Houston's back against wall

Celts outrun Rockets, 122-117 for third win

HOUSTON (AP) — The physical Boston Celtics helped by Don Chaney's 29 points outmuscled and outran the Houston Rockets for a

BOSTON (122)
Havlicek 8 6-6 22, Nelson 4 2-2 10, Cowens
12 7-8 31, White 1 2-2 4, Chane,
9 11-12 29, Silas 6 0-0 12, Westphal
5 2-3 14, Totals: 46 30-33.
HOUSTON (117)
Tomjanovich 11 3-5 25, Ratleff 3 0-0 6, Kunaert 2 2-6 6, Newlin 12 7-8 31, Murphy
14 7-7 35, Hawes 5 2-2 12, Bailey 0 0-0 0,
Riley 1 0-1 2. Totals: 48 21-29 Boston
Boston 30 32 31 29-122
Houston 33 18 26 40-117
Fouled out: Silas

Ali, Frazier receive offer from Garden

NEW YORK (AP) - If the fighters rise to the \$4.5-million bait, there will be a third go-around between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier in Madison Square Garden on Sept. 16.

The plans call for Ali, the heavyweight titleholder, to receive \$3 million and Frazier, the former champion, to get \$1.5 million. The fight would be on closed-circuit television with the Garden possibly the sole promoter.

The Garden announced Tuesday that a proposal for the "rubber" match had been formally made to the respective managers of the two men and that the first reaction had

"I would rather fight in Madison Square Garden than any other place in the world," said Muhammad Ali in Miami Beach, where he is training for his May 16 defense against Ron Lyle in Las Vegas.

"It sounds good. I hope Clay takes the offer," Frazier was quoted as telling the Garden from Minneapolis where he is preparing his protege, Duane Bobick, for a bout against Raul Gorosito Wednesday

Ali's manager, Herbert Muhammad, was not available for comment. Both Frazier's manager, Eddie Futch, and attorney, Bruce Wright, were reserved in their early responses. Futch, acknowledging that he was considering the offer, said he felt that the 2-1 purse distribution favoring Ali was unfair in view of the fact that the first two fights were split.

"But we will negotiate with the Garden about that," he said. Futch said the date was accepta-

Ali and Frazier have had two great fights in the Garden, both going the full distance and close occasion claiming he was the victor.

On March 8, 1971, Frazier, then the champion, won a brawling, 15-round decision, and belted the challenger to the canvas in the last round. Each received \$2.5 million.

The title was in another's hands-George Foreman-when the two met a second time in a 12-rounder. It was another slam-bang fight, won by Ali on a unanimous decision. Frazier insisted he wasn't beaten. Each fighter received close to \$3 million.

Astros fall to Padres in close tilt

HOUSTON (AP) — Willie McCovey led off a two-run second inning with a home run and Tito Fuentes capped it with a single that gave the surging San Diego Padres a 2-1 victory over the Houston Astros Tuesday night.

McCovey sent his first homer of the season on a line over the right field fence off Tom Griffin, 0-3. Dave Winfield followed with a walk and successive singles by Dick Sharon and Fuentes produced the run that gave the Padres their eighth victory in the last 11 games. It also sent the reeling Astros to their ninth loss in the last 10 games.

Houston scored its lone run off Dan Spillner, 2-1, on Roger Metzger's double, Tom Griffin's bunt and Rob Andrews' sacrifice fly in the third. Spillner finished with a

Houston scored its lone run off Dan Spillner, 2-1, on Roger Metzger's double, Tom Griffints bunt and Rob Andrews' sacrifice fly in the third. Spillner finished with a four-hitter.

122-117 victory Tuesday night in their National Basketball Associa-

NBA champions a 3 to 1 lead in their best of seven play-off series. Boston can wrapup the series with a victory Thursday night at home.

The Celtics started to take com-

mand late in the first quarter but they had to hold off a Houston rally in the fourth quarter that included a The victory gave the defending debris-throwing incident by the capacity crowd of 10,218 fans. After Rocket center Kevin Kunnert was called for a loose ball fowl, paper cups, ice and a pair of men's shoes

pelted the court. Celtic Coach Tom Heinsohn was but was not injured.

Chaney, a former University of Houston star, led the Celtics on a scoring free-for-all in the fourth scoring binge with 12 second quarter points that put Boston ahead 62-51 at halftime.

In addition to his eight points in the first quarter, Westphal added five assists, two baskets and one

hit in the head by a thrown object steal in eight minutes of the second

Boston center Dave Cowens led a quarter that thwarted a Houston rally. Cowens finished with 29 points to tie Chaney for Boston's

Calvin Murphy did much of Houston's fourth quarter scoring nine points 29-20 with 2:23 left in

Mike Newlin hit 31. Kunnert got into foul trouble quickly, picking up his third personal only 3:04 in the game and sat out much of the first

Murphy scored six of Houston's first eight points for an 8-2 Rocket

Houston hit only 8 of 21 of field go attempts and turned the ball over to towr

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Boston shot 52 percent from the field, hit 6 of 6 free throws, a outrebounded the Rockets 17-8 in the second period.





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