

## Ronaldo remains motivated for more trophies

Cristiano Ronaldo expects to continue his "trajectory" and win more trophies at Real Madrid after scoring the winner against Gremio in Saturday's Club World Cup final.

The Portugal international, 32, curled home a free-kick as Real became the first team to win back-to-back titles, BBC reported.

Ronaldo won a fifth Ballon d'Or earlier this month and crowned himself "the best player in history".

"The numbers speak for themselves," he said.

mio saw Zidane win yet another trophy as the club's coach, since taking over he has averaged a trophy every 89 days with the Spanish giant.

From the time he arrived at the Estadio Santiago Bernabeu to the night of the Club World Cup final, there have been 10 possible trophies the French coach could have won, and he's claimed eight of them, Marca reported.

His 2017 has been almost unmatched; his haul of five titles within the calendar year has the former Juventus midfielder right up there with the very

nization right through to the bottom, few were more invested in such a challenge than the Frenchman himself.

He duly delivered, before winning the Champions League again becoming the first coach of the modern era to lift it in consecutive campaigns.

In less than two years in the job, Zidane has moved into second place on the all-time leaderboard for successful Real Madrid coaches.

Only Miguel Munoz has won more trophies, who's haul stands at 14.

"It is a great moment for all Ma-



REUTERS

Cristiano Ronaldo (C) holds aloft Club World Cup trophy while celebrating with his Real Madrid teammates after the 1-0 victory over Brazil's Gremio in Abu Dhabi on December 16, 2017.

"I am very happy. I remain very motivated to keep winning titles at a collective and individual level.

"I still feel strong enough to continue my trajectory as a player and to win trophies, which is what I like most."

Saturday's victory in Abu Dhabi was a record-equaling third Club World Cup win for Real, who also triumphed in 2014, matching Barcelona's achievement.

### 89 days per trophy

Real Madrid's 1-0 victory over Gre-

best.

January 2016 saw Zidane appointed after the disastrous failure of the Rafa Benitez experiment; his first success came with the Champions League of the 2015/16 season as Los Blancos overcame their fierce rival Atletico Madrid in a penalty shootout in Milan.

Next came the UEFA Super Cup over Sevilla before Zidane lifted the first of two Club World Cups with a victory over Kashima Antlers.

Los Blancos' pursuit of the La Liga title in the 2016/17 season bordered on an obsession, from the top of the orga-

nization and everyone who loves this club. There have been some great brilliant moments and we are witnessing them first hand," Zidane said in a press conference.

"We have to enjoy today, the balance is good and we must continue in this manner. We are going home to relax, and then turn our attentions to El Clasico."

The Real Madrid coach added, "We have won our fifth (trophy) this year and we will keep on. Now we must enjoy, rest up and think about the rest of the season."

## Saunders challenges Golovkin after WBO title defense

Billy Joe Saunders challenged Gennady Golovkin to a middleweight unification bout after making a successful defense of his WBO title on Saturday as he outclassed David Lemeux at Quebec's Place Bell in Canada.

The British fighter controlled the bout from start to finish as he defended his title by unanimous decision at Place Bell in Quebec, winning 120-108, 117-111, 118-110 on the judges' scorecards, Sky Sports reported.

It was a fourth defeat for Lemeux, who had won each of his four fights since being stopped by unified middleweight champion Golovkin in 2015.

After the fight, Saunders called out Golovkin and insisted he can become the first man to defeat the Kazakh knockout specialist.

"Golovkin, you kept saying you want my WBO belt when I was 14 stone, out of shape and wasn't in love with boxing," he said in an interview shown on BT Sport.

"Then you wanted to fight me. Fight me now. Now fight me, cos we'll be seeing a different story. You'll be punching

fresh air."

Lemeux's first clean punch of the fight came in round three but it was not enough to stop Saunders, who retali-

ated the better shots.

The masterclass continued into the seventh when Lemeux left the round bloody and hurt and with little answer to



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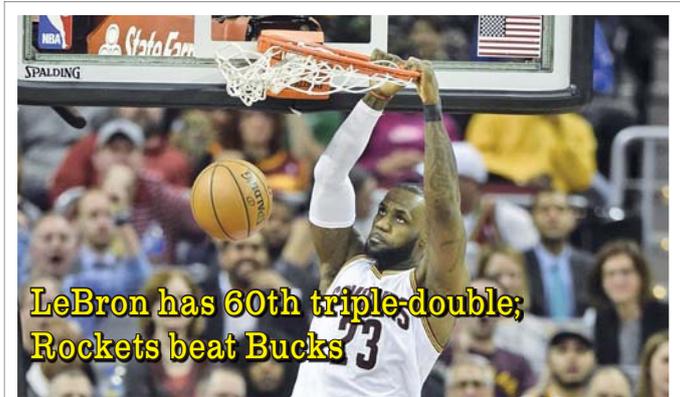
Billy Joe Saunders poses for a photo with his WBO title belt after he beat David Lemeux at Quebec's Place Bell on December 16, 2017.

ated with a combination uppercut in the fourth.

By the fifth, Saunders began taunting his opponent for his misses, drawing boos from the crowd, but went on to

Saunders' jabs and footwork.

Saunders, who has already defended the belt twice since winning it from Ireland's Andy Lee in 2015, dominated the later rounds to take his record to 26-0.



USA TODAY SPORTS

Cavaliers' LeBron James dunks against Jazz in an NBA meeting in Cleveland on December 16, 2017.

LeBron James passed Larry Bird for sixth place in career triple-doubles and Cleveland beat Utah 109-100.

James' 60th triple-double in 15 seasons included 29 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. It was his third triple-double in a now-completed four-game homestand — each game won by the Cavaliers, Reuters reported.

James scored 10 points in the fourth quarter. He was 9 of 15 from the field and 10 of 10 from the free-throw line.

"Team success is always the No. 1, but along the way if you're able to accomplish some individual awards, individual achievements, it would mean a lot," James said after Saturday's victory.

"I feel good. This is my 15th year, but this is one of the best years I've had as far as how I feel, and I want to continue that. I want to kind of try to break the mold for the next generation."

### Rockets 102 Grizzlies 93

James Harden scored a game-high 31 points and Chris Paul produced 23 of his 25 points in the second half as Houston extended its winning streak to 13 games with a victory over Milwaukee.

Paul had just two points on 0-of-5 shooting before

the intermission but opened the second half by drilling three consecutive three-pointers.

He was just as lethal down the stretch, nailing back-to-back mid-range jumpers off screens to lift the Rockets (24-4) to a seven-point lead with 33.7 seconds left.

The Rockets improved to 14-0 with Paul in the lineup.

### Celtics 102 Grizzlies 93

A great first quarter and a solid burst to start the fourth kept Boston from back-to-back embarrassments, coming away with a victory over struggling, but still scrappy, Memphis.

Al Horford and Terry Rozier sparked a 16-0 run at the start of the fourth as the Celtics erased a 73-71 Memphis lead built largely on a third-quarter explosion from Marc Gasol, who had 21 of his game-high 30 points during the stretch.

Kyrie Irving led Boston with 20 points, rookie Jason Tatum had 19 points, nine rebounds and two blocked shots.

Horford had 15 points and seven boards, Aron Baynes added 13 points and six rebounds while Marcus Smart scored 11 and Rozier added 10 points off the bench.

## Guardiola not 'humble' over personal records



PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS

Kevin De Bruyne (R) rifles in Manchester City's second goal during the 4-1 beating of Tottenham Hotspur at Manchester's Etihad Stadium on December 16, 2017.

Pep Guardiola admitted he had no desire to be "humble" after witnessing his Manchester City side register its 16th consecutive Premier League victory by beating Tottenham Hotspur at the Etihad.

Goals from Ilkay Gundogan, Kevin De Bruyne and a Raheem Sterling brace extended the all-time league record City set after Wednesday's win at Swansea City, with Christian Eriksen's late consolation the only blemish on a dominant performance, The Independent reported.

The victory saw Guardiola match his 16 consecutive wins with Barcelona during the 2010-11 season, a La Liga record. The Catalan is also now three games away from equalling his 19-match Bundesliga record, set with Bayern Munich during 2013-14.

"Of course I'm proud. I don't want to be humble right now," Guardiola said when asked about his remarkable triple crown of records.

"I think we work a lot and the players know that. We're going to review the game tomorrow morning. I'm going to speak with the players individually and together to see how many good things we did and mistakes we have done."

Guardiola claimed he would have been unable to set any of the three records without the support of all three

clubs, which all ensured he had quality players at his disposal.

The City manager added, "Of course, that's happened because I was with three amazing clubs — Barcelona, Bayern Munich and this one."

"All three clubs support me, in all the decisions they believe and they provide me with outstanding players. Without good players and clubs supporting your ideas, it's impossible to achieve these kind of things."

### 'No words'

Guardiola was left speechless by De Bruyne's performance against Tottenham and said the Belgian is an inspiration to the club's younger players.

"You see him how he runs without the ball, he's a good example for the young players and for our academy, for Phil Foden, for Brahim (Diaz), they know how good Kevin De Bruyne is."

"When they are outside and see how he runs and fights without the ball, that is the best example and he helps us to be a better club, a better institution for the future."

"His performance today, I have no words, no words to describe what he has done with the ball, how many assists, and his ability to switch play," City manager added.