

# Thunder heat up from long range in time

**DAN WOIKE**  
ON THE NBA

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Thunder's communications head, Matt Tumbleson, turned around from his seat courtside with a big grin during the first timeout Friday night. A fan had just drilled a half-court shot for a \$20,000 prize. He knew what that meant. "I think we're undefeated when that happens," Tumbleson said. And there might not be a team in the NBA playoffs that needed to see a shot from long range more than Oklahoma City. In the first two games of one of the most anticipated first-round playoff series, the Thunder were awful from behind the three-point line, making just 10 of 61

attempts (16.4%) in a pair of losses in Portland. But back home Friday night, the rims were a lot friendlier. A second fan won an additional \$20,000 after he too made a half-court shot. The Thunder were just as hot, making 15 of 29 from three-point range in a critical 120-108 win over Portland in Game 3, avoiding a 3-0 series deficit thanks to some much-needed shotmaking. Russell Westbrook, Jerami Grant, Terrance Ferguson and Dennis Schroeder combined to make 13 of their 18 three-point shots. Of the four, Westbrook is the outlier, one of just six players to attempt 400 three-point shots in a season and make less than 30% of them. The hot shooting was enough to overcome a big

second half from Damian Lillard, who scored 25 of his 32 points in a third-quarter barrage. "Three-point shooting was one of our priorities," Portland coach Terry Stotts said. It's everyone's priority every night — or at least it should be. The days of NBA pundits sitting behind desks in television studios disparaging teams that look for outside shots first should be wrapping up. After Oklahoma City made 15 three-point shots to Portland's 12, teams that have hit more from deep are now 17-5 through the first week of the playoffs. It might be overly simplistic to say the NBA has evolved into a race to the three-point line — basketball is more than just one singular play. "It's not like the end all,

be all to me. I say that respectfully because it is really, really important," Thunder coach Billy Donovan said. "The most important thing to me is really sharing the ball, playing unselfishly, getting good shots. ... But the three-point line is a factor." Two guys left the arena with \$20,000 each because of the long ball. And the Thunder, they left with the series one step closer to being tied. **Siakam is magical** From the first few weeks of the season, it's been clear that Toronto third-year forward Pascal Siakam was the NBA's most improved player. How improved? Just ask Orlando. Friday night in a pivotal Game 3 in Orlando, it was Siakam — not Kawhi Leonard, not Kyle Lowry, not Marc Gasol — who did the

most damage to the Magic's upset attempt. Siakam, 25, scored 30 points to go along with 11 rebounds and four assists, but maybe more impressive than that, he hit three of four attempts from deep, a sign of his continued evolution from defensive Swiss Army knife to one of the NBA's best all-around prospects. Since Jan. 1, Siakam hit 38.8% from three-point range, numbers that would suggest his 0-for-7 start this postseason from deep was more of the anomaly than Friday night. Even when he's not hit shots, he's been Toronto's second-best player this postseason. He's scored at least 19 in each of the first three games of the Raptors' series with Orlando, grabbing at least nine rebounds. He's shooting better than

50% from the field, and he's committed just one turnover in a little more than 120 minutes of court time. When the end of season awards are announced, Siakam will almost certainly be named the NBA's most improved player. But, based on his start in the postseason, he's nowhere close to being done with his improving. **Embiid doubtful** The Philadelphia 76ers have listed All-Star center Joel Embiid as "doubtful" for Game 4 on Saturday in Brooklyn with a sore left knee. Embiid appeared in just 10 games after the All-Star break, and after playing in the first two against the Nets, he missed Game 3, in which Greg Monroe started in his place.



DAVE CHIDLEY Associated Press

**THE AVALANCHE'S** Colin Wilson, right, celebrates his goal with teammate Gabriel Landeskog.

**STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS**

## Top-seeded Flames KO'd by Avalanche

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colin Wilson and Mikko Rantanen each had two goals and an assist, and the Colorado Avalanche beat the host Calgary Flames 5-1 in Game 5 of their playoff series Friday night to advance to the second round. Gabriel Landeskog also scored, and Nathan MacKinnon and Tyson Barrie each had three assists as the Avalanche won a playoff series for the first time since 2008. T.J. Brodie scored for the Flames, and Mike Smith finished with 27 saves. The Flames' ouster marked the first time both conferences top seeds were

eliminated in the first round. East-leading Tampa Bay, which won the Presidents' Trophy with the league's best record, was swept by Columbus. **Toronto 2, at Boston 1:** Auston Matthews broke a scoreless tie in the third period, Kasperii Kapanen added another goal and the Maple Leafs held on to take a 3-2 lead in their first-round playoff series. With the goalie pulled for an extra skater, David Krejci got the Bruins on the board with 43.7 seconds left, but Boston couldn't tie it up. The Maple Leafs have a chance to close out the series when it shifts back to Toronto on Sunday.

## NHL SUMMARIES

**Avalanche 5, Flames 1**

Colorado	2	2	1	0	-5
Calgary	1	0	0	0	-1

FIRST PERIOD: 1. Col., Landeskog 1 (Barrie, MacKinnon), 9:40. 2. Col., Rantanen 4 (Makar, Wilson), 15:38. 3. Col., Brodie 2 (Bennett), 19:54. **Penalties**—Makar, COL, Penalty Shot (interference on breakaway (penalty shot)), 13:54. **SECOND PERIOD:** 4. Col., Wilson 1 (Rantanen), 6:52. 5. Col., Wilson 2 (Barrie, MacKinnon), 14:47 (pp). **Penalties**—Landeskog, COL, (hooking), 3:32. Tkachuk, CGY, (interference), 13:06. Zadorov, COL, (high-sticking), 17:46. Bennett, CGY, (hooking), 19:36. **THIRD PERIOD:** 6. Col., Rantanen 5 (Barrie, MacKinnon), 0:57 (pp). **Penalties**—Brodie, CGY, (cross-checking), 2:03. MacKinnon, COL, (interference), 2:33. Frolik, CGY, (cross-checking), 15:41. Hathaway, CGY, (slashing), 17:23. **SHOTS ON GOAL:** Col. 15-10-7-32. Cal. 9-14-6-29. Power-play conversions—Col. 2 of 5. Cal. 0 of 3.

**Maple Leafs 2, Bruins 1**

Toronto	0	2	0	-2
Boston	0	1	0	-1

FIRST PERIOD: Scoring—None. **Penalty**—Hyman, TOR, (tripping), 17:00. **SECOND PERIOD:** Scoring—None. **Penalties**—Marleau, TOR, (hooking), 4:13. Marner, TOR, (delay of game), 8:24. **THIRD PERIOD:** 1. Tor., Matthews 4 (Muzzin, Kapanen), 11:33. 2. Tor., Kapanen 1 (Rielly, Johansson), 13:45. 3. Bos., Krejci 2 (Pastmak, Krug), 19:16. **Penalty**—Bos. bench, served by Johansson (too many men on the ice), 7:14. **SHOTS ON GOAL:** Tor. 7-9-11-27. Bos. 6-9-14-29. Power-play conversions—Tor. 0 of 1. Bos. 0 of 3. **GOALIES:** Tor., Andersen 3-2 (29 shots-28 saves).

## STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS FIRST-ROUND SCHEDULE

**WESTERN CONFERENCE**

**P1 Calgary vs. WC2 Colorado**  
Avalanche win series 4-1

Gm 1	at Calgary 4, Colorado 0
Gm 2	Colo. 3, at Calgary 2 (OT)
Gm 3	at Colorado 6, Calgary 2
Gm 4	at Colo. 3, Calgary 2 (OT)
Gm 5	Colorado 5, at Calgary 1

**P2 San Jose vs. P3 Vegas**  
Golden Knights lead series 3-2

Gm 1	at San Jose 5, Vegas 2
Gm 2	Vegas 5, at San Jose 3
Gm 3	at Vegas 6, San Jose 3
Gm 4	at Vegas 5, San Jose 0
Gm 5	at San Jose 5, Vegas 2
Gm 6	Sunday at Vegas, TBD
Gm 7	Tuesday at San Jose, TBD*

**C1 Nashville vs. WC1 Dallas**  
Series tied 2-2

Gm 1	Dallas 3, at Nashville 2
Gm 2	at Nashville 2, Dallas 1 (OT)
Gm 3	Nashville 3, at Dallas 2
Gm 4	at Dallas 5, Nashville 1
Gm 5	Today at Nashville, noon
Gm 6	Monday at Dallas, TBD
Gm 7	Wed. at Nashville, TBD*

**C2 Winnipeg vs. C3 St. Louis**  
Blues lead series 3-2

Gm 1	St. Louis 2, at Winnipeg 1
Gm 2	St. Louis 4, at Winnipeg 3
Gm 3	Winnipeg 6, at St. Louis 3
Gm 4	Winn. 2, at St. Louis 1 (OT)
Gm 5	St. Louis 3, at Winnipeg 2
Gm 6	Today at St. Louis, 4
Gm 7	Monday at Winnipeg, TBD*

**EASTERN CONFERENCE**

**A1 Tampa Bay vs. WC2 Columbus**  
Blue Jackets win series 4-0

Gm 1	Columbus 4, at T.B. 3
Gm 2	Columbus 5, at T.B. 1
Gm 3	at Columbus 3, T.B. 1
Gm 4	at Columbus 7, T.B. 3

**A2 Boston vs. A3 Toronto**  
Maple Leafs lead series 3-2

Gm 1	Toronto 4, at Boston 1
Gm 2	at Boston 4, Toronto 1
Gm 3	at Toronto 3, Boston 2
Gm 4	Boston 6, at Toronto 4
Gm 5	Toronto 2, at Boston 1
Gm 6	Sunday at Toronto, Noon
Gm 7	Tuesday at Boston, TBD*

**M1 Washington vs. WC1 Carolina**  
Series tied 2-2

Gm 1	at Washington 4, Carolina 2
Gm 2	at Wash. 4, Carolina 3 (OT)
Gm 3	at Carolina 5, Washington 0
Gm 4	at Carolina 2, Washington 1
Gm 5	Today at Washington, 5
Gm 6	Monday at Carolina, TBD
Gm 7	Wed. at Washington, TBD*

**M2 N.Y. Islanders vs. M3 Pittsburgh**  
Islanders win series 4-0

Gm 1	at N.Y. 4, Pittsburgh 3 (OT)
Gm 2	at N.Y. 3, Pittsburgh 1
Gm 3	N.Y. 4, at Pittsburgh 1
Gm 4	N.Y. 3, at Pittsburgh 1

P: Pacific C: Central  
A: Atlantic M: Metropolitan  
WC: Wild card

\* — if necessary  
All times PDT, p.m. except noted

# Ready to bring out the big guns

Crawford is eager to prove he's better than every other welterweight champion.

BY LANCE PUGMIRE

NEW YORK — The odds don't favor Terence Crawford, but to know the welterweight champion is to understand he'll never accept defeat. So he takes to the Madison Square Garden ring Saturday night against Amir Khan, simultaneously defending his World Boxing Organization belt and building his public relations case that he's superior to every other welterweight champion. While Crawford (34-0, 25 knockouts) fights for veteran promoter Bob Arum's Top Rank promotional company, the four other welterweight champions — unbeaten Errol Spence Jr. and Keith Thurman, the legendary Manny Pacquiao and World Boxing Council champion Shawn Porter — are locked into deals with Arum rival Al Haymon's Premier Boxing Champions.

That makes doing cross-promotional business more complicated and unlikely. So Crawford has done his best to sharpen his focus on Spence, who established himself as the best of the Haymon stable last month by dominating four-division champion Mikey Garcia. Crawford and Spence had an animated backstage exchange at a fight last year, sizing each other up and boasting about their skills. Crawford's trainer Brian McIntyre said he believes the fighters forged a bond that night and share a vision to break through the business obstacles and press for a mega-fight. Arum said that should Crawford win Saturday, he will call Haymon next week to open negotiations. "I love that fight, and we want it," McIntyre said of Crawford-Spence. "We can't do anything else. It's just left for the stars to line up right. I'm sure they will. There's a lot of money on that table."

ESPN boxing analyst Timothy Bradley Jr. confirmed his friend Crawford wants Spence next should he beat Khan, a 10-1 underdog. "Spence has got to tell Al Haymon, 'This is the fight I want because I need people to stop saying this guy's No. 1,'" Bradley said at Friday's weigh-in, where Crawford weighed 146.4 pounds to Khan's 146.6. "Crawford wants that fight to prove himself. These millennials feel entitled to No. 1, but to do so, you've got to be willing to face the best. Crawford is, but these guys won't get in the ring with him. Stop barking and let's see action. With the performance coming Saturday night, Crawford's going to open up the division and put everyone on notice." Crawford, the former unified 140-pound champion making his second welterweight title defense, says he views Khan (33-4, 20 KOs), who previously wore a 140-pound belt, as a serious challenger capable of winning early rounds, as Khan did against Canelo Alvarez in their 2016 fight before the bigger Alvarez knocked him out in the sixth round. Crawford says Khan still possesses the hand speed and guile that paced him to victories over former champions Marcos Maidana, Zab Judah and Paulie Malignaggi. "Taking these kinds of



SARAH STIER Getty Images

**TERENCE CRAWFORD** weighs in for his welterweights fight against former champion Amir Khan.

fighters shows the kind of confidence I have in myself," Crawford said. Khan, 32, recognizes this is likely his last chance to be involved in the sport's pound-for-pound rankings and show, as he did in beating Maidana in the 2010 fight of the year, that his chin is durable enough to withstand a fighter inside his own weight class. "I'll do whatever I can to win the fight. It's too important," Khan said, acknowledging he'll go on the defensive if he wins early rounds against the occasionally slow-starting Crawford. McIntyre said he has encouraged Crawford to press the attack quickly. "I've stayed on him to punch more, to have better rhythm with his legs," McIntyre said. Sometimes when the gym work ended, McIntyre would glance at Crawford and see his mind wandering. "I'm going to tell you something Terence tells us about once a week when I'll catch him staring off in space between rounds," McIntyre said. "He gets up and says, 'I'm going to ... that dude up. ... I'm going to ... Spence up.' "That will and that hunger that he wants to fight Spence ... he's looking at it like everyone thinks Spence will beat him, so he wants to prove the world wrong. He

wants to show everyone he's the best." Saturday's card also includes a featherweight bout between Crawford's friend, featherweight Shakur Stevenson (10-0, six KOs), and recent 130-pound title challenger Christopher Diaz (24-1, 16 KOs). The co-main event is unbeaten lightweight Teofimo Lopez (12-0, 10 KOs) against Edis Tatli (31-2, 10 KOs). Lopez, who knocked out veteran Diego Magdaleno in late January, is pressing for a July title fight against International Boxing Federation champion Richard Comney and an early 2020 date against two-belt champion Vasiliy Lomachenko. Lopez is fretting that he's outgrowing his division, a concern expressed when he weighed 142 pounds Thursday night and was the last man on the morning weigh-in scale Friday. Lopez cut man Miguel Diaz preached calm as officials hovered over Lopez, worrying what the scale would read. "Last night was last night," Diaz assured. "Today is today." Sure enough, Lopez weighed in right at the 135-pound limit as his team cheered raucously. "I'm glad that's over!" Lopez exhaled, striding away from the scale.

# Garcia has trap fight versus Granados

Welterweight must avoid upset Saturday in Carson to secure bigger bouts later.

BY MANOUK AKOPYAN

Trap fights are one of boxing's recurring scenarios. When a marquee fighter has more significant matchups looming, for the sake of bigger business, promoters will set up their prizefighter with one last hurdle before a more palatable fight and payday can become a reality. Danny Garcia will be presented with a potential trap fight Saturday when he takes on journeyman Adrian Granados at Dignity Health Sports Park in Carson in a nationally televised fight on Fox. Garcia (34-2, 20 knockouts) is aiming to reclaim his stake atop the stacked 147-pound division and will be looking to rebound after los-

ing to Shawn Porter last summer for a shot at the World Boxing Council belt. If Garcia, 31, gets past Granados, he will be poised for a potential title opportunity against a who's who of welterweights such as Manny Pacquiao, Errol Spence Jr., Mikey Garcia, Adrien Broner and rematches with Keith Thurman and Porter to avenge losses. Garcia, who has lost two of his last three fights in close decisions, is not planning that far ahead — yet. "I'm ready for anybody, but I'm also not looking past Granados. At the end of the day, I have to get this victory," said Garcia, a former two-division champion. "There's a lot at stake, so I know Granados will be ready." "Danny has to look great and dominate," trainer Angel Garcia said of his son. "He has to put Granados down." Garcia, a Puerto Rican who fights out of Philadelphia, is one of the biggest

names in boxing. He has a decorated resume that features wins over Erik Morales (twice), Amir Khan, Zab Judah, Lucas Matthysse, Lamont Peterson, Paul Malignaggi and Robert Guerrero. Granados (20-6-2, 14 knockouts), from Chicago, does not come close to presenting the same pedigree as Garcia's previous opponents. His best career showings arguably came in disputed losses by decision to Porter and Broner. Granados, 29, wants to secure his breakthrough and spoil Garcia's plans of landing a career-defining fight. He admitted it's his last chance to become a star. "I'm tired of being known as a steppingstone and gatekeeper. I'm a legitimate fighter," Granados said. "I have a lot more to give than what I've been known for. I don't think Danny is looking past me, but I know he has bigger plans. I'm here to interrupt those plans." Garcia and Granados will walk into the ring Sat-

urday with something to prove. Their fighting styles should mesh well and deliver an action-packed fight. "I want the war. I hope he brings it to me," Garcia said. "The more he throws, the more he's going to be open for a big punch to land." The Fox broadcast begins at 5 p.m. Pacific time and also includes heavyweight title challenger Andy Ruiz (31-1, 20 knockouts) of Imperial, Calif., facing Russian veteran Alexander Dimitrenko (41-4, 26 knockouts) in the co-main event. To open the broadcast, Brandon Figueroa (18-0, 13 knockouts), the younger brother of Omar Figueroa, challenges Yonfrez Parejo (22-3-1, 11 knockouts) for the World Boxing Assn. interim super-bantamweight belt. Akopyan has been a member of the Boxing Writers Assn. of America since 2011 and has written for USA Today and the Guardian.