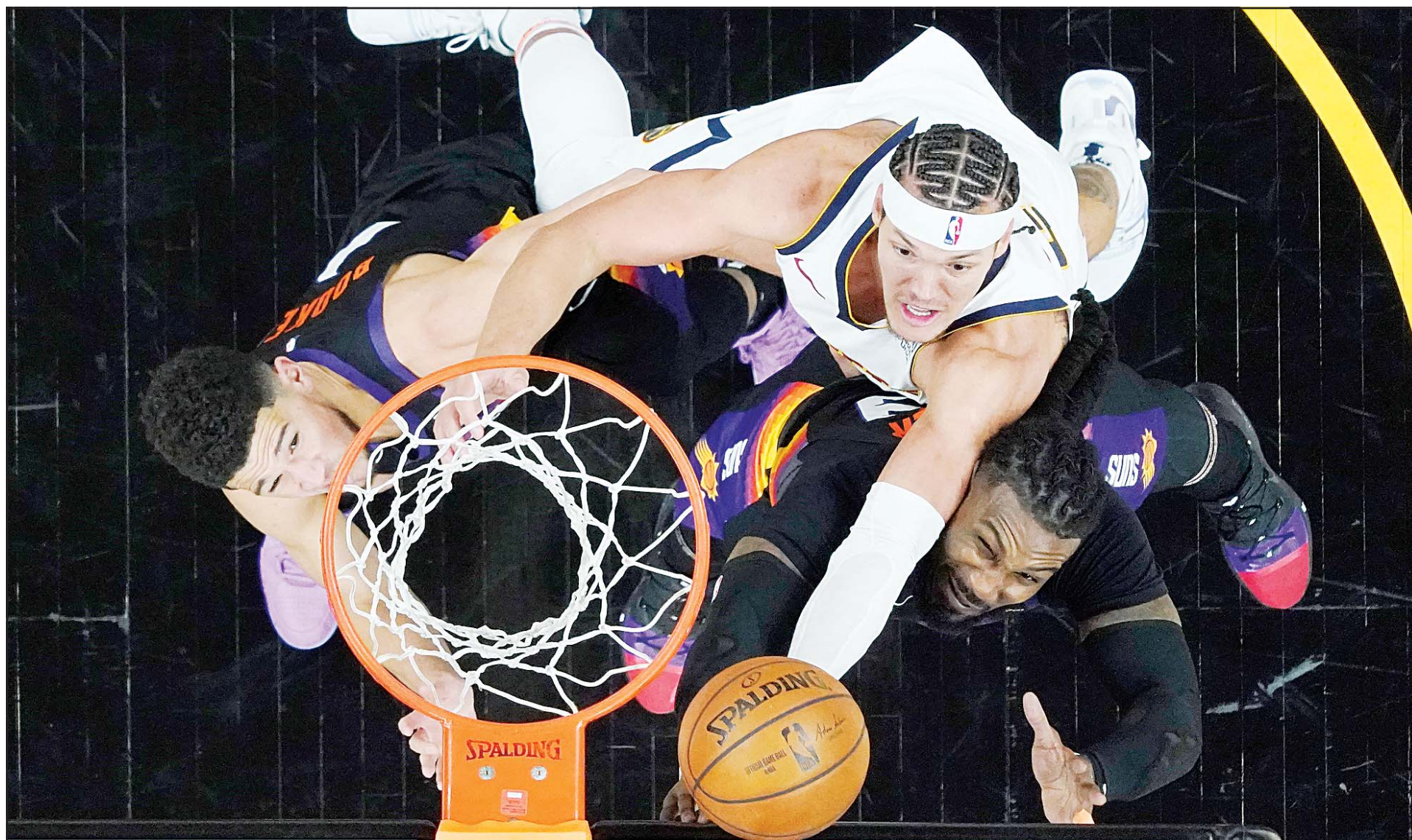
In Phoenix, in the opening minutes of the game, Chris Paul was bumped on his ailing right shoulder and grimaced for a second. His movements were a little tentative, his shots didn't look quite right.

One mid-range jumper fell and then another. A short floater found the net and then a 3-pointer splashed home as the crowd roared. The 11-time All-Star looked like his usual self, the rest of the Suns followed suit and Phoenix rallied for a 122-105 win over the Denver Nuggets in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals.

Paul and his rejuvenated right shoulder finished with 21 points and 11 assists while Mikal Bridges added a team-high 23 points on 8 of 12 shooting, including 4 of 8 from behind the arc.

The Suns trailed for most of the first half and 70-60 early in the third quarter but rallied to take the lead by late in the third. Devin Booker made a 3-pointer and Bridges added a driving layup for a 79-72 advantage.

They pushed the lead to 88-79 going into the fourth. Paul who played with an ailing shooting shoulder through most of the first round matchup against the Lakers - made back-to-back mid-range jumpers to put the Suns up 94-79 with 10:25 left. The flurry came much to the delight of the sellout crowd of 16,319, who anxiously watched the point guard's every move.



Denver Nuggets forward Aaron Gordon shoots over Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker, (left), and Phoenix Suns forward Jae Crowder, (right), during the second half of Game 1 of an NBA basketball second-round playoff series, on June 7, in Phoenix. (AP)

Zverev into 3rd Grand Slam last four

Zidasek, Pavlyuchenkova reach semifinals

PARIS, June 8, (AP) — Before the French Open, Tamara Zidasek had never advanced past the second round at any Grand Slam.

The former snowboarder has now become the first woman from Slovenia to reach the semifinals at a major tournament.

Spurred on by the vocal support of her coaching team on Court Philippe Chatrier, the 85th-ranked Zidasek defeated Spanish rival Paula Badosa 7-5, 4-6, 8-6 Tuesday at Roland Garros.

"It feels overwhelming," she said. Zidasek's next opponent at the clay-court event will be Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, another first-time semifinalist.

Pavlyuchenkova came out on top of an other tense battle to rally past her doubles partner Elena Rybakina 6-7 (2), 6-2, 9-7. The 31st-seeded Russian had lost at this stage 10 years ago at Roland Garros and was 0-6 in Grand Slam quarterfinals before taking to the court.

"Mentally it was really, really hard this morning," she said. "Especially since I needed to play Elena. But this is tennis, we both wanted to win. The key was to be able to return her serve."

Pavlyuchenkova did it well and converted six of 17 break points against her rival and friend.

Six of the eight women's quarterfinalists at this year's French Open had never made it so far at a Grand Slam tournament, including Zidasek, Badosa and Rybakina.

Her match with Zidasek featured 15 breaks of serve, and they hit a com-

bined total of 86 unforced errors. Rybakina, who upset Serena Williams in the previous round, struggled with her serve throughout.

When asked to reflect on her win, Zidasek said: "I guess I managed to keep my composure today a little bit better than her."

After splitting the first two sets,

anger at the changeover after Zidasek held for a 6-5 lead in the third. She

TENNIS

regained her composure but Zidasek then saved three break points to take

match point with a big forehand in the next game.

In perfect weather conditions, both players pulled off some spectacular winners but also hit a lot poor shots.

"I didn't feel myself in the whole match," Badosa said. "I'm a little bit sad about that, because I think I played maybe the worst match of the tourna-



Badosa violently threw her racket in a 7-6 lead and converted her second set point to take match point and of the clay season, but Slovenia's Tamara Zidasek celebrates as she defeats Spain's Paula Badosa during their quarterfinal match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris. (AP)