

STONIE'S SPORTS HANDICAPPING

A GREEK COUPLE IN FLUSHING, NEW YORK?

The US Open Tennis Championship began last week in Flushing, Queens, New York and two prominent Greeks are already making their marks. In the women's side, 25-year-old Maria Sakkari has already won her first two matches and at press time was preparing for her round three matchup with American



Amanda Amisinova. The 15th-seeded Sakkari's best finish in a Grand Slam event was her fourth round appearance at this season's Australian Open, the first major of the season. Sakkari is the daughter of Greek Tennis royalty as her mother, Angeliki Kanellopoulou, was a former top 50 WTA player and her grandfather was her coach. Born in Athens and currently living in Monaco, Sakkari

dropped the first set in her second round match to American Bernarda Pera, 2-6, before bouncing back to take the final two sets 6-3 and 6-2. Sakkari appeared headed to the Quarterfinals, but was ousted from the U.S. Open by Serena Williams in the fourth round yesterday.

On the men's side of the draw, world #4 ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas and Croatian Borna Coric and were even at a set each before Coric had the luckiest night of his career so far and knocked Tsitsipas right out of the U.S. Open in the third round. Tsitsipas, born in Athens to a Greek father and a Russian mother, now lives in Monte Carlo and is looking for his first major championship, as his previous best at a major was a trip to the Semifinals in Australia last season.





The 22-year-old Tsitsipas has often been rumored to be Sakkari's boyfriend, as they live very close to one another and grew up together. Sakkari said last year, though, that their mothers are close, they grew up in the same tennis circles, and have known each other their whole

lives, but there's no truth to the rumors.

Whether they are or they aren't isn't the point. The bottom line is that they are two good-looking Greeks who are playing professional tennis at the highest level and neither of them has hit their prime yet. Hopefully while you were home avoiding crowds you tuned in to ESPN to watch them compete against the world's best and didn't overdo it with the Ouzo!



THOUGHTS AND HUNCHES, MAKING MONEY IN BUNCHES, AND SUCKER PUNCHES

NBA

While a couple of Greeks are turning heads in New York, two others are in serious trouble in Orlando, Florida. The Antetokounmpo brothers, Giannis and Thanasis, came in to the playoffs as the Eastern Conference's top seed and the favorite to get to the NBA Finals, but earlier this evening, their Milwaukee Bucks (+700 to win the Finals) are now in a 0-3 hole to the Miami Heat (+700) and are one game away from being eliminated. No team in NBA playoff history has ever overcome a 0-3 hole to win a series. In the East's other matchup, a miraculous buzzer-beating game winner by Toronto's OG Anunoby saved the defending champion Raptors (+1400) from falling into a 0-3 hole against the Boston Celtics (+600). The Eastern Conference, thus far, has been much more entertaining than the Western Conference, as all signs are still pointing to an

All-Los-Angeles matchup between the Clippers (+230) and the Lakers (+260). Yes, there were a couple of Game 7's in the first round out west, but neither the Lakers nor Clippers seemed to break a sweat as a showdown seems imminent. There are odds on every single game being played and I'd love to get you some picks, but the timing of this newsletter won't allow it, forcing us to bet futures. As of now, I'm seeing a Finals between the Clippers and the Celtics, who seem to be the two most polished teams left in Orlando's bubble, but for those of you conspiracy-minded sleuths, don't think for a moment that the NBA and ABC/Disney won't do everything in their power to get LeBron James to the Finals, especially this season, as he's been so outspoken on Social Justice topics.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Two weeks ago, the New York Yankees and the Oakland A's looked like the two best teams in the American League, but a lot has changed since then. The Yankees (+450 to win the World Series) have fallen on hard times, and if you're interested in taking a flyer on the Yanks, you're better off waiting another week when you can probably get them at +600. Their pitching staff is a mess and their two best players, Giancarlo Stanton and Aaron Judge, can't seem to stay healthy. The A's (+850) haven't played poorly because they haven't been playing at all this week due to a minor outbreak of Covid-19 that ran through their clubhouse. In the meantime, the Astros (+1200), the Rays (+900), the White Sox (+1600), and the Indians (+1600) have all made up ground on Oakland and New York, while Minnesota (+1200) is still right in the thick of it.

Over in the National League, there have been a few pleasant surprises like the Padres (+2000) and Phillies (+3000). Both San Diego and Philadelphia seem like pawns, though, as the Braves (+1200), Cubs (+1400), and Dodgers (+350) are all eyeing each other and October matchups. Right now, I'm looking at the Twins and the Astros in the American League and the Braves and Dodgers in the National League. There's still plenty of value out there right now for teams like Tampa Bay and Cleveland for you to take a shot with.

NCAA AND NFL

While NCAA Football kicked off this weekend, next week is the first real week. The SEC, Big 12, and ACC all get their seasons underway, while waiting for politics to decide the fate of the Big Ten and the Pac-12. The NFL kicks off next weekend, and in next edition's column, I will have a video where I break down picks for you to maximize your bankrolls. Until then, stay healthy and GOODLUCK2YA!

- Stonie

AUTHOR BIO



Stonie is an Oakland-born, but currently Nashville-swingin' sports nut who may only be half-Greek, but was raised in the Greek Orthodox Church in Oakland. A devout Prince Fan who has attended 78 live shows, ALL of Stonie's posts will be published in purple to honor the Purple Yoda. Fascinated by sports gambling and thrilled that it is finally becoming legal, Stonie breaks down sports and looks to give you an edge on your way to the ticket window.