

# USA survives test, holds on to edge Brazil

By **Brian Mahoney**  
Associated Press Writer

ISTANBUL — The United States survived its first tough test at the world championships, edging Brazil 70-68 on Monday when Leandro Barbosa's shot rattled out at the buzzer.

Kevin Durant scored 27 points and Chauncey Billups added 15 for the Americans (3-0), who essentially clinched Group B with the victory.

But this was further proof that a world title won't come easily for this young U.S. team — if it comes at all.

After the Americans trailed most of the first 2 1/4 quarters, Lamar Odom's dunk with 7:14 left

put them ahead 64-62. But they couldn't build on the lead during a tense final few minutes, and Brazil had two chances to send the game to overtime.

Following a miss by Billups, Brazil got the ball and Marcelo Huertas was fouled on a drive to the basket with 3.5 seconds remaining.

He missed the first free throw and then the second intentionally, tracking it down in the corner and firing it underneath to Barbosa, who put up a shot over Kevin Love, only to have it bounce off the back and front of the rim.

Barbosa finished with 14 points after a strong start for Brazil (2-1). Marcus Vinicius scored 16, and Tiago Splitter had 13 while bat-

ting foul trouble in the second half.

With NBA big men Nene, Anderson Varejao and Splitter, Brazil was considered one of the teams with enough size to topple the undersized Americans.

Nene had to pull out with an injury and Varejao sat out again while continuing to rest a sprained right ankle, so the Brazilians turned to a speed game to lead for much of the game.

They just couldn't finish the upset, leaving the Americans needing only a victory over Iran or Tunisia, the bottom two teams in Group B, or another Brazil loss to earn the top seed from the group and three full days off before meeting the No. 4 seed

from Group A on Sept. 6.

The Americans have plenty to work on before worrying about that, after needing a huge night from Durant and 31 minutes from Billups, the old man of the team at 33, to pull this one out.

The U.S. team has none of its 2008 Olympic gold medalists back, and nowhere was it more apparent than in the matchup with Barbosa. When the countries last met, in their 2007 Olympic qualifier game, Barbosa entered as the tournament's leading scorer before Kobe Bryant led a defensive effort that held Barbosa to just four points on 1-of-7 shooting in an easy U.S. victory.

There's no defenders like Bryant here, and Barbosa took

advantage in the first quarter by making two 3-pointers and scoring eight points.

Brazil made 12 of its first 16 shots in the period and its first four 3-pointers, streaks that were snapped when Barbosa was just short on a halfcourt heave at the buzzer, leaving them with a 28-22 lead.

Brazil extended its lead to eight early in the second quarter and was still up seven midway through the period, but with Splitter on the bench with two fouls, and Barbosa and Alex Garcia joining him, the Americans cut it to one a couple of times.

Splitter's dunk sent the Brazilians to the half with a 46-43 advantage.

## Clarett signs contract with UFL's Omaha Nighthawks

By **Eric Olson**  
Associated Press Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — Former Ohio State star Maurice Clarett has signed a one-year contract with the Omaha Nighthawks of the United Football League.

Clarett met Monday with team officials and UFL commissioner Michael Huyghue, who gave him blessing.

Clarett was expected to be on the practice field Monday night for

his first football activity since he was a bust with the Denver Broncos and spent 3 1/2 years in prison for having a hidden gun and holding up two people outside a Columbus, Ohio, bar, in 2006.

"I am humbled by the opportunity the Omaha Nighthawks have given me and will dedicate myself on and off the field to prove that I can be a valuable member of the team and the Omaha community," Clarett said in a statement. "I am committed to working hard to

earn the right for a second chance in football and more importantly in life."

Clarett, who is not scheduled to meet with reporters until Wednesday, went through a private workout and physical Sunday.

"The things you can't coach you can see were there — footwork, hands, those types of things. And he's in really good physical condition," general manager Rick Mueller said. "Those were the

things that jumped out more than anything else. He's done a pretty good job getting himself in condition to play football."

Clarett, 26, needed a judge's permission to leave Ohio to work out for the Nighthawks.

Nighthawks general manager Rick Mueller said he's confident Clarett will be allowed to stay the entire season in Omaha and that he won't be barred from traveling to road games.

Clarett ran into trouble after a

sensational freshman year at Ohio State in 2002.

He rushed for 1,237 yards and 18 touchdowns, the last one clinching a victory in the national title game against Miami.

He was suspended the entire 2003 season for taking gifts and lying to the NCAA.

He later lost a court case challenging the NFL's rule requiring a player to be out of high school three years before becoming eligible for the draft.

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# HOROSCOPES

By **Jacqueline Bigar**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** for Tuesday, Aug. 31, 2010: This year, look past the obvious. Finally, you will learn to trigger less and allow greater give-and-take between you and others. Empathy increases with understanding. Sometimes you will have to flow with a loved one's unpredictability. You cannot control this person; grow with him or her. If you are single, don't count on any relationship being long term until you pass the year mark. You will meet someone quite exotic through your commitments. GEMINI expects a lot from you.

The Stars Show the Kind of Day You'll Have: 5-Dynamic, 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-So-so; 1-Difficult

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)  
\*\*\*\* There is always a negative and a positive. As a result, you wrestle with an issue to find a resolution. Don't deceive yourself about what is going on here; otherwise, you'll be making a situation even more difficult. Make a point of scheduling a key meeting late in the day. Tonight: Chating away.  
**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)  
\*\*\*\* Use the daylight hours to the max. You might feel as if someone isn't getting your message, even though you feel your actions are in sync with your feelings. Confusion surrounds the best of intentions. Stay centered and open. Tonight: Treat yourself to a new item.  
**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)  
\*\*\* Much that occurs might be on a subconscious level. You might want to rethink a situation more carefully than in the past. Sometimes too much advice can be bad. First, you need to personally process what is going on in this matter.

even if you are dealing with a professional issue. Tonight: Feeling your Wheaties.  
**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)  
\*\*\*\* Use the daylight hours to the max. You might have difficulty determining which way to go with a child or loved one, though clearly someone is full of ideas. A brainstorming session could be worthwhile. Doors open. Surprising insights head your way. Tonight: Take some much-needed one-on-one time.  
**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)  
\*\*\* A must appearance could open up new possibilities. Responsibilities could be overwhelming, especially as a close associate develops a case of the flakies. Don't delude yourself -- you are carrying the weight. Tonight: Where the crowds are.  
**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)  
\*\*\*\* If you can distance yourself from difficult situations, you will see a new path. Emotions cloud even the most intellectual thinkers. Go for your bottom line, and don't cause yourself any stress. Revitalize your energy through a talk with a like mind. Tonight: Working late.  
**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)  
\*\*\*\* How can you relate on a one-on-one level with everyone you know? What a challenge others present! Insight comes from a sudden change or reversal. You will be able to deal with any issue that arises. Trust in your abilities. Tonight: A favorite pastime.  
**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)  
\*\*\*\* Others keep seeking you out. You might feel harassed, or you could feel extremely popular. The interpretation you choose speaks about who you are. Pace yourself. Tonight: Make time for a special person. Visit over dinner.  
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

\*\*\*\* Pace yourself, knowing everyone does have limits. Though you can be fiery and energetic, you also need some downtime. Do what you must, and eliminate the frivolous. Suddenly you will be energized. Tonight: Making your mark on the social world.  
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)  
\*\*\*\* Your creativity could define your success or failure. You need to allow more brainstorming, especially in work-related environments and problematic settings. You like to be in control, but at what cost? You could be killing an element of productivity in others. Tonight: Where the action is.  
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)  
\*\*\* If you can, work from home. You often feel pressured by events. You allow yourself to feel responsible in some way, but you might not be. Think positively about the possibilities of not doing so much. Allow others to clean up their own messes! Tonight: Let the good times roll.  
**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)  
\*\*\*\* Reach out for others, and don't stand on ceremony. You will be able to renew a special relationship if you follow your inner voice. Communication could be quite sudden and might surprise you. Flow with a change of plans. Tonight: Happily head home.

**BORN TODAY**  
Actor Richard Gere (1949), wrestler Jeff Hardy (1977), Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver (1935)  
\*\*\*\*  
Jacqueline Bigar is on the Internet at www.jacquelinebigar.com.  
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