

Daily

Sports

NBA Finals: It ain't over till it's over

by Conner Gilson
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After Game 1 of the NBA Finals, the series somehow already felt like it was over. The Miami Heat got out to an early 23-10 lead in the first quarter, but were quickly overthrown by the more star-studded Lakers team, eventually losing 116-98. Heading into the weekend without Bam Adebayo and Goran Dragic, who both got hurt in the opening game, no one expected much from this Heat team, but here we are three days later with a 2-1 series that might just go the distance.

The Lakers picked up right where they left off in Game 2, with LeBron, Anthony Davis and even playoff Rajon Rondo coming up big in a 124-114 victory. Adebayo's absence was felt from the start — particularly on the defensive end — as his backups Kelly Olynyk and Meyers Leonard are much better known for their offensive game. With the big man out, the Lakers had their way in the paint, outscoring the Heat 56-46 inside and racking up 16 offensive rebounds. LeBron and AD once again showed why they are considered the best duo in the NBA, combining for 65 points, with AD adding 14 rebounds and LeBron flirting with another triple double.

The Heat put together a solid game, hitting the 50-40-90 mark as a team and moving the ball effectively through Jimmy Butler. Without two of his biggest weapons and ball handlers, Butler played a relatively passive role, scoring 25 points on just 7-17 shooting, but piling on



Miami Heat's Bam Adebayo, center, congratulates Miami Heat's Jimmy Butler (22) after a win against the Los Angeles Lakers 115-104 during the second half in Game 3 of basketball's NBA Finals, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. PHOTO BY MARK J. TERRILL/AP

a playoff-best 13 assists. Other contributors on the offensive end were Olynyk and Tyler Herro, who chipped in 24 and 17 points respectively.

In the end it was clear the Lakers were simply the better team, as they led by more than 10 more often than not throughout this game. And when the announcement came out that Dragic and Adebayo would miss Game 3 as well, the outlook was bleak for Miami and their fans.

Enter Jimmy Butler, who after taking on a less aggressive role in Game 2 completely took over in the most important game of his career to date.

Much like in Game 1, the Heat got off to an early 13-point lead.

Also similarly to Game 1, the

Lakers had it down to three by the end of the first. The second and third quarters were as close as the two teams have played and heading into the fourth Miami held just a five-point lead.

The Heat got off to a quick start in the fourth, opening up a double digit lead, but LeBron and AD wouldn't give up getting the game within two or three points on multiple occasions. What kept them from getting over the hump and taking the lead? Butler. Jimmy Buckets had one of the best games of his career, finishing with 40 points, 11 rebounds and 13 assists, just the fourth 40-point triple double in NBA Finals history.

Butler willed his team to vic-

tory in this one on the offensive end, but it was also the complete defensive effort that earned them the win. By game's end, the Lakers had committed 19 turnovers (including 10 in the first quarter) and could not for the life of them figure out Miami's zone defense. Davis finished with just 15 points, and only three other players got in double figures for the Lakers.

Bam and Dragic could potentially return for Game 4, making the series that everyone thought was lost much more interesting as we gear up for Tuesday's matchup. If there is one thing we can take away from this weekend of games, it's that you can never count out Jimmy Butler and the Miami Heat.

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS: THE EAST'S SUCCESS

by Ashton Stansel
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As fans around the world watched the 2020 Play-Ins Stage of the World Championship for League of Legends, it seemed like the COVID-19 pandemic might've legitimately had an impact on the teams and players. The teams from smaller regions like Russia, Brazil and Turkey put on exceptional performances, surpassing the historical expectations set for play-ins teams. The Turkish lineup, Papara SuperMassive, eliminated the fourth seed out of Europe, MAD Lions. LGD Gaming from China made it but barely; they were one game away from being the first team eliminated from Worlds.

But once the Group Stage started on Saturday, it was clear the magic hadn't necessarily carried over. The event opened with a dominating win by TOP Esports over FlyQuest. The dominating wins continued as the Unicorns of Love were demolished by DRX, Rogue claimed a win for Europe of PSG Talon, who have their full roster again and DAMWON Gaming of Korea beat JD Gaming, a Chinese roster.

The close game on day one came when LGD Gaming, who had struggled in the play-ins, came up against Gen.G. At 45 minutes long, it was the longest game by 11 minutes, and ended up as a close game. While Gen.G seemed to have the edge, LGD was not as far out as most people would've predicted after their abysmal start to Worlds, and it took the full 45 minutes for Gen.G to claim a very shaky victory.

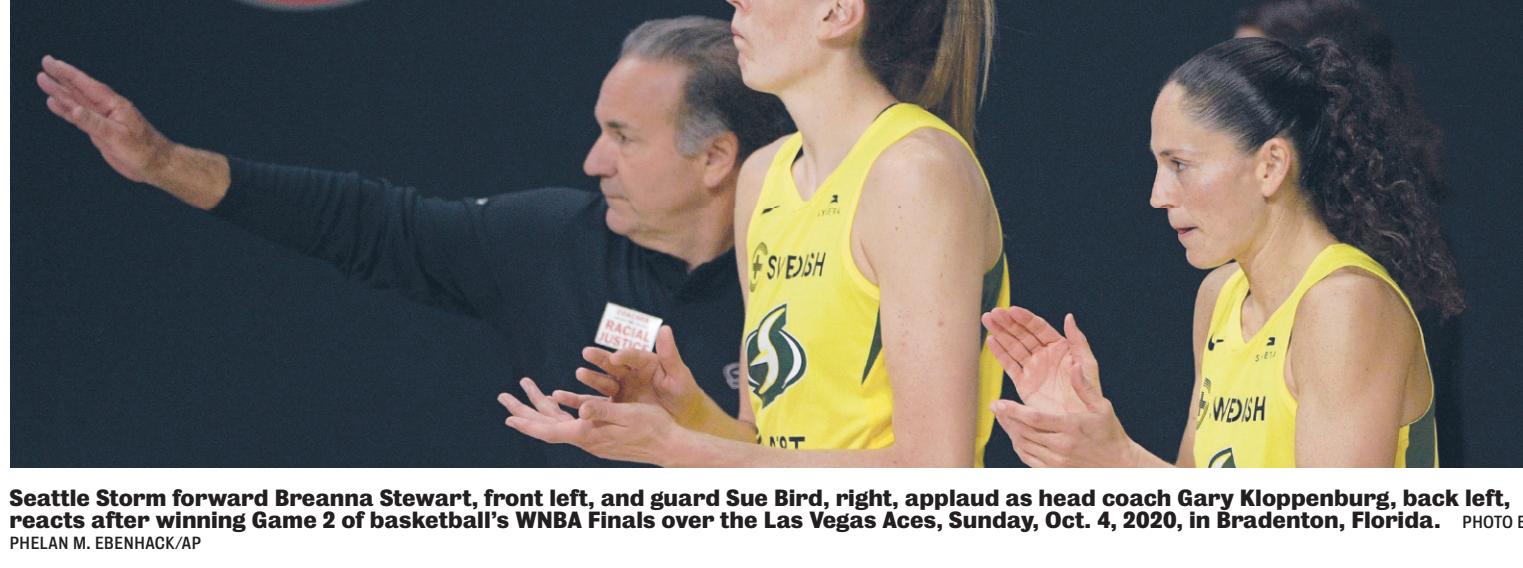
North America's woes continued; they would not claim a win until Day Three, when FlyQuest managed a victory over the Unicorns. As of Monday, North America has a pitiful one win and five losses. PSG Talon and the Unicorns, two of the four play-ins teams, have yet to win a game and sit at 0-5 combined.

In Group A, Machi Esports from the PCS has managed a better than expected 1-1 record, beating Team Liquid but losing to G2. G2 seemingly shook off their troubles from summer; while they were the first seed from Europe, they had inconsistency issues and a lot of problems during the Summer Split. But in the first few days, dominant wins over Machi and Suning made it clear that G2 had come to claim the trophy that they'd been so close to in 2019.

It's clear the Eastern teams are going to be the favorites to win this championship. The Chinese teams have combined for a 6-3 record, while the Koreans are boasting a 6-1, with DRX having the only loss, coming from a close game against Top Esports. Group D has been perhaps the closest group thus far; FlyQuest barely beat the Unicorns today, too, and DRX looked more than capable of taking Top down had they not suffered a series of mistakes.

See LEAGUE, p. 9

WNBA: Seattle take the finals by storm



Seattle Storm forward Breanna Stewart, front left, and guard Sue Bird, right, applaud as head coach Gary Kloppenborg, back left, reacts after winning Game 2 of basketball's WNBA Finals over the Las Vegas Aces, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020, in Bradenton, Florida. PHOTO BY PHELAN M. EBENHACK/AP

by Hanaisha Lewis
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Breanna Stewart is the name ringing through the WNBA finals. After the Seattle Storm lost to the Las Vegas Aces both times the teams faced off during the regular season, Stewart has played a major role in the victories that the Storm were able to achieve thus far in the finals.

The Storm are currently 2-0 in this best-of-five finals series.

Stewart finished Game 1 of

the finals with 37 points, 15 rebounds and 4 blocks as the Storm secured a 93-80 victory.

"I'm excited for the big moment and the big stage. I expect to be here," Stewart told Associated Press. "... This is why I play basketball. This is why I play, to have big games to help my team in big moments."

Stewart nearly broke Angel McCoughtry's WNBA finals record in scoring, but was shy of it by one point. Sue Bird on the other hand, who is also a key contributor to the Storm, broke two WNBA playoff-records by ending Game 1 with 16 assists and having 10 assists in the first half.

As the Storm are on the verge of a second championship within three years, Stewart went on to lead the Storm in Game 2 as well, ending with 22 points. The Storm, as a whole, set a WNBA championship round record of 33 assists, led by Sue Bird with 10 assists, as they defeated Las Vegas 104-91.

WNBA MVP A'ja Wilson led the Aces in Game 2 with 20 points.

Game 2 for the Aces consisted of five free-throw attempts to the Storm's 15 attempts, alongside 15 turnovers. This Aces team is used to averaging

over 23 attempts at the line, yet only managed to get five attempts, which did not sit well with coach Bill Laimbeer.

"We shoot five free throws, we shoot more than anyone in the history of league," Laimbeer explained in an interview with Associated Press. "That was the determining factor in this ballgame. They got fouled and got calls."

The Storm will either end the Finals series with Game 3 on Tuesday, or the Aces will push for there to be a Game 4. With either team, anything is possible.

WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

Games we're watching this week



Dodgers

vs.



Padres

Teams we're paying attention to

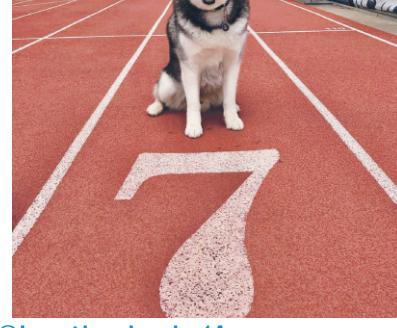


MIAAMI HEAT

Athletes we're paying attention to

Jimmy Butler

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY



@jonathanhusky14
It's my birthday!!! Guess how old I am.
(I've given you a little hint in the photo.)

TWEETS OF THE DAY



Todd Fuhrman

@ToddFuhrman

Adam Gase outlasting Bill O'Brien now the biggest upset of the NFL season

Storrs South

@UConn6thBorough

First Patriots game since the late Cretaceous period I'm walking into expecting them to get blown out

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Hey Dave: What the heck happened on Sunday?

by David Sandoval

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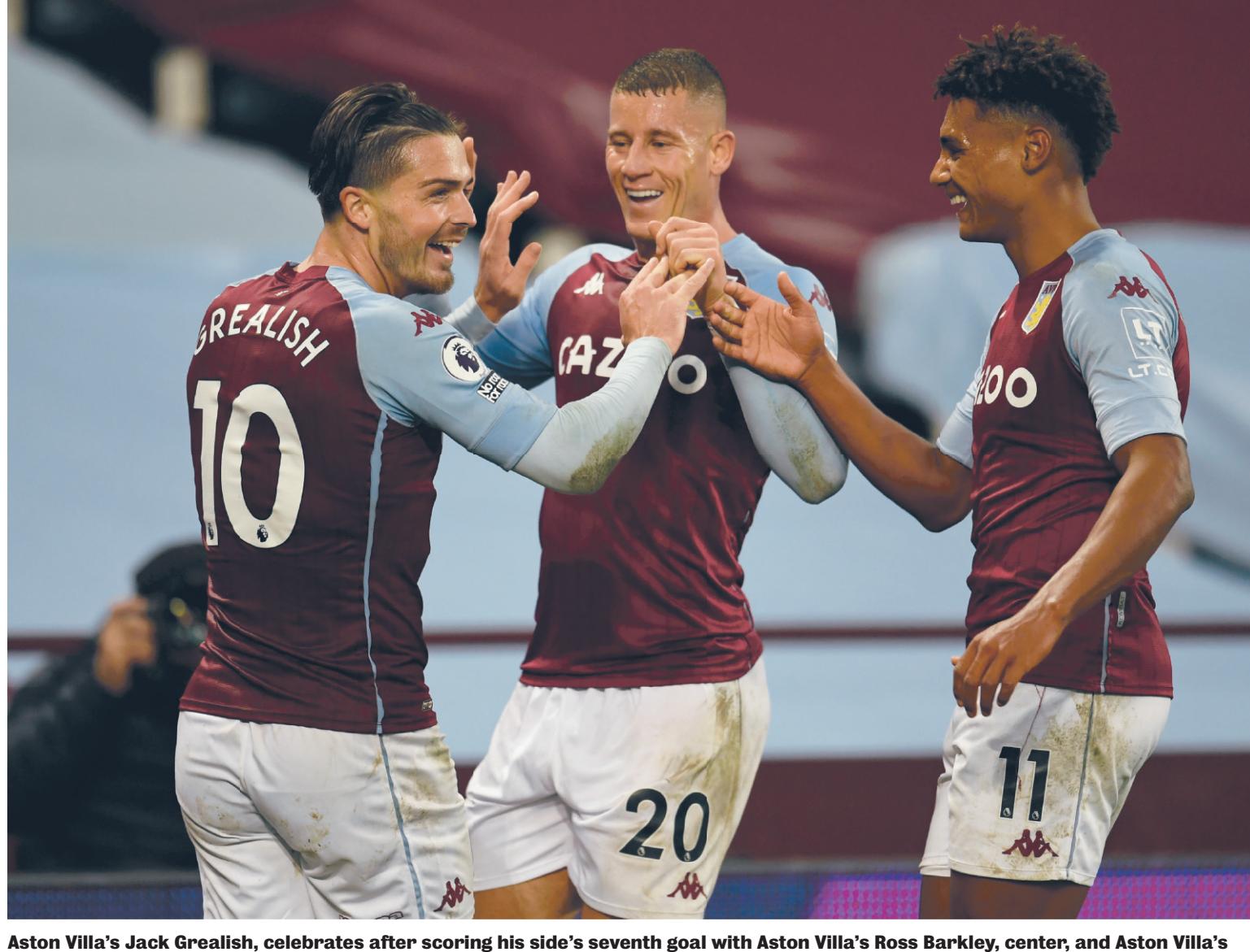
I guess for a short answer, it's just 2020 things; but all in all, it's the beautiful game simply taking its course.

If you have no idea what I'm talking about, then you really missed out on not one, but two eventful games that truly lived up to the spooky month of October. The matches I'm talking about are Manchester United vs. Tottenham Hotspur and Liverpool vs. Aston Villa.

Starting off chronologically, the Lilywhites traveled to Old Trafford after having incredible form leading up to the match following the controversial draw against Newcastle United. Winning on penalties against London rivals Chelsea in the Carabao Cup Tuesday and securing their place in the Europa League group stage after defeating Maccabi Haifa 7-2, everything was going well for Jose Mourinho's team... until the very first minute of the match when they gave away a penalty.

While I thought the Red Devils taking the early lead would be the beginning of the end in terms of Spurs' form, Tottenham were very quick to respond with a Tangy Ndombélé equalizer, followed by braces from Heung-Min Son and Harry Kane with United's Anthony Martial getting a red card in the 28th minute. Everything was easily going Tottenham's way after finishing the first half 4-1. I mean for Christ's sake, even Serge Aurier scored against the Red Devils in the second half; that's basically how you know it was game, set and match. Shoutout to Harry Maguire for being such a good defender to merit United's £80 million payment (I mean that very sarcastically).

This was just clinical soccer, or as Jose Mourinho would put it, "This is football heritage." The match reminded me of



Aston Villa's Jack Grealish, left, celebrates after scoring his side's seventh goal with Aston Villa's Ross Barkley, center, and Aston Villa's Ollie Watkins during the English Premier League soccer match between Aston Villa and Liverpool at the Villa Park stadium in Birmingham, England, Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020. PHOTO BY PETER POWELL, POOL VIA AP

when the league had "Barclays" in its name in terms of high-energy games and pure upsets. I would also heavily argue that Tottenham's current form has to do with Mourinho's project at the North London club. With their recent signings of Matt Doherty, Pierre-Emile Højbjerg and Sergio Reguilón to name a few, they've all added the depth and chemistry the club have long needed to compete. With the international break this week, this will be perfect for Tottenham to rest up and continue their form

when soccer returns, especially for players like Son and Ndombélé. On top of that, Gareth Bale will be fit enough to play once the break's over, and I just don't think the league will be ready for the Son, Kane and Bale trio. You heard it here first.

While Man U fans were saddened by their defeat, Liverpool easily cheered them up by living up to their motto of "You'll Never Walk Alone," and somehow lost 7-2 to Villa. Yeah, the current champions of England were defeated by a side who barely man-

aged to stay in the league last season. 2020 has been an extremely weird year.

While I don't really have much to say about the result as Liverpool has embarrassed themselves enough, this should really be a wakeup call for Jurgen Klöpp that anything is possible. After gloating for so long about being the champions of England and of Europe the year before, the Reds are off to a rocky start this season while their Merseyside rivals Everton are on top of the league (also really weird

to see). To let someone like Ollie Watkins score a hat trick against you is just shambolic, and I hope that Adrián doesn't start for Liverpool for a while. Not only him, but Joe Gomez was also just horrendous in Sunday's game and needs to be on the bench as well.

These two games just go to show how crazy yet beautiful the sport of soccer can be; and because it's the year 2020 and anything can happen this year, fans can expect similar results in future games. As Patrice Evra once said, "I love this game!"

DB's Weekly Take: The NFL's top 10 quarterbacks right now

by Danny Barletta

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By the time you're reading this, the 2020 NFL season will be essentially a quarter of the way over, with every team except the Tennessee Titans and Pittsburgh Steelers having played four games. So I thought I'd do a quarterback ranking based on my observations from the first four weeks of the season. Some of the guys on this list are very predictable, since they were expected to hold their place among the league's best. But others have overachieved this season and made their way into the top 10 discussion. Feel free to disagree with me, as this is just my personal list. Here we go.

10. Tom Brady, Tampa Bay Buccaneers

If I was writing this at half-time of Sunday's game, Brady wouldn't even have been in the

running for a spot on

during that time. His most recent performance against the Chargers was one of his best since his 2017 MVP season. The 43 year-old quietly is sixth in the league in passing yards with 1,122 and third in the league in touchdown passes with 11 at the time of writing.

He has thrown four interceptions this season, including two really ugly pick-sixes, but the good has definitely outweighed the bad so far, and the Buccaneers are 3-1 as a result. If Brady continues to get comfortable in his new environment, the "Brady is washed" crowd may have to postpone their party for another season. Because it looks like the six-time Super Bowl champion still has more in the tank.

9. Kyler Murray, Arizona Cardinals

Murray being on here is a classic example of passing the eye test. His stats aren't particularly impressive this year passing the ball, but if you made a highlight reel of the 10 best plays in the NFL this season, Murray could easily have three on there. He's up there with Lamar Jackson for the most electric running quarterback in the game.

In fact, he's ahead of

Jackson

39 receptions.

Murray had his best game passing in the Cardinals' most recent game, a 31-21 loss to the Carolina Panthers. He threw three touchdowns and zero picks. If he can have more days like that moving forward, he'll find himself in the top five not before long.

8. Derek Carr, Las Vegas Raiders

Carr is definitely one of the surprises on this list. Once considered one of the brightest young players in the league, he

kind of fell by the way-side the last

playoffs for just the second time in his seven-year tenure.

Carr has completed over 73% of his passes this season for 1,095 yards, eight touchdowns and zero interceptions through the first four games. His 113.6 passer rating is good for fifth in the league at the time of writing. He's been extremely efficient so far and exactly what the Raiders need to balance their impressive rushing attack headlined by Josh Jacobs.

If Carr can keep this up, the Raiders could be a surprise playoff team in this year's expanded postseason. He's been nothing short of terrific.

7. Deshaun Watson, Houston Texans

The Texans are a terrible organization who just fired their head coach and general manager. The one thing they got right was drafting a franchise

quarterback in

Watson, but

they've

been so

inept at

put-

ting

him in a

position to

succeed.

Still, he

has willed

the Tex-

ans to the

playoffs in

the last two

seasons and has

be-

come one of the best quarterbacks in the league.

Unfortunately this year, Houston had one of the hardest schedules to start their season, and despite playing well at times, they're in a 0-4 hole with a slim chance to make the playoffs. Despite the Texans' struggles, Watson has looked the same, extending plays behind a bad offensive line better than anyone in football.

He's thrown for 1,092 yards and six touchdowns so far, and we know he's good for at least one jaw-dropping play each week. The Texans certainly aren't losing because of him, but he's going to have to be even better if they're going to turn the season around.

6. Dak Prescott, Dallas Cowboys

Forget everything you know about the Cowboys for a second. Forget that they're 1-3 and underperforming for what seems like the 25th year in a row. Prescott has been really good, and there's no denying that.

He's leading the league by a landslide in passing yards with 1,690, and he has thrown nine touchdowns and rushed for

three more. He's on

pace to de-

mol-

ish the single-season passing record and become the NFL's first ever 6,000-yard passer. Granted, that likely won't happen because the reason he's thrown for so many yards is he's constantly in situations where he has to throw because his team is always losing.

Photo via AP

See QB, p. 9

son for the

couple of years. But he is back in a big way this season looking to lead the Raiders to the

league lead in rushing yards (265) and rushing touchdowns (four, tied with Cam Newton) for a quarterback this season. And while he's struggled a little bit passing — he's third in the league with five interceptions — Murray has also thrown for seven touchdowns and is developing a great connection with DeAndre Hopkins, who leads the league with

After a below-average first two weeks, Brady has played like himself again in the last two, throwing eight touchdowns to just one interception

Throwback Photo of the Day | Light show!



In this file photo, UConn's Brett Graham runs out of the tunnel before a game versus the USF Bulls. The Huskies lost to the Bulls 48-22, and running back Kevin Mensah recorded his 2,000th rushing yard of his career. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Ligue 1 Recap

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Round six of the Ligue 1 season served as a reality check for all teams looking to take away the league title from Paris-Saint Germain. Despite the slow start, the Parisians demonstrated that it is going to take an extraordinary feat to dethrone them as champions of France's premier footballing division.

The richest club in France hosted Angers SCO at the Parc Des Princes on Friday, Oct. 2, absolutely decimating them 6-1 in a game which saw new signing Alessandro Florenzi score his first goal for the club, an extraordinary volley from just inside the right side of Angers box.

Attacking midfielder Neymar Jr. then scored his first two goals of the season, with forward Kylian Mbappé and right back Alessandro Florenzi able to square it back to him at the top of the box, slotting it into the back of the net. Midfielders Julian Draxler and Idrissa Gana Gueye, along with Mbappé, scored the last three goals of the match to make it 6-1 for Paris.

Despite the great result, the headlines were stolen by a continued feud between PSG manager Thomas Tuchel and sporting director Leonardo Nascimento de Araújo. Tuchel expressed his discontent about the club's lack of activity in the transfer market after the match. "If we stay like this, with this reduced squad, we cannot expect to have the same objectives, even though we could still reach them. In general, we lose too many players for nothing..." he said. Leonardo was questioned about the comments made by the German coach after the match. "We did not like these statements. The club did not like them, neither did I personally like them... If he decides to stay, he needs to respect the board's strategy, the internal rules and the moment that the club is going through, which is delicate."

This comes after reports from British media outlet The Daily Mail, which claimed PSG players were "losing faith in boss Thomas Tuchel." Although this article was published after back-to-back losses to RC Lens and Olympique de Marseille — with form improving since then — players inside the dressing room are still very critical of the German, stating his only tactic is to "give the ball to Neymar." Furthermore, relationships between key players have deteriorated, with Tuchel's relationship with main striker Mauro Icardi said to be "cold."

If Tuchel is able to get results, all will be forgotten. However, any slip-up will be used to get rid of him, with former manager Borussia Dortmund beginning his third season at the French capitol.

Olympique de Marseille and Olympique Lyonnais met Sunday, Oct. 4 in what can only be de-

scribed as anticlimactic. The "Choc Des Olympiques" may not be the biggest rivalry in French football, but it's definitely an unique battle between two historic sides.

Undoubtedly, these two teams have the best squads they have had in quite some time. Lyon were able to keep the likes of midfielder Houssem Aouar and forward Memphis Depay, which only bolster an already solid team with players such as center midfielder Maxence Caqueret, right mid-

fielder Karl Toko Ekambi, left midfielder Maxwel Cornet and striker Moussa Dembélé.

The opposing side has veteran fullbacks Hiroki Sakai and Jordan Amavi, who consistently go up and down the pitch, maintaining their tactical discipline in defense while serving in balls into the box in attack, attempting to find the head of strikers Dario Benedetto and Nemanja Radonjic, respectively.

Moreover, right winger Florian Thauvin is a veteran member of the squad who has appeared more than 150 times for "Les Phocéens."

Transitioning to what occurred in the match, the beginning stages showed Marseille coming out very sluggishly, something that does not come as a surprise to anyone who has watched them play in the past three weeks. Despite Lyon putting Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda under pressure, Thauvin took advantage of a Lyon loss of possession, finding attacking midfielder Dimitri Payet, who was able to slide it into the back of the net.

Payet's solid performance would be cut short, however, as he was shown red for a reckless tackle on Lyon right back Léo Dubois, stepping on his ankle with the studs of his cleat.

Although originally shown a yellow card, a VAR review would see

the yellow card exchanged for a straight red. Like

the beginning of the match, Lyon once again took control, with quick play around Marseille's box leading to a penalty for "Les Gones," after center back Álvaro Gonzalez stomped on left back Melvin Bard's right foot.

Lyon continued dominating the match, testing Mandanda, who came up big for Marseille and arguably kept them in the game. However, it was Lyon that ultimately proved to be their own worst enemy, not taking advantage of the multiple chances they created, particularly a Memphis Depay cross that rolled across the six yard box and somehow was not put into an empty net by Thiago Mendes, who hit the post.

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change things before the Champions League group stage, unless they wish to be embarrassed by Europe's elite.

Marseille now stand 10th in the table with nine points, while Lyon stand 14th with seven points. The draw ultimately did not benefit either team, with both falling in the table as a result.

Niko Kovac's men encountered a hurdle they were not able to overcome, and that would be Olivier Dall'Orlio and his Stade Brestois 29 squad when they traveled to the Stade Francis Le Ble on Sunday, Oct. 4.

Monaco continue working with a relatively young team that is still maturing before our very eyes, with center backs Benoît Badiashile and Chrislain Mastima, right back Julian Biancone and defensive midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni all below the age of 20.

This inexperience ultimately led them to concede their first goal early in the match after not being able to handle an intense press from Brestois, losing the ball in their half and conceding off a cross put into the net at the far post by right midfielder Romain Faivre.

They committed this same sacrificial error less than 10 minutes after the first, with veteran midfielder Cesc Fàbregas uncharacteristically losing the ball in his own half. Brestois striker Steve Mounié then took a shot on goal, just barely being cleared off the line by Monaco center back Christian Matsima.

Midfielder Sofian Diop and left winger Gelson Martins were two of the most creative players in this squad, moving the ball from side to side in the second half and finding fullbacks Julian Biancone and

Ruben Aguilar, putting crosses into the box that Stevan Jovetic — who came in for the sub-pair Wissam Ben Yedder — was not able to connect

outlet for Monaco throughout the second half, but he could not put effective balls into the box, consistently missing the target or sending it out for a goal kick.

The best opportunity of the day came from center back Benoit Badiashile, who was one-on-one with the goalkeeper from less than a yard out, with his shot sailing into the stands. Despite putting Brestois under pressure for the majority of the second half, Brestois would hold on to the victory, taking all three points.

This result moved Brestois up to 11th in the table with nine points, while Monaco fell to sixth with 10 points.

Veteran players Fabregas, Ben Yedder and Jovetic have not been able to make their presence felt in a very average squad. It's as if the inexperience and schoolboy errors made by these young players are toxic, with Ben Yedder playing below his usual standard, and Fabregas making uncharacteristic errors. Jovetic simply has not been able to find a rhythm with this young squad, once again demonstrating how difficult it will be to make an impact on this team.

Monaco's faith will continue to trust in the former Croatian International, as they understand this rebuild will be a very grueling process. They've gone through three managers in the span of two years and understand that a job like the one Kovac did at Eintracht Frankfurt in Germany — revitalizing them and making it one of the Bundesliga's best clubs — will not happen overnight.

Despite this, football fans are impatient. If Kova does not show some sort of improvement in the squad by the end of the season, his stint at the club may well be over by next summer.

Photos via AP

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Manager Rudi Garcia and his Lyon squad will leave disappointed that they were unable to claim the three points, but content with the fact they finally seem to have found a style of play, revolving around possession and quick build-up play in the opposition's half.

The pressure on manager André Villas-Boas will only continue to mount. His team has been performing dreadfully as of late,

not winning their last four matches and looking very lost on the pitch. They should be eager to

on.

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