

30<sup>th</sup> August, 2009

## **NEW SOUTH WALES PAIR HELP BOOMERS SHOCK CHINA FOR BACK-TO-BACK WINS**

Australia's men's basketball team has registered two victories in succession at the Boris Stankovic Cup in Kunshan City, downing host nation China in a thriller by two points, 76-74.

The Boomers defeated Turkey 70-54 yesterday while China, still smarting after losing the FIBA Asia Championship to Iran, was coming off an 88-62 victory over Angola and was looking to impress in front of a home crowd.

The Boomers rallied from a ten point deficit in the third quarter and tied the game with one period to play before pinching the game in the final ten seconds.

Starting centre AJ Ogilvy stole the ball from China and passed to Matthew Dellavedova who found Oscar Forman under the basket for a bucket despite a heavy foul. Forman finished the three-point play and Australia had the unlikely victory.

Two significant performers in the Boomers display against China today were former New South Wales junior representatives, AJ Ogily and Ater Majok.

Ogilvy, a former Hills junior, top scored for Australia with 18 points on 5-of-7 shooting with 8-of-10 free throws, James Harvey chimed in with 17 and Ater Majok, a Sudanese refugee who played his junior Australian basketball for Macarthur, added 10 points on 5-of-7 shooting, all of which came in the first half. Li Xiaoxu top scored for China with 17 points while former NBA player Wang Zhizhi added 16.

Boomers head coach Brett Brown was impressed by the spirited performance of his inexperienced team.

"I'm a bit surprised to be honest. With this young group, to come back from ten down and get a win like that on the floor of the host nation – it was a fantastic effort," Brown said.

"AJ Ogilvy made a great play stealing the ball near the end of the game but really it was our collective team defence and holding China to 74 points that won us the game.

"When our guys come with a great energy we can get the job done and we should play like that always. Tonight we've over achieved and the boys are happy.

"AJ is the rock of this group and he was terrific tonight and another story is Ater Majok. He had his first legitimate minutes tonight and he was great.

"Harvey embraced his role and gave us a lot, Damien Martin came in with a great spirit and made a physical contribution and Forman hit some big shots."

The Boomers came ready to play and opened up an 8-2 lead in the early stages behind the inside play of Ogilvy and despite some good moments from Majok off the bench China fought back to take a slight lead.

After one quarter the scores were tied 23-23 but just minutes later China had their largest lead, a nine point buffer that looked commanding before Majok followed a nice block with a jump shot, a tip in and a nice low post move to keep the Boomers alive.

Australia reduced the margin to one as time neared completion in the half but China drained a three pointer and went into the locker room ahead by four points, 43-39.

Ogilvy had 11 points at half time to lead the Boomers, with Majok adding 10 points in support, and while Australia shot well from the field they had only managed a sour 1-of-9 from three point land.

China scored first in the second half to push the lead to six points and after a see-saw battle in the third the lead was still five points when three minutes remained in the quarter.

The Boomers then showed great spirit to bridge the gap in the latter stages of the stanza and with ten minutes to play the score was tied at 57-57.

China scored the first four points of the fourth quarter before Ogilvy went to the rack, got fouled and hit two free throws to steady the ship.

A Chinese foul shot and two three pointers spaced by a powerful inside move had the hosts fired up as Australia was forced into a time out behind by ten, 70-60.

When Forman nailed a three pointer from the top of the key Australia had scored six unanswered points to force China into a time out but Harvey kept the push going with another three and Australia was within one point with three minutes to play.

The margin was back out to five in a hurry before Harvey drove and scored to make it 74-71 to China with two minutes to play.

Misses by Harvey and Forman were rebounded by the Boomers and when Ogilvy hit two free throws the margin was one point. China then had control but it was Ogilvy again with the heroics, stealing the ball, finding Dellavedova, who got the ball to Forman under the basket.

Forman scored despite being fouled then hit the ensuing free throw to put the Boomers up by two and when Crawford broke up China's last play the victory was Australia's.

Forman and Martin shared Australia's rebounding ribbon with seven apiece as the Boomers won the rebound count 40-37.

Australia shot a hot 63 percent from the floor but connected on a lowly 5-of-25 from beyond the arc.



In the earlier match tonight, Turkey pumped Angola by twenty three points, 60-37, meaning that irrespective of Australia's result against Angola tomorrow it will face the winner of tomorrow's China-Turkey match in the Boris Stankovic Cup final on Monday night.

Quarter by quarter:

1. AUS 23 CHN 23

H: CHN 43 AUS 39 (20-16)

3: AUS 57 CHN 57 (18-14)

F: AUS 76 CHN 74 (19-17)

**AUSTRALIA 76** (AJ Ogilvy 18, James Harvey 17, Ater Majok 10) bt

**CHINA 74** (Li Xiaoxu 17, Wang Zhizhi 16)

at Boris Stankovic Continental Cup

in Kunshan City, China

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