

# DETROIT SHUTS OUT FLYERS 3-0 AS PLAYOFF RACE WINDS DOWN

**DETROIT:** If the Detroit Red Wings make the playoffs for a 25th straight year, they can thank Jimmy Howard. Howard made 30 saves, Darren Helm, Andreas Athanasiou and Kyle Quincey scored for Detroit, and the Red Wings took a step toward another postseason appearance with a 3-0 win over the Philadelphia Flyers on Wednesday night.

The Red Wings (93 points) lead Boston (91) in the race for third place in the Atlantic Division. Philadelphia (91) is tied with the Bruins for the second wild card. "I think it's just the paying attention to detail," Howard said. "We've been a lot smarter with the puck - not forcing things, and just taking what's given."

While teammate Petr Mrazek has struggled in net, Howard has won all three of his starts this month. Wednesday was his second shutout of the season. The Flyers have three games remaining, while Detroit and Boston have two each. The Bruins host the Red Wings on Thursday night, and a win would put Detroit in the playoffs.

"From day one, we've had to grind out wins. Everything's been close," Red Wings coach Jeff Blashill said. "We've never been truly comfortable in a playoff spot. At times, we've been on the outside looking in."

Helm scored in the first period and Athanasiou added a short-handed goal in the second for Detroit, which hasn't missed the postseason since 1990. Quincey's goal was an empty-netter. Detroit took a 1-0 lead on Helm's goal. Philadelphia's Shayne Gostisbehere was trying to help clear the puck by flinging it around behind the net from near the corner, but instead it went toward the goal and bounced in front, where Helm was able to flip it past Flyers goalie Steve Mason for his 13th

goal of the season.

An even more glaring mistake led to the second goal. Philadelphia's Jakub Voracek let the puck get past him near the boards with the Flyers on the power play. There was nobody back to prevent Athanasiou from going in alone on a breakaway, and his eighth goal of the season made it 2-0. "They played a good game. We played a good game too," Philadelphia's Claude Giroux said. "They got a couple bounces. We had chances on the power play and at even strength."

Mason made 23 saves. His most impressive sequence came in the second when he stopped a breakaway by Helm, then recovered in time to deny Luke Glendening's follow-up attempt. Voracek hit the crossbar with a wrist shot in the second, and that's the closest the Flyers came to beating Howard. Quincey's empty-net goal with 1:43 left in the game was a strange one. Skating near his own net, he tried to slam the puck around the glass to clear it. The puck bounced out at a weird angle and slid all the way down into the goal. The Flyers host Toronto on Thursday night. "We didn't get the job done so we just have to pivot real quick and look at the two points (Thursday) night," Philadelphia coach Dave Hakstol said.

This was Detroit's last home game of the regular season. Pavel Datsyuk was honored before the game for reaching 600 assists recently, and fans chanted "one more year" at the 37-year-old star, hoping he will remain with the Red Wings. The short-handed goal was only the second of the season by Detroit. Philadelphia was without G Michal Neuvirth (lower body) and D Andrew MacDonald (upper body). ... Red Wings F Tomas Jurco replaced rookie Anthony Mantha in the lineup. — AP



**DETROIT:** Detroit Red Wings center Andreas Athanasiou reacts after scoring on Philadelphia Flyers goalie Steve Mason during the second period of an NHL hockey game. — AP

# MAEDA HOMERS IN DODGERS' WIN



**SAN DIEGO:** Los Angeles Dodgers starting pitcher Kenta Maeda throws against the San Diego Padres in the first inning of a baseball game. — AP

**SAN DIEGO:** Japanese pitcher Kenta Maeda homered in the second at-bat of his major league debut with the Los Angeles Dodgers on Wednesday night and beat the Padres 7-0, making San Diego the first team in major league history to be shut out in its first three games.

So much joy and so much agony in one game. "I'm just very happy that I got a 'W' in my major league debut," Maeda said through a translator. There wasn't anything for the Padres to celebrate. They were outscored 25-0 in the opening three games by their biggest rivals and set MLB marks for futility.

"There is still perspective here, not to be lost," rookie manager Andy Green said. "We still do have 159 games left and we will score runs this year. And we will win series this year." But this was bad. The Padres were outscored 25-0 in being swept in three games by the Dodgers. They set the MLB mark with 27 straight scoreless innings to open a season. The old mark was 26 by the 1943 St Louis Browns, according to STATS.

The Dodgers joined the 1963 Cardinals in winning their first three games by shutouts. Clayton Kershaw and Scott Kazmir had strong performances in the first two games before Maeda responded with six shutout innings of his own. The right-hander signed an eight-year deal with the Dodgers in January after spending eight seasons with the Hiroshima Carp of the Japanese Central League.

His delivery bears some resemblance to that of former Dodgers pitcher Hideo Nomo, with a pause at the top. He threw a full repertoire of pitches: two- and four-seam fastballs, sliders, curveballs and a changeup. Nomo, the first Japanese player to permanently join the majors, is now a special

adviser to the Padres' baseball operations.

## 'Very efficient'

Maeda scattered five hits in six innings, struck out four and walked none. "I was a little bit nervous at first but my teammates scored four runs for me so that relaxed me a lot," Maeda said. "I was able to get on the mound the way I usually do and pitch the way I usually do." Roberts said Maeda was "very efficient and they didn't really stress him at all. It was clean."

Obviously for him to hit a homer, he got a lot of firsts out of the way. He got his first strikeout, hit, homer, win, so it was a good night. "With one out in the fourth, Maeda drove an 0-2 pitch from Andrew Cashner (0-1) into the seats in left field."

Maeda (1-0) waved to the crowd as he rounded third base and at first got the silent treatment in the dugout from his teammates, who then mobbed him. "I didn't know that the ball's going to go in, so I was running really hard. That's all I thought about," he said. And the silent treatment? "I was surprised but then everybody moments later came. I was very surprised at first." Said manager Dave Roberts: "It was fun to see the guys react to Kenta. They had a big team hug."

The right-hander signed an eight-year deal with the Dodgers in January after spending eight seasons with the Hiroshima Carp of the Japanese Central League. The Padres thought they'd ended their scoreless streak in the sixth. Although Cory Spangenberg was called out trying to score on a grounder to first, the Padres appealed. A replay appeared to show Spangenberg got his foot across the plate before being tagged by AJ Ellis. After a review of 3:02, the call was upheld. — AP