

Stars win first game with Sharks Jordan contemplates retirement



DALLAS (AP) — Dallas lost top regular-season scorer Joe Nieuwendyk to a first-period knee injury, but the Stars recovered to take the opener of their Western Conference playoff series 4-1 over the San Jose Sharks on Wednesday night.

Nieuwendyk got the Stars' first goal only 2:22 into the game as Dallas scored twice in the opening three minutes. Nieuwendyk took a lead pass from Darryl Sydor, got behind the Sharks' defense for a breakaway and beat Mike Vernon with a wrist shot.

But with 4:02 left in the period, Nieuwendyk was knocked out of the game by San Jose defenseman Bryan Marchment's check. Nieuwendyk's condition will be further evaluated by Stars medical personnel on Thursday.

No penalty was called on the play. Juha Lind made it 2-0 only 37 seconds after Nieuwendyk's goal when he knocked in the rebound of Modano's slap shot. Dallas scored on two of its first three shots.

But the Sharks answered at 12:40 when Owen Nolan scored on a slap shot from the top of the left circle. Dallas pushed its lead to 3-1 at 3:30 of the second period on Derian Hatcher's power-play rebound.

Modano's empty-netter with 1.9 seconds left made it 4-1. Stars goalie Ed Belfour stopped 21 shots.

CHICAGO (AP) — His body, exquisitely sculpted but still 35 years old, has been pounded repeatedly during a season that started in October and could yet last until June. Planes and practices, jump shots and jostling.

But it is one question that wears Michael Jordan more than anything else. At every stop, before and after every game, it is always the same: What's next?

Jordan has said he will not play next year if Bulls coach Phil Jackson is not back. General manager Jerry Krause has said it is time for Jackson to leave, and the ex-hippie, Zen-practicing coach is ready to take a year off.

So that ought to be it. Right? Who knows? Jordan has at times appeared to hedge. And he's changed his mind before. And almost no one wants to believe basketball's greatest player, a man whose salary alone has totaled \$63 million the last two years, is going to hang up his flying shoes.

So the question keeps coming, over and over and over again. "It's a lot of the same old questions I had to deal with city-to-city," Jordan said. "It gets monotonous,



Jordan

although I may have the same answers. It's taken too much time to talk about something that really hasn't been decided."

He's been on top of the NBA as its best player for years, even after taking a nearly two-year respite from the game when he experimented with baseball.

Comebacks from retirement often produce players who are just a shadow of what they once were. Jordan, who altered his game the second time around and has made great use of a fallaway jumper that is unblockable, has won two championships since coming back. This season, he captured his 10th scoring title.

What's it like to guard him? "Hell," says Nick Anderson, the Orlando Magic guard. "You ever been to hell before? You don't want to go."

Now Jordan's favorite time has arrived — the playoffs. Knowing the Bulls need 15 more wins for their sixth title of the decade, he'll be revitalized for the postseason, which begins Friday against the New Jersey Nets.

The playoffs, Jordan says, start "with your own willingness to push yourself." And no one has done that better.

His career playoff average of 33.6 is the best in NBA history. He has made game-winning shots in the postseason an art form.

"Having him means you've got the mental edge over every team you play, because he's the best,"

teammate Steve Kerr. "If you lose a game or two in a game, you've got him. You're always in the game. You lose or get knocked out of ways have that."

That this might make Jackson calls the Bulls "the best" will make Jordan's retirement in his quest for "I think the last championship always the hardest and the most gratifying because the situations you deal with in the course of the season," he says.

"My first championship maybe there weren't as many there are now. Now we're and everybody expects because of the way we've maintained the level of the world for so long."

So, what if this the Bulls for the game," said Chicago Orlando coach who's often frustrated Jordan's rough defense and years denying him a shot.

"I think he is in the prime of his game," Kerr knows exactly how to energy, where it is at. He has complete control of the think he is probably the best basketball he's ever seen in his life. I think it would be if he left the game."

Spurs will use size against Suns

PHOENIX (AP) — San Antonio vs. Phoenix shapes up as the Improvement Series.

The Suns were 16 games better this season than last — a good comeback, but one that pales alongside the Spurs' NBA-record, 36-game turnaround.

Both arrived at a final record of 56-26 and qualified for a first-round playoff series that begins Thursday night.

San Antonio may owe its postseason return to injuries that kept David Robinson out of all but six games in 1996-97.

His absence made the Spurs a lottery team, and they were awarded the No. 1 pick.

They used it on 7-foot Tim Duncan, who averaged 21.1 points and a team-high 11.9 rebounds a game.

The Spurs set the previous improvement standard during Robinson's rookie season, when they won 35 more games than in 1988-89.

"David has become more like a step-off-the-block

player, one who's going to face you up and shoot the ball," Suns forward Antonio McDyess said.

"And Duncan, he's more of a power player, trying to dribble you in, shoot the hook shot. He's got so many moves down there he causes problems for a big guy."

While the Spurs capitalized on the return of Robinson and a lottery break, the Suns returned to the elite ranks with something close to a makeover.

McDyess, Cliff Robinson and George McCloud, who will start in the frontcourt, are new to Phoenix this season. Guards Jason Kidd, Steve Nash and Rex Chapman have two seasons or less with the team.

But they jelled quickly enough to make the Suns a formidable opponent from the start. The Suns won the first three of a four-game regular-season series with San Antonio, and have the homecourt edge on that basis.

The Suns, who have as much quality depth as any team but have no dominant center, believe in a tried-and-true philosophy: a good offense helps the defense.

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Disk Space Quotas

Some students have a hard time receiving all of the e-mail that gets sent to them.

An obstacle standing in the way of getting all e-mail messages can be disk space quotas. These quotas deal with the amount of space available for e-mail messages and other files.

When space is filled, messages will bounce back to the sender without making it to the intended recipient. Students may not know they've exceeded their quota until messages are not received.

If the person you are sending e-mail to doesn't have enough space, the message will bounce back to you. If this happens you may see an error message in the header mentioning exceeded quota. But nothing will appear on the intended recipients screen to tell the person that they've missed a message.

By default, the amount of disk space is set from 2 MB (4000 blocks) to 3 MB of space. On special mini-disks, 5-cylinders is the minimum space allotted. And a typical e-mail message can range from 8 to 60 blocks.

There are some things you can do to keep from bouncing incoming messages due to exceeding quota.

Remember to delete old messages, since storing them will leave you less disk space for new incoming e-mail messages.

Call Help Desk Central to learn how to avoid bounced messages, and how to check available disk space on different systems. For information about different e-mail systems, call 845-8300 or visit www.tamu.edu/scip.

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