



# Back in the spotlight



LeBron James is back in the National Basketball Association (NBA) Finals. It's his ninth appearance in 10 years and first with the Los Angeles Lakers. The Lakers return to the biggest stage for the first time since 2010, while the Miami Heat re-emerge after six years. The match-up marks the first time in NBA history that the finalists did not reach the play-offs in the previous season.

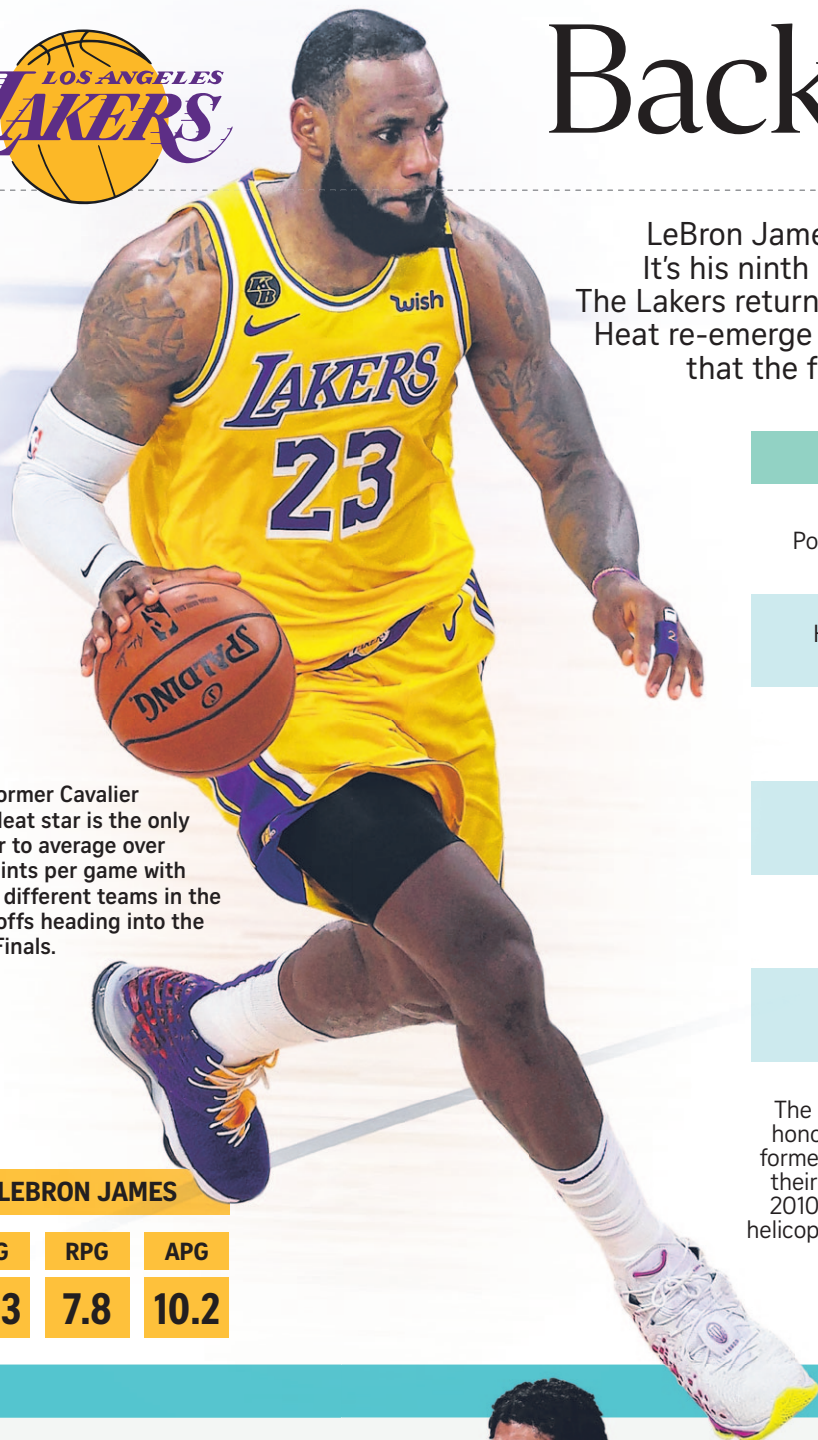
## ROAD TO FINALS

Portland Trail Blazers 4-1	<b>First round</b>	Indiana Pacers 4-0
Houston Rockets 4-1	<b>Second round</b>	Milwaukee Bucks 4-1
Denver Nuggets 4-1	<b>Conference finals</b>	Boston Celtics 4-2
52-19	<b>Regular season record</b>	44-29
<b>2</b>	<b>Season series</b>	<b>0</b>
16	<b>Titles</b>	3

The Lakers are looking to honour Kobe Bryant, their former star who led them to their last championship in 2010 before his death in a helicopter accident in January.

### Fairy-tale ending

The massive underdogs can become the first fifth seeds to win the title. They were 110-1 outsiders to win the championship before the season tipped off.



The former Cavalier and Heat star is the only player to average over 25 points per game with three different teams in the play-offs heading into the NBA Finals.

LEBRON JAMES		
PPG	RPG	APG
25.3	7.8	10.2

JIMMY BUTLER		
PPG	RPG	APG
19.9	6.7	6.0

## KEYS TO VICTORY

### Dominate the paint

The Lakers have outscored their play-off opponents in the paint by 9.6 points per game this term. They averaged 40.7 points per game in the restricted area in the bubble - more than any other team.



### Battle of the sidekicks

Bam Adebayo will need to be a strong offensive threat, as he was against the Boston Celtics when he was the Heat's top scorer in the East Finals with an average of 21.8 points per game, if they are to pull off an upset. But much of his focus will be on defending Anthony Davis, who is set to take him away from the paint.

ANTHONY DAVIS			BAM ADEBAYO		
PPG	RPG	APG	PPG	RPG	APG
26.1	9.3	3.2	15.9	10.2	5.1



### Stop LeBron

In Jimmy Butler and Andre Iguodala, the Heat have two of the most equipped players to guard James. Butler, four-time NBA All-Defensive Team member, has locked down James before, albeit in the 2013 Eastern Conference semi-finals. More recently, Iguodala has met the forward in NBA Finals from 2015-18, coming out tops thrice as the Golden State Warriors' primary James defender.

## SCHEDULE

Game 1	Today, 9am
Game 2	Saturday, 9am
Game 3	Monday, 7.30am
Game 4	Wednesday, 9am
Game 5	Oct 10, 9am*
Game 6	Oct 12, 7.30am*
Game 7	Oct 14, 9am*

\*If necessary. All games will be live on StarHub Ch202.