US Monastir gave themselves a second chance to compete for the Basketball Africa League (BAL) trophy after beating Zamalek in Wednesday's second semifinal in Kigali.

Paced by Michael Dixon and Radhouane Slimane, Monastir knocked the BAL defending champions out, a team they too lost in the Final last year.

The 88-81 win ended Zamalek's unbeaten run in the BAL.

The Egyptian outfit entered the game with a 6-0 mark this season and was the only team that had never tasted defeat in the history of the competition until Monastir halted that run.

Slimane led the way with a team-high of 21 points, Dixon added 20 points and Julius Coles Jr. contributed 19 points to help Monastir improve their current BAL record to 6-1.

"It's good to get some revenge, but we expected to win. We feel like we can beat anybody, but, more importantly, we believed in ourselves," Coles Jr. said afterwards.

After trailing by five at the break (40-35), Monastir used an aggressive defensive game plan that started to pay off early in the third quarter.

It didn't take long before Dixon sank a jumper that gave Monastir their first lead (50-49) since the second quarter.

Dixon added another 2pt shot for a 52-49 lead, before Ike Diogu responded with a 3-pt that tied the game at 52-all.

Fearing another defeat to Zamalek, Slimane and Dixon combined for 16 points in the third quarter to help Monastir head to the final ten minutes with a 64-58 advantage.

Zamalek bench's reaction when Dixon hit a mid-range jumper that sparked Monastir to a 70-60 lead – their largest lead in the game at that point – signalled frustration, despair and disbelief.

Even after Will Voigt called a timeout, Monastir showed no signs of slowing down as they extended their lead to 74-60 with six minutes left.

When Diabate buried a 3-pt shot with 4 minutes left (79-64), the game was technically over.

Zamalek's leading scorer in the current BAL season, Edgar Sosa drilled two 3pts that cut the deficit to 79-70 with 2:51 left, but it was short-lived revival for the White Knights.

To make matters worse and undermine Zamalek's hope of a comeback, DJ Strawberry fouled out with 2:51 minutes to play.

"The key was learning from last year," said Monastir's Ater Majok who finished with 10 points and 9 rebounds.

"I have seen their mistakes, what they do well. For me, I was burning inside, especially for what happened last year. I said I need to get back. We don't do revenge."

Zamalek center Anas Mahmoud, who finished with 8 points and 9 rebounds, expressed his disappointment after the game.

"It feels bad, especially in a playoff game," the 2021 defensive player of the year said.

"We prepared the best way we could, but we did not execute the best we could. Execution to the game plan. We shot ourselves in the foot offensively. It continued to get worse as the game went on."

With Zamalek's unproductive bench – they were outscored 35-10 – Dixon, Slimane, Coles Jr. and Majok saved the day to change the course of BAL history.

Mikhael McKinney finished with a game-high of 26 points off bench, but the game belonged to Zamalek.

With the win, Monastir are now set to meet Petro de Luanda in the final while Zamalek will face FAP in Friday's Third-Place game.