

The Most Shocking Upset Of The 2024 Men's March Madness Tournament: Oakland Defeats Kentucky

ZACH GODSEY

In what is possibly the most shocking upset that we will see over the course of the entire 2024 NCAA Men's Basketball March Madness tournament, the Oakland Golden Grizzlies, the 14th-seed, beat the third-seeded Kentucky Wildcats with an 80-76 win. This win marked the first March Madness victory in Oakland Mens Basketball history since 2011, ending their 13-year drought. Kentucky, a team adorned with potential NBA talent and led by the veteran John Calipari, found themselves trailing and unable to catch up for most of the night. The entire Oakland team played a nearly flawless game right up until the buzzer, but one player stood out among them. Jack Gohlke, a graduate transfer from Hillsdale College — a Division II basketball school — was the star of the night, showcasing a per-

formance that outshone the many NBA prospects that played in that game. Standing at 6 foot 3 inches, Gohlke scored a career-high 32 points, which were primarily from his ten 3-pointers, nearly breaking the NCAA Tournament single-game 3-point record. In addition to Gohlke, the Horizon League Player of the Year Trey Townsend contributed 17 points, and DQ Cole's clutch 3-pointer in the final minutes of the game sealed the victory for Oakland.

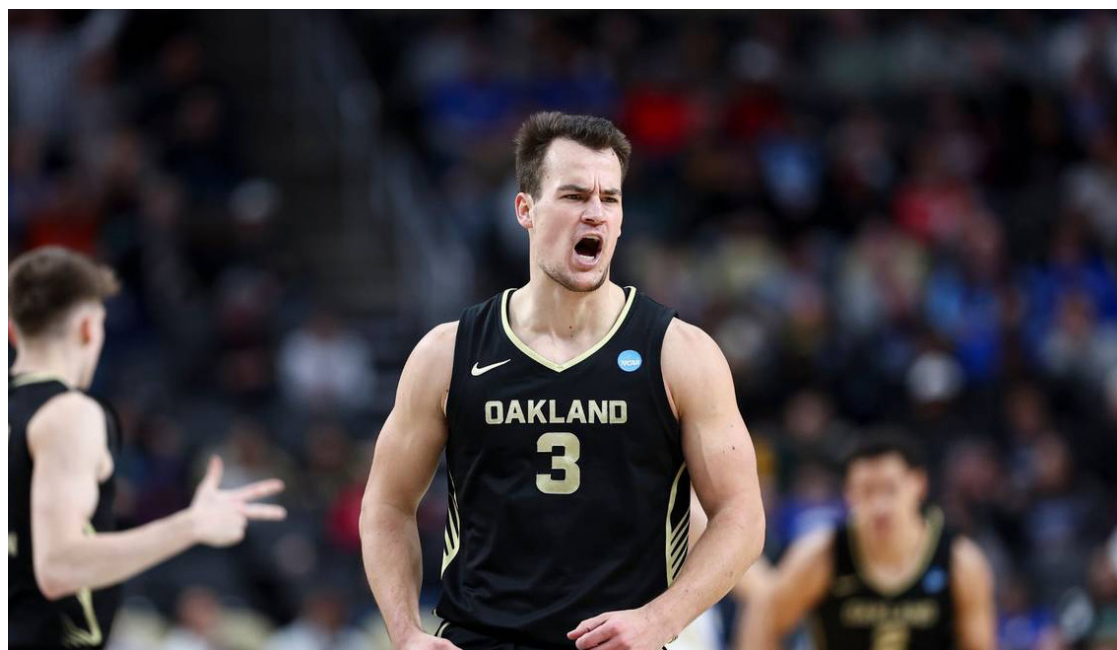
Oakland's victory was rooted in a season-long belief that they could compete with any team, regardless of the opponent's reputation. This confidence was palpable from the start of the game, as Gohlke's 3-point shooting gave Oakland some early momentum. Despite Kentucky's attempts to shut down his 3-point shot with a box-and-one defense, Oakland was able to adapt and center the offense around getting him an open shot. This

quick flexibility allowed a steady stream of points to come from behind the arc, eventually giving them the win.

Although Oakland's upset over Kentucky most likely shattered the vast majority of brackets across the country, Gohlke's journey from a Division II player to

being a star in the 2024 NCAA tournament, and Oakland's upset as a whole, is the epitome of March Madness. For underdog teams like Oakland, March Madness is not just about competing; it's about seizing the moment, defying expectations, and making their name known on the na-

tional stage. Even though Oakland was later defeated by another underdog team, NC State, their win against a basketball program as strong and well-known as Kentucky will go down as one of the most electrifying upset performances in recent March Madness memory.



Jack Gohlke, Oakland's primary shooter, was lights out all game for the Golden Grizzlies.

Accountability In The NBA: Should Referees Face Punishment For Mistakes?

TEO CHOI

If you're an avid NBA fan, or even just a sports fan in general, nothing pains you more than a missed call by a referee in the crucial final minutes of a game. And when that missed call eventually leads to your team's loss, you would be livid.

In the game of basketball, NBA referees wield

a lot of power. They call fouls, declare technical fouls, eject players, and often, these calls are personal. The famous "beef" in the NBA is not between a player and another player or between a coach and a player, for that matter. It is between Warriors guard Chris Paul and referee Scott Foster. Paul has a playoff record of 3-17 when Foster officiates, with one instance

taking place last year. During a game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Boston Celtics, LeBron James went up for a layup at the end of regulation. He missed the layup, except he got fouled. James knew it, the fans, the broadcasters, everyone except for the referees. The Lakers went on to lose the game in overtime. Later,

however, it was discovered that the chief referee of the game, Eric Lewis, exercised bias throughout the game. His wife's twitter account was flooded with photos of Celtics jerseys and players. Coincidence? I think not. Apart from these, there are so many instances of referees "ruining" the game with a terrible call, too many to even list them all.

The NBA previously said in a press conference that the league punishes its players privately. But some fans, including me, believe this is not enough. If the referees have as much accountability for the result of the game as the players do, should they not also be punished? The NBA loves fining its players, coaches, and teams, including one hundred thousand dollars for violating league injury rules, 35,000 dollars for complaining about the ref's post-game, and another 40,000 dollars for complaints about the officiating. Why can't the league do this to the refs, too?

So, what are the solutions? The NBA can start fining their referees for missing crucial calls in the last minutes of the game. Although the fines won't be as expensive as those of the players, the threat of the fine alone

would tremendously benefit the quality of play in the league. Another solution is to make post-game reports on every game. This would allow transparency in the league and easier ways of punishing these referees. Through transparency, referees would be refrained from exercising bias in their calls. A final solution would be to send these coaches to the G-league, the minor league of the NBA. This would allow them, like players, to be able to officiate and take part in games based on performance, similar to how players do.

Ultimately, as NBA fans, we should acknowledge that NBA referees are all human and make mistakes. However, that is not to say that they should go unpunished. But when the referees are biased and are missing egregious plays because of personal reasons, causing the game to change in drastic ways, that is a problem that must be dealt with. For the integrity and the beauty of the league, the NBA must find better ways to increase the level of proficiency of their referees.



Trae Young (Atlanta Hawks guard) complains to the referee during a win against the Los Angeles Lakers.



Is Something Sketchy Going On With Shohei Ohtani?

SEBASTIÁN VERMUT

Ohtani is one of the best players in baseball right now. Back in 2018, Shohei Ohtani came over from the Japanese Baseball Leagues to the Los Angeles Angels, marking the beginning of what could become the great-

est career of all time. Still learning English, Ohtani brought his interpreter, Ippei Mizuhara, with him. The two had been friends for years and knew each other very well. However, over the next couple of years, Mizuhara began placing large bets on Southern California bookmaker Mathew Boyer's account. By early 2023, Mizuhara's bets

had exceeded four million dollars, and, finding himself in a heap of trouble, began asking Ohtani for help paying off his debts. Ohtani's name appears on two transfers to Mizuhara's account, both more than one million dollars and under the purpose of a loan. While this may seem like a story of a man with a dangerous gambling addiction,

it is actually incredibly illegal: while Mizuhara was addicted, it does not excuse the illegal activities.

Shohei has been based in California since 2018. California prohibits any kind of sports betting. In addition, the MLB strictly prohibits any player or employee from betting on any sport. Pete Rose, the greatest contact hitter of them all, was banned from baseball for sports betting. These rules are in place to prohibit players from purposely performing badly to make money. Almost all of the 1919 Chicago White Sox were permanently banned because they fixed the World Series to make money off of their bets. Even if Mizuhara was not betting on baseball, his dangerous habits were largely against the stringent betting rules of the MLB. The Los Angeles Dodgers were quick to fire Mizuhara.

The scandal gets worse: the money used to pay off the bets came directly from Shohei's bank account. Ohtani wanted to help out his close

friend, so he paid off the hefty debts. End of story, right? Mizuhara was fired - the scandal was over. But people are not so sure whether or not Ohtani is innocent. Not all the facts surrounding the bets were released. Some believe that Mizuhara covered for Ohtani, while others believe Ohtani used Mizuhara as a scapegoat. I believe that that is nonsense. Of all the players in baseball, Ohtani has shown the most respect to his opponents, to his management, to his fellow players, and to his fans. One can only keep up an act for so long, and it is safe to say that Ohtani is not acting. Few people like him come around, and accusing him of such blasphemy is simply a way that people who are upset at his greatness try to get back at him - end of story. Shohei's friend made a mistake, Shohei tried to help out and be a good friend.



Shohei Ohtani with interpreter Ippei Mizuhara at an introductory press conference on December 14 at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.

Jannik Sinner Defeats Daniil Medvedev To Win 2024 Australian Open

ISAAC TIOMKIN

Scintillating is a word commonly used by tennis commentators. It refers to something that is sparkling, something emanating a brilliant light. At 22 years old, Jannik Sinner is living that word, embodying its essence as he dominates the world of tennis. His potential is seemingly limitless; he has a vice grip on the sport already, his commanding groundstrokes proving nearly impossible to play against for any opponent.

However, Sinner was not always such a dominant tennis player. In fact, he was not even a tennis player to begin with. Hailing from San Candido, Italy, his first love was skiing. The Alps were his backyard, and he began to compete from a young age. At eight years old, he became the Italian National Slalom Ski champion. He soared down the mountain, outpacing the rest of the competition (not unlike his current tennis game). Despite his dominance on the mountain, his thrill for skiing had been overcome by fondness and talent on the tennis court. It was then that Sinner had determined that tennis was

his passion. He resolved to turn pro, earning a scholarship at Ricardo Piatti's tennis academy in order to realize his dream.

Since he turned to professional tennis in 2018, his game has continually evolved into the complete power player that he is today. He has flown through the rankings. At the start of 2019, Sinner sat at a meager 553rd in the world. By the end of 2020, he had risen up to 37th. He now sits at second in the world, fresh off an absolutely stellar performance at the Australian Open. It was the youngster's first Grand Slam, a monumental achievement in the tennis world. Sinner tore through the start of the tournament without dropping a single set. He annihilated big names such as world number 15 Karen Khachanov, as well as world number five Andrey Rublev. It was in the semi-finals, however, that many believed his mythical run was to cease. He was to play one of the greatest, if not the greatest, tennis players to have ever lived: Novak Djokovic. Not only is Djokovic a legend of the sport, but also a ten-time champion in Australia.

Refusing to back down from the occasion, Sin-

ner began to play absolutely sublime tennis. His forehand shredded Djokovic's signature defense, leaving the Serbian to question whether anything could have even been done against the Italian maestro. He dispatched Djokovic in four sets, forcing him to a tie-break in the only set that Djokovic managed to win against Sinner.

The finals proved far tougher for the wonderkid. He faced Daniil Medvedev, the favorite apart from Djokovic to win the

tournament. Although Sinner went toe to toe with the Russian at every point, Medvedev soon found himself at a comfortable two-set lead. Sinner, however, would not allow anyone to halt his drive to win. Turning on the afterburners, Sinner began to hammer his signature forehand, cracking Medvedev's cool composure. Relentless, he put his all into every single shot. He fought. And ultimately, he won. He was able to rebound from the deficit and ulti-

mately collapse onto the court as his winning predecessors had done before him.

Sinner has now achieved the holy grail of tennis, a Grand Slam, and doesn't seem to be limiting himself to just Australia. Since his victory in Melbourne in January, he has not slowed down at all, setting his sights on the future. He is a scintillating talent eager to play against the best and to win against the best.



Jannik Sinner holding up his Australian Open trophy.



2024 Men's NCAA Swimming and Diving Championship Recap



The ASU Sun Devils celebrate their first-ever NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships, led by the legendary Coach Bob Bowman.

JAY WEI

The Arizona Sun Devils won their first-ever NCAA Men's Swimming Championship title, scoring 523.5 points, followed by the Cal Bears and the Florida Gators. "Arizona State's team was cut in 2008," Swim Reporter Kyle Sockwell posted on his Instagram. "Now, in 2024, they're National Champions. Unbelievably proud to be an ASU alum today." He's right. In 2008, Arizona State University cut the swimming program, but it was saved and brought back through fundraisers held by swimmers, alumni, and coaches. In 2015, ASU hired Bob Bowman, a name that many recognize as the swim coach of the Legendary Michael Phelps. Nine years later, the Sun Devils have propelled themselves to be one of the greatest collegiate swim programs of all time, winning seven of the 18 swimming events and breaking three NCAA records. Led by the swimming phenomenon Leon Marchand, the team is composed of world-class swimmers like Hubert Kōs Ilya Kharun, Jonny Kulow, Jack Dolan, and Zalan Sarkany. Marchand earned an NCAA title every single time he touched the water, except the 200-medley relay on night one. He established records in the 500-free, 200-free (later broken by Luke Hobson),

200-breast, 400-medley relay, and 400-free relay.

Every event has something to be talked about. From the 1650 to the 100 breast, the fields were all stacked with the fastest short-course swimmers in the world. Below, I will analyze a few of the fastest swims of the meet:

200-Medley Relay:

Let's be honest: We all thought ASU was going to sweep the relays. Coming in as the NCAA Record holders, set just two weeks prior at the PAC 12 Championships, ASU seemed unstoppable in their peak form and condition. The second seed, Florida Gators, came in with a 1:21.66, over a second slower than the ASU. Yet in finals, the Florida Gators dropped over one and a half seconds to win the event at an NCAA record-breaking time of 1:20.15, with Adam Chaney splitting 20.29, Julian Smith splitting 22.55, Josh Liendo going the second fastest split of all time 18.97, and Maguire McDuff anchoring at an 18.34. ASU placed second, going their seeded time of 1:20.55 again. Surprisingly, no one broke the 20-second barrier on the backstroke leg, with Aiden Hayes being the closest, going 20.07. The breaststroke leg was highlighted by the five-year Cal swimmer Liam Bell, who went a blazing 22.25. As mentioned before, Josh Lien-

do went the second fastest fly split of all time, going 18.97, behind Jordan Crook's 18.90 set last year. McDuff's 18.34 held off ASU's Kulow, the only swimmer in the field going under the 18-second mark at 17.94.

500-Free:

Wow. Many of us are still questioning: did that really just happen? Did Marchand really just swim a 4:02 500-yard free-style, four seconds faster than the second performer of all time? Coming out of an amazing PAC-12 Championships in Federal Way, Washington, Marchand already held the NCAA record in this event, with a time of 4:06.18. However, his performance was nothing close to the swim we saw on night two of the NCAA Championships. The field had some other notable names, including Luke Hobson, Jake Magahey, and Gabriel Jett, but all eyes were on Marchand. Marchand went out a 21.09, more than a full second ahead of everyone else in the field. His 200 split was 1:33.12, followed by a 1:57.94 at the two hundred mark. His legs gave out a little toward the end of the race, yet he still destroyed the NCAA record with a 4:02.31. Hobson came in second at 4:06.93, followed by Magahey at 4:07.12.

200-Free:

The 200-free really started on night one of the finals, in the final two heats of the 800-free relay. Hobson opened up the meet with a lead-off split of 1:29.13, breaking Dean Farris's 200-free record from 2019. Marchand, in the heat right after, responded with a 1:28.97, breaking the not-even-ten-minutes-old NCAA record while also becoming the first swimmer ever to go sub-1:29. Two nights later, Hobson made one of the craziest comebacks in collegiate swim history. In prelims, Hobson touched first at a 1:29.75, just a little over his relay split. Jack Alexy touched second, going a best time of 1:30.38, followed by Jordan Crooks at 1:30.41. The field for the final was stacked, with six of the eight A-finalists all going sub 1:31. Alexy took it out the fastest, going 43.31 at the hundred mark, with Hobson close behind, going 43.36. Alexy's back half, however, was no match for Hobson, and Hobson split a 45.54 on his second 100 to finish the race at a blistering time of 1:28.81. That was huge points for the Texas Longhorns, and Hobson reclaimed his NCAA record while becoming the second performer in history to go under 1:29.

400-Free Relay:

The 400-free relay has always been one of the most exciting races to watch at the NCAA

Championship. It sits as the competition's final event and caps off the short course season for all collegiate swimmers. The highlight of the race was the race between Marchand, Liendo, and Crooks on the lead-off leg. Marchand proved his versatility by going 40.28, which would have been second in the 100-free-style individual event. Crooks also went a lifetime best, going 40.39, just two-tenths behind Marchand. The race ended with a battle between Kulow and McDuff, with Kulow ultimately taking the win for the Sun Devils in a record-breaking time of 2:43.40. This time shaved off over half a second from the previous records, set just a year ago by the Florida Gators (2:44.07) at the 2023 NCAA Championships.

Year after year, the NCAA Championships stand as a beacon of growth and evolution in the sport of swimming. The relentless hard work and dedication of athletes like Marchand and Hobson show just how far athletes can push the boundaries of the sport. As the NCAA continues to captivate audiences and inspire future generations of swimmers, it serves as a testament to the enduring popularity of the sport while also signaling a promising trajectory for its continued growth and success in the years to come.



The 2025 Formula 1 “Silly” Season Begins

BRANDON HORNE

In February 2024, a bombshell announcement was dropped on the Formula 1 (F1) paddock. Lewis Hamilton, seven time world champion, widely regarded as the greatest F1 driver of all time, was ditching Mercedes, with whom he had won six of his seven titles, to make a shocking switch to Scuderia Ferrari. Why was Hamilton doing this? As we soon came to find out, Mercedes’s 2024 car was far from perfect. Although initially, hopes were high for the Brackley-based team’s W15 car, it quickly became obvious that the car simply did not have enough pace. Poor results followed for both of the team’s drivers, making Hamilton’s daring switch more understandable throughout the race.

This decision rocked the entire paddock. Hamilton has been with Mercedes since 2013, and has until recently, maintained his desire to finish his career with the team. However, a recent string of poor cars and slow development has finally forced Hamilton to leave. In search of his elusive eighth title, he has finally given up on his team. As a result, the 2025 driver market is completely wide open. As Hamilton replaced Carlos Sainz, he no longer has a seat for 2025, despite being the only driver other than the indomitable Max Verstappen to win a race in the past 20 races. So, let’s go through each team, and I’ll go through my picks for their 2025 driver lineup. We’ll do this in the constructor’s championship order from last season.

Red Bull:

Max Verstappen and Carlos Sainz

It’s pretty clear that Sergio Perez is no longer the race-winning driver he once was. Although his recent upturn in performance has displayed some of his prowess, he is nowhere near his teammate, and in an era where the competition can only become more competitive, Red Bull must secure a better driver. I believe Carlos Sainz will replace Perez at Red Bull, remak-

ing the 2015 Toro Rosso driver lineup. As for Verstappen, there’s really no reason to leave. His recent string of wins and championships has propelled him up the ranks alongside the top drivers in the sport’s history, and despite the Christian Horner controversy, he will decide to stay and attempt to win even more world titles.

Mercedes:

George Russell and Fernando Alonso

Fernando Alonso is a two-time world champion who has been searching for a third-world title since 2006. He is renowned for his awful team decisions, such as his fabled partnership with the atrocious mid-2010’s McLaren Honda. However, after an upswing towards the end of 2024, and with future prospect Kimi Antonelli still not ready for the big show, Toto Wolff and Mercedes decided to sign the two-time champion in hopes of bringing the fight to Ferrari and Red Bull. George Russell continues to stay put and gets to fight another world champion for his troubles, with the hope Mercedes can deliver a better car for his prime years.

Ferrari:

Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc

This driver lineup is already confirmed, so there isn’t any predicting to be done here. The man from Monaco, Charles Leclerc, 2022 F1 Drivers Championship runner-up, gets to fight 2008, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton. Ferrari produces a powerful car, allowing the pair to challenge for a world title with the likes of Verstappen and Sainz.

McLaren:

Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri

This driver lineup is also confirmed, with Norris and Piastri signed through at least 2027. The pair looks to continue the strong work made on their car midway through the 2023 season, propelling them back to championship contenders.

Aston Martin:



Future 2025 Ferrari driver Lewis Hamilton speaks with Ferrari team principal Fred Vasseur.

Alex Albon and Felipe Drugovich

With Fernando Alonso departing for Mercedes, team owner Lawrence Stroll must pivot quickly and sign the talented Williams driver, Alex Albon. Albon consistently places his Williams into the points despite it being a very slow car relative to stronger teams, making him a great candidate for a team looking to ascend into championship contention. To pair with Albon, Lawrence Stroll must finally part ways with his son, Lance Stroll, who finally leaves F1 to compete in endurance racing. For his replacement, Aston Martin called up their reserve driver and Formula 2 (F2) champion, Felipe Drugovich. He has proven he has the pace, and Aston rewarded him with a full-time F1 seat.

Alpine:

Esteban Ocon and Sergio Perez

For the French-based Alpine, Pierre Gasly has departed in favor of 2023 runner-up Sergio Perez. Despite his lack of race-winning pace, Perez is still a high-caliber driver and is highly regarded enough to earn a spot at Alpine for 2025. Personally, I think there is a high likelihood that Perez would retire if dropped by Red Bull, but there’s certainly a chance he stays for revenge, hoping Alpine develops a better car for 2025. As his teammate, I’ve gone for the Frenchman Esteban Ocon to remain with the team, as he has done since 2020.

Williams:

Liam Lawson and Pierre Gasly

With Alex Albon’s departure and the loss of struggling young American Logan Sargeant, Williams has two new drivers for 2025. The young prospect from New Zealand, Liam Lawson, has decided to part ways with the toxic Red Bull junior academy in favor of the once-dominant Williams racing team. He partnered with former Alpine driver Pierre Gasly, who is looking for a better teammate and car.

Visa Cash App RB:

Yuki Tsunoda and Ayumu Iwasa

Due to Daniel Ricciardo’s recent struggles, he is forced out of Red Bull and replaced with Japanese talent Ayumu Iwasa to form a powerful all-Japanese driver lineup for 2025. Red Bull has shown zero interest in promoting Tsunoda to a drive at the top team and has recently expressed a desire to pair their young drivers with more experienced veterans. As Tsunoda has now driven for VCARB for four seasons, I’d say he qualifies as an experienced veteran capable of mentoring his countryman Iwasa.

Sauber:

Theo Pourchaire and Valtteri Bottas

This is my sleeper surprise pick, as I’ve gone for another entirely new driver lineup for the Sauber team. Their talented reserve driver, Theo Pourchaire, finally finds his long-awaited opportunity in Formula 1, re-

placing the disappointing Guanyu Zhou. In addition, Valtteri Bottas remains on the team to mentor the young driver as the team prepares to transform into Audi for the 2026 season.

Haas:

Oliver Bearman and Nico Hulkenberg

For Haas, I’ve gone with Oliver Bearman and Nico Hulkenberg. Unfortunately, the ship has sailed for the once-promising Nico Hulkenberg, and despite his rapid qualifying pace, he has found no better alternative but to remain at Haas for the 2025 season. In replacement of Kevin Magnussen, Haas looks to the young Brit Oliver Bearman, who showed significant promise in his first race at Ferrari (replacing Carlos Sainz, who needed his appendix removed). Because Haas is a Ferrari customer team, they have a strong relationship with Ferrari and look to nurture the young driver as he prepares to replace Lewis Hamilton after he retires potentially.

These were my 2025 F1 driver lineup predictions, I hope you enjoyed it. As always, leave me any comments if you don’t agree with my ideas.



Is the Harry Kane Curse Real?

NAREK HAMBARDZUMYAN

“You can take the man out of Tottenham, but you can’t take the Tottenham out the man.” A common phrase surrounding England International Harry Kane. Today, he has gained more attention on social media after Bayern Munich lost to Dortmund on March 30th, lengthening the gap between Bayern and Leverkusen to 13 points. Harry Kane looks to miss out on another trophy after 15 years, but how did he get here?

History at Tottenham

Harry Kane is arguably the best Tottenham Hotspur player of all time, with 213 goals in 317 appearances. He made his professional debut for the club in 2009 and remained there until 2023. His goal-scoring prowess, however, did not result in a single title for the club. In his time at Spurs, he encountered a multitude of chances to win some silverware but could not quite get it over the finish line. His first chance at glory came in 2015 via the League Cup final but lost to Chelsea 2-0. Spurs then were in a race for the Premier League in 2016 against Leicester, in which they started

losing important matches at the end of the season and finished third. This was then followed by two consecutive semi-final appearances in the 2017 and 2018 FA Cup and a semi-final loss to Croatia in the World Cup in 2018. Then came a heart-breaking loss to Liverpool in the 2019 Champions League final, followed by a 2-0 loss in the 2021 League Cup Final. Then came arguably the team’s greatest loss, losing on penalties to Italy in the 2020 Euro Final. He has won the Premier League Golden Boot 3 times and the PFA Player of The Year award twice, but never won anything. After years of near wins, he decided to move to Germany in 2023, but this is when the Harry Kane curse really spurred into reality.

Season at Bayern Munich

Harry Kane joined Bayern Munich at the start of the 2023-2024 season. He joined a Bayern team that has won the Bundesliga for 11 years straight, with Dortmund last winning the trophy in 2012. The Bayern Munich dominance doesn’t stop at the league, as they have won the DFB Pokal and the Champions League numerous times. Kane’s



Kane missed out on his first trophy against RB Leipzig in the Super Cup on August 12, 2023.

first game for Bayern came against RB Leipzig in the Supercup, where they lost 3-0 on a disappointing day for Kane and the team. Many thought that he would surely win his first league title with Bayern, but an unexpected turn of events happened. Bayer Leverkusen and their new coach, Xabi Alonso, have been absolutely on fire this season. They haven’t lost a single match in all competitions this season and have beaten and drawn Bayern the two times they faced. Bayern themselves have not been at their best form

and have just helped Bayer Leverkusen to keep widening the gap between first and second place. Now, it almost seems a guarantee that Bayer Leverkusen will win the league, as they only need three wins in the last seven games to seal the deal. Bayern Munich was also knocked out of the DFB Pokal by third-division side FC Saarbrücken. Although Bayern Munich remains in the Champions League, that will be the most difficult competition to win, and it will take something special for it to happen.

Conclusion

Kane looks to go another season trophyless, and his curse seems more and more apparent after each game. Even after joining a giant club like Bayern Munich, he still cannot achieve the silverware he desires. So, is the Harry Kane curse real? You can blame tough luck, but it really does seem that wherever he goes, whether it is the England national team, Bayern Munich, or Tottenham Hotspur, he simply can’t pass the finish line.

Ohio State Wins Women’s National Hockey Championship

ANNABEL CURRY

The Ohio State women’s hockey team is back on top after winning the 2024 National Championship. The Buckeyes bested the defending champion Wisconsin in a 1-0 game that was decided by Rookie of the Year Joy

Dunne in the middle of the third period. Wisconsin and OSU have battled for the championship, with Wisconsin winning in 2021, OSU in 2022, Wisconsin beating OSU in the 2023 finals, and this year, OSU beating Wisconsin for the 2024 Championship. Dunne’s goal was assisted by Cayla Barnes and Hannah

Bilka, both graduate student transfers from Boston College. Senior Buckeyes goalie Raygan Kirk made 27 saves, earning her a shutout in her final game. Overall, the Buckeyes finished the season 35-4, with Bilka leading the team in points, closely followed by Jennifer Gardiner, Joy Dunne, and Kiara Zanon. The OSU goalie also finished the season strong, notably Kirk with a .945 save percentage and Amanda Thiele with .905%. Looking ahead, the Buckeyes team will be very different, as they have 16 graduating students on their team. On the other hand, Wisconsin will have a strong group next year, including Eden Simms, Laula Edwards, Caroline Harvey, Cassie Hall, Ava Murphy, and Laney Potter.



Ohio State women’s hockey celebrates as the final whistle blows.

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14-Year-Old American Cavan Sullivan Signs With Manchester City Academy

ALEX LEE

On March 26, Philadelphia Union agreed to a deal with Manchester City that will see 14-year-old star Cavan Sullivan join City's academy when he turns 18. A report from "The Atlantic" indicates City will pay in excess of \$2 million upfront, with another \$5 million and a sell-on clause expected to be added to the original fee.

This agreement comes after a lengthy battle between top European clubs, such as Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund, to secure his services. Until then, Sullivan will be working with the Union to sign an MLS homegrown contract and join the club's first team to continue his development.

Sullivan burst onto the scene last spring during the GA Cup, a prestigious tournament that features some of the best youth teams from across the globe. At only 13, Sullivan

played for the Union's U15 team and helped them beat difficult opponents such as Arsenal and Real Madrid. His talented performance was recognized as he was named in the GA Cup Best XI following the tournament. He continued to excel as he took his talents to the international stage at the CONCACAF U15 Championship, during which he won the Golden Ball with the USYNT.

Since then, Sullivan has continued to garner attention through his performances for the Union's U17 side. Despite playing against players two to three years older than him, he has not only kept up but has also emphatically impressed his coaches and the rest of the world.

"Those that maybe haven't learned yet, a young Cavan Sullivan has the talent and ability to become, I'll just say a household name and is doing really big things," said Union head coach Jim Curtin in 2023.

From this success and attention, Sullivan began to train with the Union's second team before earning a spot on their bench. He eventually made his professional-level debut on March 24 with Union II, even registering an assist in the match. His unprecedented move to Manchester, however, has understandably added another level of pressure and attention to his game.

Thrown onto the global stage at just 14, Manchester City scouts understand the weight on his shoulders and proceed with caution in attracting attention as he tries to live up to his "wonderkid" potential. Instead of adding additional stress, it is beneficial for the public to appreciate his talents in the context of the United States' development as a soccer country.

While the world dis-

misses the U.S. as a hub for soccer, transfers like Sullivan signify the country's growing interest in soccer and the larger pool of talented youth. Soccer in America will continue to develop as Sullivan and potentially many other bright stars make the move to European clubs to realize their full ability and represent the United States on the world stage.



Sullivan poses with his Golden Ball from the CONCACAF U-15 Championship.

Declan James Makes Comeback After Suffering Achilles Injury

WILL WEISSMAN

In November of 2022, PSA's World No. 45, Declan James, suffered a ruptured Achilles tendon, ending his season with a long road of recovery. With surgery ten days after the injury, James was forced to leave the game behind for months.

Shortly after his injury, the Englishman tweeted, "The hunger and drive is as strong as ever and I will be back. I'm 29 years old and this latest setback isn't going to be the end of the story in my Squash career."

Despite his determination to get back on court, James embraced recovery by spending time with friends and family and re-

cuperating from "the jet lag, the tournaments and the brutal matches."

With his hiatus from the PSA Tour, James's ranking moved outside the top 200 in the world. However, the Englishman remained optimistic, excited to play pressure-free squash, and quickly climbed back into the rankings. After months of recovery and training,

Declan James' return began in late November of 2023 at the PSA Des Hauts De France. While James lost in the finals to Spain's Bernat Jaume and the current World No. 54, his tournament performance proved his ability to play at the highest level even after his injury. After losing in the second round of the QSF 5 and the finals of the Ipswich Sports Club Challenger Cup, James finally found his stride in the Odense Open. He defeated World No. 97 and Wales' Owain Taylor to win his first title in over a year.

With newfound momentum and confidence, James entered the GillenMarkets London Squash Classic, one of the largest tournaments of the year, played in his home country of England. Having an improved rank of World No. 76, Declan James met Egypt's Mohamed El Sherbini and World No. 19 in the first round, winning both games in a best-of-three format. In the second round, he faced France's Baptiste Masotti and World No. 14, who he defeated in an impressive three games.

After a spectacular run, James met former World No. 1 Egypt's Karim Abdel Gawad in the quar-

ter-final, with hopes of reaching his first semi-finals in a Gold-level PSA tournament. The Englishman continued his streak of superb squash, playing effective shots to the front, which pushed Gawad from edge to edge on the court. James upset his opponent in the first game, winning 11-8, and went up 10-9 in the second game to force a match ball. While Gawad equalized the game at 12-12, the Englishman received a generous call to win the match, sending the English-backed crowd into eruption.

"I'm just happy to be playing a decent standard. It's been a long road back, a long 18 months, jeez, a lot of hard work and suffering. Nights like tonight make the suffering worth it," James said after the match.

While he lost to Egypt's Mostafa Asal, the current World No. 4, in the semi-finals, James' performance at the GillenMarkets London Classic placed him at a level higher than when his season ended over a year ago. After a long road of recovery, Declan James has thrived in his return by producing what might be the best squash of his career.



Declan James celebrates after defeating Baptiste Masotti in the GillenMarkets London Squash Classic Tournament on March 27, 2024.



Why Boston College Hockey Dominates The NCAA

ANNABEL CURRY

The NCAA men's hockey Frozen Four will start on April 11 in St. Paul, Minnesota. Two-seed Boston University will take on three-seed Denver, and one-seed Boston College will play the University of Michigan.

Boston College and Boston University have been at the top of the NCAA standings for this season, having faced off four times this season. BC took both games in the rivalry weekend, winning 4-1 and 4-3. BU then bounced back in the Beanpot, winning 3-4. The teams met in the Hockey East Championship in late March, with BC dominating the game, winning 6-2. Both teams are known for their underclassmen. BC Freshman Will Smith was the 4th pick in the 2024 NHL draft and was awarded Hockey East MVP, and the team has five more players named to the Hockey East All-Tournament team. The freshman line of Smith, Ryan Leonard, and Gabe Perreault has been deadly this year as well, all of them coming from the National Development Program. This team has been seemingly unstoppable, which was especially evident after the statement win in the Hockey East Fi-

nals. Another standout has been Jacob Fowler, who has been close to perfect, saving .924% of shots. The team would also not be complete without sophomore Cutter Gauthier, who has scored 37 goals and assisted 27 times. 81% of BC's goals were scored by underclassmen, which leads to comparisons to teams like the University of Michigan last year, who, similar to BC, had many underclassman stars, including Adam Fantilli and Luke Hughes. A recurrent struggle for young teams such as UMich includes the play-off elimination by older teams. While teams like Quinnipiac may not have had as much star power in comparison, their players have more experience, which led them to a national championship last year. This Quinnipiac team that played BC in the regional finals this year is very comfortable in overtime, having won three back-to-back play-off matches in OT. BC may have pushed past this narrative of experience over star power, as they won, which qualified them for the Frozen Four. While this BC team may be young, they have plenty of experience. Many of them competed at the World Junior Championship this past January, as well as many players coming out of the NTDP

and USHL teams. These players have experience in these high-stakes games, which, along with their talent, helped to push BC over the edge.

Boston University has a similar lineup to BC, as they are led by freshman Macklin Celebrini and sophomore Lane Hutson. The average points per game demonstrates how productive these players really are and the effect freshmen, who will probably join the NHL next year, have on the game. Four out of the top five freshmen in PPG play for Boston College. While the PPG stat is good for looking at the overall impact, one must also consider that not only do four out of five play for the same team, but three are on the same line. However, when you look at overall goals and the way each of the assists was set up, these players still stand out. Out of the Smith-Perreault-Leonard line, Will Smith has scored 23 goals with 46 assists. Smith is not only able to score, but he creates chances and can set up his team with the passes needed to score. Similar to Smith, both Perreault and Leonard have great stats in both categories. What often sets great players apart is not solely their ability to score but their ability to create chances to score. Teams often fall apart when their star



scorers struggle because no goals get generated. For example, the Bruins are currently tied for 2nd in the NHL, but 30% of their goals are scored by two players. Out of 29 players who have registered a point for the Bruins, having players like Pastrnak and Marchand can be both a blessing and a curse; if their productivity drops, so does the team's rankings. BC not only has a plethora of great goal scorers, but those players make the entire team better.

Looking ahead to the game against Michigan, it is hard to believe that

the Eagles' playoff run will end with anything less than a championship. They have shown their ability to dominate against the 2-seed BU, as well as the grit and perseverance needed to come back from deficits and win in OT. This is not a team that will back away or make 'rookie' mistakes. The combination of a powerful offense and a lockdown goaltender makes them the dangerous team that has earned the one seed in the tournament.

Wesley Visser Unexpectedly Wins The 2024 Arnold Classic Physique

ARTHUR WU

In classic physique competitions, where symmetrical muscle definition meets artistry, Wesley Visser has emerged as an unexpected victor of the 2024 Arnold Classic Physique.

Despite being regarded as an underdog in the fiercely competitive arena, Visser defied the odds, captivating audiences and judges alike with his impeccable physique and stage presence. Despite skepticism from popular bodybuilding influencers such as Greg Doucette, winning the Arnold Classic unequivocally signifies success and acknowledgment.

Born with an unyielding determination and an unwavering passion for sculpting his physique, Wesley Visser's journey in the bodybuilding world has been extraordinary. With a humble beginning and a relentless work ethic, Visser entered the Arnold Classic Physique competition with unparalleled size and condi-

tioning, driven by a desire to prove his worth on the grand stage.

As the competition unfolded, Visser faced formidable opponents, including seasoned veterans like Ramon Dino and Urs Kalecinski, both of whom expected themselves to win the coveted title. Despite lacking the notoriety of some of his counterparts, Visser's meticulous attention to detail shone through in every pose on stage.

Visser's journey to victory was filled with obstacles, mirroring the classic underdog narrative. Amidst his preparation, he faced setbacks and hurdles, each serving as a rigorous test of his determination. Enduring exhausting training sessions and grappling with moments of self-doubt, Visser remained undeterred. Drawing from his inner reservoirs of strength, he pushed himself relentlessly in pursuit of his dream.

On the day of the competition, Visser took to the stage with confidence and poise, delivering a performance that

left spectators in awe. With each pose, he showcased his sculpted physique, commanding the attention of the judges and capturing the hearts of the audience. In a stunning turn of events, Wesley Visser was crowned

the winner of the 2024 Arnold Classic Physique competition, shocking the bodybuilding world and solidifying his place among the elite. As Wesley Visser celebrates his triumph, the bodybuilding community eagerly

anticipates what the future holds for this rising underdog. Will he continue to defy expectations and conquer new heights in his career, or will he be content with this momentous victory?



Wesley Visser's front double bicep pose at the 2024 Arnold Classic.



UConn Advances To March Madness Final Four With Commanding Win Over Illinois

OLLIE VELEZ

The NCAA March Madness Basketball tournament is always one of the most exciting parts of the year in college sports. In 2023, fourth-seed UConn Huskies capped off their phenomenal season with a win over the San Diego State Aztecs to claim the program's fifth national championship. This season, the program has continued its dominance, finishing the regular season with a 31-3 record, while also capturing a Big East tournament championship. Through three more dominant wins in the NCAA tournament, the Huskies found themselves in the Elite Eight on March 30 versus the Illinois Fighting Illini.

Many anticipated this game to be a thriller. This tough Illinois squad, led by Senior Terrance Shannon Jr, had the most efficient offense in the country. Some believed Illinois could even pull off the upset over the defending champs and snap their nine-game tourna-

ment win streak.

For much of the first half, the game was very close. The two remained tied at 23 late into the first half. However, toward the end of the first half and well into the second half, the Huskies began to dominate the game. The team pulled off a remarkable 30-0 run. After taking complete control with this run, the Huskies never looked back and finished the game with a 77-52 victory.

UConn held Illinois to 25 percent shooting for the night, while also holding star Terrance Shannon Jr. to just eight points on 2-12 shooting. Illinois missed their last three shots of the first half and their first 14 shots to start the second half.

The 7 foot 2 inch star Donovan Clingan led the way for the Huskies, finishing with 22 points, ten rebounds, and five blocks. Cam Spencer and Hassan Diarra were also impressive in the win. Spencer had 11 points, 12 rebounds, and five assists, while Diarra had 11 points.



Star Donovan Clingan during UConn's win in the Elite Eight.

After the game, UConn Coach Dan Hurley said, "We're going to be tough to beat. It was a special level of basketball that we were playing." His squad will in fact be tough to beat as they look to repeat as champions for the first time since the Florida Gators in 2006 and 2007.

UConn continues to prove how dominant they are. This win marks their record-setting tenth

consecutive victory by double digits in March Madness. "This is the best UConn team I have ever seen," former UConn forward Donny Marshall shared. He continued by acknowledging Hurley's great coaching, saying, "We know he's passionate and intense, and brings that out of the players. But he's so great at managing a game, too."

First-seeded UCo-

nn is set to play the Fourth-seeded Alabama Crimson Tide in the Final Four in Phoenix, Arizona on April 6. The winner will play either the first-seed Purdue Boilermakers or 11th-seed NC State Wolfpack in the national championship on April 8.

Editor's Note: This article was written prior to April 6.

Will The Celtics Continue Their Success In The Playoffs?

ZACHARY YUAN

This season, the Boston Celtics are the best team in the East and potentially in the NBA. With an incredible starting five of Jason Tatum, Jaylen Brown, Derrick White, Kristaps Porzingis, and Jrue Holiday, along with impressive performers from the bench, including Al Horford, Payton Prichard, Sam Hauser, and Luke Kornet, the Celtics are looking undefeatable. Prior to the season, there have been concerns of injuries holding them back, yet with the way the bench players are stepping up and the talent this team has, injuries seem like not an issue at all. The Celtics have recently set the record for the most 50+ point wins in a season after demolishing the Indiana Pacers, Brooklyn Nets, and, surprisingly, the Golden State Warriors. Boston has outscored teams by 29.8 points per game in six games during the season, a span that included the latter two 50-point wins, something that only two other teams have done in an entire season. In this article, I talk about the Celtics' previous troubles in playoffs and whether this time will be the charm.

The Celtics have reached the playoffs 15 times in the last 16 years,

reaching the finals three times and winning the Larry O'Brien trophy in the 2007-2008 season after defeating the Los Angeles Lakers in the finals. However, in the last 15 years, the Celtics have failed to win the trophy again and again. Last season, they crashed out of the playoffs in the Eastern Conference finals to an underdog Miami Heat team, and in 2022, lost to the Golden Warriors in the finals. This drought is the reason why many analysts and fans are skeptical of the Celtics' ability to win the trophy this year. But before predicting if the Celtics will be able to continue their success in the playoffs, we first have to understand why the Celtics have been collapsing in the playoffs in previous years.

One of the biggest criticisms of the Celtics in the postseason over the last two years has been their ability to close out games late in the fourth period. The Celtics haven't been involved in many truly close contests this season, but when they have, the same old problems have returned. For example, they blew a 22-point fourth-quarter lead to lose 105-104 to the Cleveland Cavaliers. With the game on the line against the Cavaliers, Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzu-

lla decided not to call a timeout and draw up a designed play and instead pass the ball to their best player, Jayson Tatum, and let him work. This resulted in the All-NBA forward dribbling down the clock and launching a contested and unsuccessful fall-away jump shot. It's not the best shot choice when you're trying to win the game against a smaller defender. Taking this season as a whole, the Celtics rank 18th in the league when it comes to pace – defined as the average number of plays per 48 minutes. In clutch scenarios – the final five minutes of the fourth quarter or overtime when the score is

within five points – the Celtics' pace ranks 30th.

However, this season has still been special for Boston. The Celtics are still on pace to record one of the great regular-season campaigns of recent times. They have all but wrapped up the top spot in the Eastern Conference, eight games ahead of the Milwaukee Bucks in second place. They rank first in the league in offensive rating and third in defensive rating. Their league-best average winning margin is the sixth-best in NBA history – all but one of the five teams ahead of them went on to win a championship the same season. This time

has looked mostly unstoppable, sweeping aside other teams, and with the new addition of Holiday and Porzingis to this year's playoff roster, the Celtics will once again be the favorites to win it all. All the Celtics need is to consistently close out games, draw up game plans, and strategically use timeouts. Hopefully, after so many failures, both Mazzula, Tatum and all the players will have matured and learned from our mistakes. Once Boston has that down, their first Larry O'Brien trophy in 15 years is on the way home.



The Boston Celtics are by far the best in the NBA currently, ending the season with a 64-18 record.



Does Boston College Have A Better Coaching Situation Than The New England Patriots?

BRUCE MCLAREN

When one first reads, “Does Boston College have a better coaching situation than the New England Patriots?” they dismiss it and think, how could a college team, especially a middle to low-level ACC team, have a better coaching situation than an NFL team? Once you go through each coach, though, it becomes a real debate and is not so clear to answer.

Boston College has Bill O’Brien, an experienced NFL head coach with lots of playoff experience. He also has coaching experience at the college level. The Patriots have Jerod Mayo, an inexperienced head coach who is in his first-year head coaching at any level. I would give the “point” here to BC because of the lack of experience that Mayo has. Next, we should look at offensive and defensive coordinators. BC’s offensive coordinator/tight end coach is Will Lawing, who has NFL and college experience as a tight end coach but no experience as a coordinator. The Patriots OC is Alex Van Pelt, the ex-Cleveland Browns offensive coordinator who has a lot of time coaching QBs and calling plays on offense. Here,

based on experience, I would give this point to the Patriots. The defensive coordinator for BC is Tim Lewis, who has 34 years of coaching experience on defense, including seven as a DC in the NFL, albeit this was a long time ago. The Pats DC is Demarcus Covington, who has been on the Patriots staff as a coach for a couple of years now. I would give the advantage to the Patriots on this one, as Tim Lewis is a bit old and hasn’t coached in the NFL or in college for a while. He has been coaching in other football leagues for the last few seasons, while Covington has a lot of experience with Bill Belichick teaching him his genius defensive strategies.

Next, we can compare the other assistant coaches on both team’s offensive and defensive sides of the ball. BC has many widely known ex-NFL head coaches on their staff, including Doug Marrone, Rob Chudzinski, and Bill O’Brien. They also have experienced coaches including Matt Applebaum, Dan O’Brien (son of Tom O’Brien ex BC head coach), and Darrell Wyatt, who are renowned in the college football world for being excellent teachers of the game. The Patriots have a lot



Bill O’Brien at his introductory Boston College press conference.

of coaches on their staff this year, most of whom have good reputations as coaches and a few that do not, including Bed Mcadoo, who coached the New York Giants and did not do a great job. Many of the coaches that the Patriots have, however, are quite new to coaching in the NFL, with a large percentage never coaching in the NFL. Due to this, I would give the advantage of the best assistant coaching staff to BC because of the pedigree some coaches have on the staff, compared to the inexperience of the Patriots staff.

It is important to compare the “other” coach-

es and advisors to the teams, along with who has been helping the teams along their way during the beginning of the off-season. BC has had many ex-Patriots coaches/players helping out, which has been tremendous to their growth this off-season, including ex-Bill Belichick advisor Ernie Adams, who has become an advisor to Bill O’Brien, NFL QB Brian Hoyer, and former NFL QB Matt Ryan. BC also hired Berj Najarian as chief of staff, a very well-experienced coach who was another right-hand man to Bill Belichick and has been working for the Patriots for the past 24 years. Also, there have

been many rumors of other ex-Patriots players and NFL coaches coming to BC practices to advise them. This, in my opinion, pushes BC’s coaching staff over the top of New England’s. In turn, I would say that the answer to the question posed in this article is that yes, indeed, BC does have a better coaching situation than the New England Patriots at this time! Only time will tell, however, to see if my prediction will prove true or not.

Who Is Leading The NBA MVP Race?

HARRY MURPHY

With less than ten games left in the NBA Season, it would be impossible to create substantial change in the race for MVP, so it is fair ground to assess the legitimacy of MVP campaigns at this point. For the most part, the pre-season expected candidates are the ones in the race for the NBA’s premier individual award. The five top players for this year’s MVP will likely be Nikola Jokic, Giannis Antetokounmpo, Luka Doncic, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, and Jason Tatum.

While it is never safe to call something a lock, Nikola Jokic currently holds odds as low as -10,000 on SportsBooks, and deservedly so. The Denver Nuggets find themselves atop the Western Conference standings with an impressive 54-24 record and are not experiencing a post-championship hangover or slump. They are playing with the same beautiful basketball centered around their offensive engine, Nikola Jok-

ic. Jokic is averaging an absurdly efficient 26, 12, and 9, continuing his stat line stuffing from his two previous MVP seasons. Jokic remains a truly top-notch scorer, his mix of three-level scoring and exceptional efficiency is something to behold. The magnum opus of Jokic’s game is his transcendental passing and playmaking ability. His mix of fundamental mastery and circus trick, no look ability is unmatched, and nobody can reasonably claim to be in the same stratosphere as Jokic as a passer. In addition, pairing his passing toolkit and scoring excellence makes him and the Nuggets offense impossible to stop. Leaving Jokic one-on-one will ultimately result in a bucket, and good luck doubling him without him finding the open man instantly. Though the fact that he is a negative defensive presence remains, his stellar offense has proven to overcome that in his past two MVP wins and NBA Championship win last season. In recent years, many have failed to win MVP three seasons

in a row: Giannis in 2022, Curry in 2017, LeBron in 2011 and 2014, and Jokic last year. While Jokic joined that club, he is more than likely joining LeBron James, Michael Jordan, and a few others as an NBA MVP winner who wins again after being dethroned.

Though Jokic is going to receive the most votes from the distin-

guished voting pool, other players have had reputable seasons that challenged Jokic’s case throughout the year. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander is leading the Thunder to a potential one-seed after being tenth last season while averaging 30, 5, and 6. Jason Tatum is averaging 27, 8, and 5 with stellar defense and leading the Celtics to the best

record in the Eastern Conference. Giannis Antetokounmpo is having a typical season, averaging 31, 12, and 7 alongside DPOY-caliber defensive play. Lastly, Luka Doncic was the favorite for many at some point throughout the season due to his 34, 9, and 10 stat line, rivaling the best; however, the Mavericks’ spectacular record was the fa-



Nikola Jokic Celebrating in the 2021 NBA Season.