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## **ENTERTAINING EMUS ADVANCE TO WORLD SEMIS**

**This article is courtesy of Kimberley Lewis, Basketball Australia.**

Australia's Under-19 Men's team, the Emus, have won a Semi Finals berth at the FIBA Under-19 World Championship for Men by eclipsing France 79-73 at the North Shore Events Centre in Auckland, New Zealand this afternoon.

Now only Greece stands in the way of the Emus and the Gold medal game. Australia goes head to head with the European Champion in the Semi Finals tomorrow at 4.15pm AEST.

Emus' Head Coach Marty Clarke said despite a 22-point win over Greece two weeks ago, it will be a whole new ball game tomorrow.

"This is a semi final at a World Championship so the recent win over Greece doesn't mean much but it does give us some confidence that we can play with them. Our confidence in being able to play everybody is what we're really banking on," Clarke said.

Australia's Captain Matthew Dellavedova posted a team high 18 points against France, supported by Cody Ellis with 14 points and 10 rebounds, Brock Motum added 11 points. Christian Salecich did the hard yards in defence, tiring French sharp-shooter Andrew Albicy and restricting him to just four points in the second half with the help of Dellavedova and Hugh Greenwood.

Clarke said Australia made some mistakes early on that kept France in the game but the Emus' defensive pressure was the difference.

"It was a good win. This was always going to be our toughest game because we've played them so often they know us better than anyone else. It seemed like we threw it away a little bit too much early and that probably hurt us, but in the long run we defended well," Clarke said.

"It's not just about making points, it's defence, and getting the ball to where it needs to go. I know what Dellavedova does when it comes time to play and we need someone to lead us and he does that unbelievably well."

It was an up-tempo game for all four quarters as the fast paced French team tested the Australian defence.

There was open play in the first term as the Australians easily penetrated the French defence while the French guards had no problems dishing out to their three-point shooters; France went 4-of-8 from beyond the arc to lead 20-17 at the break.

The Aussies seemed to have no answer for point guard Albicy in the first quarter and struggled to get back on transition in the second but a change up in defence mid-way through the quarter troubled the French.

Australia started to show full court man-to-man and drop into a zone, forcing France to cough up the ball. The Emus converted their opportunities and when New South Welshman Jason Cadee drained a three in the dying seconds Australia took a 10 point lead into halftime, 45-35.

France came back in the third term as neither team was able to settle but Australia managed to hold on to a five point lead at the last break, 58-53.

France seemed to get on top in the fourth as Christophe Leonard dominated in the low post.

With 6:25 left to play, an Albicy long bomb brought France within one point, 62-61, before France took the lead mid-way through the final quarter and with Australia facing 66-71 on the scoreboard Dellavedova nailed a three from deep to start an 8-0 run for the Aussies.

Jorden Page injected some energy into the Emus, driving over the top of the French big men to level at 71-71 before nailing a clutch trey to snatch back the lead for Australia.

As the tension mounted in the final minute the Emus were controlled. Ellis missed a long range bomb but when Salecich tipped the offensive rebound back, he nailed the open three to stretch the lead back to four points, 77-73.

The French were feeling the pressure as Albicy missed a crucial 3-pointer and Alexis Tanghe missed two free throws that could have brought France within two points with 18 seconds remaining. It was all but over.

Australian guard Ryan Broekhoff was unruffled and he iced the game with two free throws, keeping the Aussies' medal hopes alive.

Dellavedova said the team was able to remain calm during the high-pressure moments as they had been through these game situations in training.

"We knew they weren't going to go away. We just stuck at it and got out with the win. It was a tough game," Dellavedova said.

The Emus must now recover to take on Greece tomorrow in the all-important Semi Final from 4.15pm AEST. Follow the Emus live on [www.FIBATV.com](http://www.FIBATV.com) and [LIVESTATS](http://LIVESTATS).

In the other Quarter Finals Greece annihilated Argentina 86-60 while Puerto Rico faces Croatia and the USA takes on Canada this afternoon.



Quarter by quarter:

1: AUST 20 FRA 17  
H: AUST 45 FRA 35 (28-15)  
3: AUST 58 FRA 53 (13-18)  
F: AUST 79 FRA 73 (21-20)

**AUSTRALIA 79** (Matthew Dellavedova 18, Cody Ellis 14, Brock Motum 11) bt  
**FRANCE 73** (Christophe Leonard 22, Andrew Albicy 17, Nicolas Lang 17)  
At North Shore Events Centre, Auckland, New Zealand.

[Official Tournament Website](#)

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