

GREEKS IN THE NEWS

THE THREE MUSKETEERS?

Just last week, three of Greece's most prominent athletes met up in Athens for a good time. From left to right, we'll start with Stefanos Tsitsipas, the fifth-



ranked men's tennis player in the world. Two weeks ago, he took world #1 Novak Djokovic to five sets in a brutal match in the semifinals of the French Open that left both players hurting afterwards. After taking the top two sets, 6-3 and 6-2, Tsitsipas couldn't hold off the hard-charging Serbian, as Djokovic took the final three sets in Paris to advance to the finals, where he would ultimately fall to Spaniard Rafael Nadal. Tsitsipas, though, did his country proud, as he was noticeably hobbling by the end of the match; he took off

back to Greece for some R&R following his brutal loss.

In the middle is 20-year-old professional pole vaulter Emmanuel "Manolo" Karalis. A member of Greece's national pole vaulting team, Karalis is turning a lot of heads after setting dozens of records as a junior in Greece, has competed in the European and World Championships, and has his eyes on next summer's Tokyo Olympics, which were pushed back from this summer due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

On the right, of course, is Milwaukee Bucks center Giannis Antetokounmpo, who was also in Athens for some R&R following the Bucks' exit from the NBA playoffs. Antetokounmpo didn't come to Greece, however, without picking up some hardware. The reigning NBA Defensive Player of the Year and the league's Most Valuable Player for the second straight year shared the picture above with his 8.4M followers on Instagram.

With these three leading the charge as the faces of men's athletics for Greece, there's no doubt that Greeks throughout the world have plenty to look forward to.

EUROLEAGUE BASKETBALL

After four games, which are referred to as “rounds” in Europe, Greece’s top two teams are seeing mixed results in the EuroLeague. After dropping their season opener in a heartbreaker to Zalgiris Kaunas, Olympiakos Piraeus has bounced back to win 3 straight. It started with a win over Panathinaikos Athens, who we’ll



get to in a minute; a come-from-behind win

over Ax Armani Exchange Milan; and a tight win just last weekend over Maccabi Playtika Tel Aviv, that now has the Big Reds at 3-1 and in a tie for 2nd place in the 18-team league. Olympiakos is paced by 35-year-old Greek legend and future Hall of Famer Georgios Printezis, former University of Kentucky star Aaron Harrison, and flashy point guard Kostas Sloukas, AKA “Slouky Luke”.



For Panathinaikos Athens, the rebuilding of Greece’s former juggernaut continues. After a huge 78-76 upset win over Khimki Moscow Region in their season opener, the Tryfilis dropped one to their rivals Olympiakos before having their 3rd contest postponed due to a Covid-19 outbreak of opponents LDLC ASVEL Villeurbanne. Panathinaikos bounced back with a very nice effort, though it resulted in an overtime loss to favorites FC Barcelona. So far this season, it’s been former Kansas State and



Creighton University star Marcus Foster who has led the Tryfilis, with a lot of help from Ioannis Papapetrou, who is in his second year with Panathinaikos after coming over from Olympiakos and playing college ball at the University of Texas. Dinos Mitoglou, the 6’ 10” former Wake Forest Demon Deacon, has provided a tough, interior presence and leads the 1-2 squad in rebounds. With plenty of season

left for Greece's best to stand out in the EuroLeague, expect to hear and read plenty about these phenomenal players.

STONIE'S SPORTS HANDICAPPING

First off, let me start by thanking everyone for the great responses I've received to the videos I have been posting. For a little timeline reference, I post a new video every Friday, with my selections for the upcoming weekend's events. With the publishing of the *Greece Is The Word* newsletter every other Tuesday, by the time you read this column and watch the current video, it may be a few days late, but all you have to do is to click the big red "SUBSCRIBE" button beneath the bottom-right-hand corner of the video and you'll be all set to head to the window and make a killing. If you simply want to watch the video and critique my picks – after the fact, I might add – you're also more than welcome to do that. Now, are you ready to head to the window? [Here's the link](#) for the current week's video. Before you head to the window, remember that you can't win big unless you bet big... and GOODLUCK2YA!

– STONIE