

SPORTS

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Iafallo finds scoring touch

He rediscovers his confidence just in time to help Kings take early series lead.

HELENE ELLIOTT



Alex Iafallo's goal production halted as abruptly and completely as if someone had twisted a faucet and jammed it in the "off" position.

He had enjoyed a solid start on the left side of the Kings' top line, scoring six goals and 13 points in his first 13 games, but his success didn't last. He went seven games without a goal, scored three goals in two games, and then went scoreless in eight games. He had 13 goals at the halfway point of the season and scored another three games later, leaving him primed to easily surpass the career-best 17 goals he had scored in the 2019-20 season.

And then ... nothing. Zero. Zilch. He couldn't put the puck in the ocean if he were standing at the end of the Santa Monica pier.

Iafallo went an unfathomable 23 games without scoring a goal, eventually dropping off the No. 1 line while trying to rediscover his game. Coach Todd McLellan offered help and encouragement and remained patient because he appreciated that Iafallo wasn't allowing his scoring woes to drag down his defensive game.

"There's some scorers in the league that when they're not scoring, sometimes there's not much else going [See Elliott, B9]



Stanley Cup playoffs

Kings at Edmonton

What: First round, Game 2 (Kings lead series, 1-0)

When: Tonight, 7

Where: Rogers Place, Edmonton

TV: ESPN2, BSSC

DODGERS 3, SAN FRANCISCO 1



Photographs by MARK J. TERRELL Associated Press

CHRIS TAYLOR hits a two-run single to right-center field off San Francisco Giants pitcher Carlos Rodon during the second inning.

Coming out swinging



JULIO URIAS threw six shutout innings against the Giants, giving up four hits and no walks while striking out four.

Dodgers' first matchup of season against the Giants doesn't disappoint, a close contest of contenders.

BY JACK HARRIS

Last year, they were separated by one game in the regular season. Their playoff series wasn't decided until the ninth inning of a winner-take-all Game 5.

It was as intense, dramatic and competitive as almost any season in the history of their rivalry, which spans more than a century.

And if Tuesday night was any indication, the Dodgers and San Francisco Giants might do it all over again.

In their first meeting of the season, the Dodgers won 3-1 in front of 43,370 at Dodger Stadium, prevail-



BOSTON 4, ANGELS 0

Angels blanked again

They mustered just three hits on a chilly night and suffer third shutout loss in last four. **B6**

ing in a pitchers' duel between Julio Urias (six scoreless innings) and Carlos Rodon (two runs and only three hits over six innings).

Like many of their matchups last year — when the 106-win Dodgers were edged out by the 107-win Giants for the National League West title, before knocking the Giants out of the playoffs in a classic five-game Division Series — there

[See Dodgers, B6]

HE'S A HEAVY HITTER WITH CLUBS TOO

Álvarez's obsession with golf could lead to another celebrated career after boxing

BY MANOUR AKOPIAN

Canelo Álvarez has gone from selling ice cream on the streets of Guadalajara, Mexico, as a youth to the creme de la creme of boxing.

Álvarez (37-2, 39 knockouts) breaks the bank to the tune of nearly \$40 million each time he graces a ring. The perennial pound-for-pound king and four-division champion will go down as one of the greatest fighters of his generation.

Álvarez will look to add to his legacy when he faces World Boxing Assn. light-heavyweight champion Dmitry Bivol at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas on Saturday, continuing his lucrative tradition of fighting during the week of Cinco De Mayo.

Álvarez plans on fighting seven more years, and should he beat Bivol, a tantalizing trilogy against

nemesis Gennady Golovkin awaits during Mexican independence day weekend Sept. 17.

Confidence is at the center of everything Álvarez does.

The day after Álvarez punished and pulverized Caleb Plant in November to further stamp his supremacy, he celebrated the only way he knew how — by heading to Shadow Creek Golf Course in Las Vegas to feed his growing obsession with golf.

Álvarez operates by the mantra "No Boxing, No Life," but once he gives up his gloves, he'll look for greener pastures with a golf club. His goal is to be good enough to consider pursuing a professional golf career, after picking up the sport in May 2019.

"Golf is competitive, and I am very competitive. That's why I love it," Álvarez told *The Times* in his



CLIFF HARRISON/Getty Images

CANELO ÁLVAREZ puts on the seventh green during a practice round before the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February.

Partain has UCLA set for success in volleyball

He records 43 assists, five kills as Bruins advance to face Long Beach State in an NCAA semifinal.

BY THUC NHI NGUYEN

John Spraw has a former high school basketball star, first-team All-Americans and gritty reserves on his roster. Attacking players rotate in and out for the UCLA coach, but one player never wavers.

No matter who joined Miles Partain on the court Tuesday night, the UCLA sophomore setter remained consistent and composed as No. 3 UCLA flexed its depth in a 25-23, 22-25, 26-24, 25-19 victory over No. 5 Pepperdine at Pauley Pavilion.

Partain, the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation player of the year, had 43 assists and five kills as UCLA (22-4) advanced to face No. 1 Long Beach State in Thursday's NCAA semifinal. Showing experience beyond his years, Partain has UCLA two wins away from the pro-

[See Volleyball, B8]

NBA PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

WESTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

Memphis vs. Golden State Series tied 1-1
Golden State 117, Mem 116
Memphis 106, Golden State 101
Sat. at Golden State, 5:30
Monday at Golden State, 7
May 11 at Memphis, TBD
May 13 at Golden State, TBD
May 16 at Memphis, TBD

Phoenix vs. Dallas

Phoenix 121, Dallas 114
Today at Phoenix, 7
Friday at Dallas, 6:30
Sunday at Dallas, 12:30
Tuesday at Phoenix, TBD
May 12 at Dallas, TBD
May 15 at Phoenix, TBD

Phoenix 121, Dallas 114
Today at Phoenix, 7
Friday at Dallas, 6:30
Sunday at Dallas, 12:30
Tuesday at Phoenix, TBD
May 12 at Dallas, TBD
May 15 at Phoenix, TBD

BOX SCORES

Grizzlies 106, Warriors 101
Grizzlies: Ja Morant 27, Desmond Bane 20, Jaren Jackson Jr. 14, Kyle Anderson 10, Steven Adams 10, Dillon Brooks 10, Kyle Van deroy 10, Zach Collins 10, Monte Morris 10, Isaiah Thomas 10, Garrison Mathews 10, Willie Miller 10, Robert Covington 10, Patrick Miller 10, Kyle Anderson 10, Steven Adams 10, Dillon Brooks 10, Kyle Van deroy 10, Zach Collins 10, Monte Morris 10, Isaiah Thomas 10, Garrison Mathews 10, Willie Miller 10, Robert Covington 10, Patrick Miller 10

Three-point goals: 7/36 (Warriors 3/11, Grizzlies 2/11)
Rebounds: 27 (Bane) Warriors; 26 (Bane) Grizzlies
Steals: 10 (Curry) Warriors; 10 (Morant) Grizzlies
Blocks: 3 (Curry) Warriors; 3 (Morant) Grizzlies
Points in the paint: 24 (Warriors) vs. 22 (Grizzlies)
Fast break points: 16 (Warriors) vs. 14 (Grizzlies)
Turnovers: 13 (Warriors) vs. 12 (Grizzlies)
Personal fouls: 20 (Warriors) vs. 19 (Grizzlies)
Technical fouls: 0 (Warriors) vs. 0 (Grizzlies)
Flagrant fouls: 0 (Warriors) vs. 0 (Grizzlies)

MEMPHIS

Memphis box score table with columns: MIN, FGA, FTA, 3PT, REB, AST, STL, BLK, PTS

Three-point goals: 14/40 (Morant 5/12, Williams 4/14, Jackson Jr. 2/7, Anderson 4/4, Bane 1/4, Brooks 0/1, Jones 0/1)
Rebounds: 4 (Bane)
Steals: 10 (Curry)
Blocks: 3 (Morant)
Points in the paint: 24 (Warriors) vs. 22 (Grizzlies)
Fast break points: 16 (Warriors) vs. 14 (Grizzlies)
Turnovers: 13 (Warriors) vs. 12 (Grizzlies)
Personal fouls: 20 (Warriors) vs. 19 (Grizzlies)
Technical fouls: 0 (Warriors) vs. 0 (Grizzlies)
Flagrant fouls: 0 (Warriors) vs. 0 (Grizzlies)

Golden State 25 26 24-101
Memphis 33 23 21 29-106



GIANNIS ANTE TOKOUNMPO, who had a triple-double in Game 1, had a hard time against Payton Pritchard, Jaylen Brown and the Celtics in Game 2.

NBA PLAYOFF ROUNDUP

Morant takes control, scores 47 for Grizzlies

Ja Morant scored 47 points to match his postseason high and carry the Memphis Grizzlies into a tie in the Western Conference semifinals with a 106-101 home win over the Golden State Warriors on Tuesday night.
Morant scored the last 15 points for Memphis, starting with 4:16 left. He drove and turned around a defender before hitting a seven-foot jumper with 1:42 left to put the Grizzlies ahead to stay at 100-90. He added four free throws and a nine-footer, finishing with 18 in the quarter.
The NBA's most improved player, who also had 47 in Game 2 against Utah

UCLA advances to semifinal

UCLA's first national title since 2006.
'It is really hard to be a first-year setter and get this far,' Speraw said. 'I'm really confident in his ability to grow and develop. This is just the beginning for him, and we're a good team when he's playing well.'
The Bruins hit .437, eclipsing .300 for the 17th consecutive match. They entered the NCAA tournament as the best hitting team in the country despite their top attacker, first-team All-American Ethan Champlin, ranking only 78th nationally in 2.59 kills per set. Instead of a single dominant force, the Bruins thrive on what Pertain calls a "six-dimensional" approach: UCLA has six players with at least 30 kills.

Opposite Kevin Kobrine, a four-year varsity basketball and volleyball player at Corona del Mar High, led the Bruins with 16 kills, followed by eight from Champlin and seven from middle blocker Merrick McHenry, who led the solo block and five block assists. Austin Wilmot led MPSF tournament champion Pepperdine with 12 kills and two block assists.

Sam Burgi, who had six kills and two digs, epitomized UCLA's bench depth. The red-shirt junior was inserted as a defensive sub to stabilize UCLA's passing in the second set after playing just three sets the entire season. Then he hammered home a set-kill with 1:11 left in the third before the Bruins comfortably pulled away for the fourth.
'Burgi goes down on the list of great performances from guys coming off the bench when it mattered most,' Speraw said. 'I had 100% confidence in him to do it.'
Speraw, who won two national championships at UCLA under legendary head coach Al Scates, said this team's depth reminds him of Bruins teams of old. It's not uncommon for the second team to defeat the starters in practice.

Álvarez's golf passion could lead to new career

Álvarez, from BHOJ San Diego gym.

Golf has turned into Álvarez's release, distracting him from the rigorous routines required to be a boxer, and he's making it look somewhat easy, as his golf highlights go viral now along with his knockouts.

His handicap is currently at 10, he says. Last June, Álvarez won a celebrity tournament in South Carolina.

"I don't come to play. I come to win," Álvarez wrote in an Instagram post.

During an AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am event in February, Álvarez came within one foot of sinking a hole in one on the par-three 17th.

When he nails impressive putts, he shadow boxes.

Take a peek at his online presence and it's filled with as many images of him swinging a stick as swinging at opponents.

Golf has helped bring out a different side of Álvarez's personality. The development coincided with his improving command of English after years of exclusively speaking Spanish.

But he's honest with his self-assessment, acknowledging that one day he can play great golf and the next he can play poorly.

"Golf is such a really hard sport, and it's a hard sport to be a pro. You need to be a golfer starting from your youth," Álvarez said. "I consider myself a two-sport guy, but I don't know if I'm a star or not yet in golf."

Álvarez's above-par play is even more impressive when you consider he didn't grow up around a sport that is mostly reserved for the wealthy.
Although the PGA Tour held the Mexico Open in Puerto Vallarta this past weekend, Mexico is not considered a hotbed for producing golfers. Only four native Mexicans have won a PGA event. In 2020, Carlos Ortiz became the first Mexican to win an event in more than 40 years.

Álvarez will represent Mexico in a USA vs. World nine-hole team play tournament at Liberty National in New Jersey on June 30.
The Irons Series is a big tournament and forms to represent my country. I'm really happy to be a part of it," Álvarez says.

Thomas Brookes, founder and chief executive of The Irons Series, says Álvarez can be transcendent beyond boxing borders as a powerful in-

ever you want besides Golf Channel," Álvarez quips.

Álvarez acknowledges he's addicted to golf.

"I don't play golf to be a better boxer. I play golf because I love golf," he said. "I love what the game of golf brings to my life. It's a challenge for me to be a better golfer and better player. Golf makes me feel calm in my personal life and boxing too."

Matheo Boxing head Eddie Hearn, who has served as Álvarez's primary promoter ever since the fighter split from Oscar De La Hoya in 2020, caters to Álvarez's appetite by arranging mini-golf in his hotel room and golf setups across hotel floors during fight weeks.

Much like Álvarez has two-time trainer of the year and lifelong confidant Eddy Reynoso in his boxing corner, he also has a team of golf coaches showing him the ropes on the links.

"He loves golf just as much as anyone I've ever seen," says Aaron Dexeimer, a former PGA Tour player who has coached Álvarez. "The one thing that sticks out to me is his dedication to improvement. It's pretty amazing to watch his confidence. It's a testament to who he is as a boxer. With him always having the belief that he's not going to fall — you can learn a lot from that. We're all self-doubters, and golf is an extremely hard game, but I never saw him doubt himself. He might not have executed how he wanted to, but it wasn't because he didn't think he could do it. That's what you need to be a great golfer."

Dexeimer says Álvarez's work ethic and mental approach are up there with some of the best golfers he's coached.

"If you ask him to hit one shot 150 times, he'll literally hit it 150 times. He understands hard work and what it takes," Dexeimer says. "If he decides to be a professional golfer, it's going to be a matter of transferring his body. I'm sure he can do that perfectly because that's what he does now with boxing and doesn't cut corners doing so. His future in golf is whatever he wants to make it."

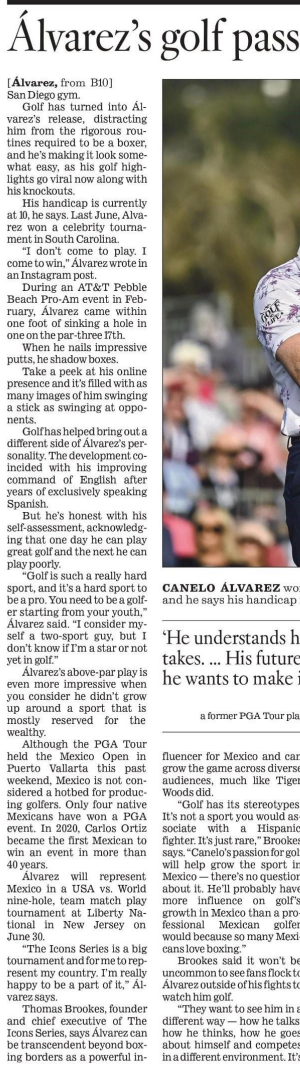
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KEYER KHAMAR POJA TOUR

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— AARON DEXEIMER, a former PGA Tour player who has coached Canelo Álvarez

fluencer for Mexico and can grow the game across diverse audiences, much like Tiger Woods did.

"Golf has its stereotypes. It's not a sport you would associate with a Hispanic fighter. It's just rare," Brookes says. "Canelo's passion for golf will help grow the sport in Mexico — it's no question about it. He'll probably have more influence in golf's growth in Mexico than a professional Mexican golfer would because so many Mexicans love boxing."

Brookes said it won't be uncommon to see fans flock to Álvarez outside of his fight to watch him golf.

"They want to see him in a different way — how he talks, how he thinks, how he goes about himself and competes in a different environment. It's

really interesting," Brookes said. "I'll put him in the one-to-watch category (as a top athlete-turned-golfer). With the ridiculous amount of time he's practicing, there's no question he could get his handicap to a much better level."

Álvarez plays golf with his inner circle as well as his famous friends.

His gone toe-to-toe and traded shots with Golden State Warriors star Stephen Curry, played rounds with Dallas Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliott and kicked it with retired Mexican goalkeeper Jorge Campos.

Álvarez's favorite golfer is Woods, and if he could gather a dream team for a round, the foursome would include Woods, Michael Jordan and Brooks Koepka.

"My wife is always mad at me, but I love golf. I tell her there are many TVs around the house — you can put what-

ever you want besides Golf Channel," Álvarez quips.

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UCLA men's Div. I volleyball Tuesday's results
Wed. A.O. Prentiss, 25-23, 22-25, 26-24, 25-19
Wed. J. North Greenwell, 25-15, 25-17, 25-16
Thursday's semifinals
Wed. South State (20-5) vs. UCLA (22-4), 6 p.m.
Wed. South State (23-3) vs. Hawaii (25-5), 7:30 p.m.