

Sports

Justin Smoak homers twice as Blue Jays crush Red Sox

Bieber hold Yankees to four runs on five hits

BOSTON: Justin Smoak hit two home runs and had four RBIs as the visiting Toronto Blue Jays emphatically ended the Boston Red Sox's major-league-leading 10-game winning streak with a 13-7 victory Friday night at Fenway Park. Smoak (3-for-5) tied teammate Yangervis Solarte for the team lead in home runs with 16. Kevin Pillar (4-for-5) also drove in four runs and Dwight Smith Jr. had a two-run blast and three RBIs for Toronto, which had lost four of five. Mookie Betts (3-for-4) hit two triples and had two RBIs for Boston. The Red Sox lost for the first time since dropping the rubber match of an important three-game series against the rival Yankees in New York, 11-1, on July 1. Red Sox starter Rick Porcello (11-4) surrendered a season-high eight runs over two-plus innings. He allowed seven hits and walked four batters while striking out two, suffering his first loss in six starts since June 10.

INDIANS 6, YANKEES 5

Rookie Shane Bieber pitched into the eighth inning as host Cleveland held off New York. Bieber (5-1) held the Yankees to four runs (three earned) on five hits. Three of the runs were in the fifth after the Indians built a 4-0 lead. Cleveland closer Cody Allen opened the ninth by allowing Giancarlo Stanton's 23rd homer and a single to Greg Bird. After rookie Miguel Andujar hit into a double play, Allen walked Neil Walker but retired pinch hitter Didi Gregorius and notched his 19th save in 20 chances.

PIRATES 7, BREWERS 3

Gregory Polanco homered and rookie Nick Kingham struck out nine as Pittsburgh topped visiting Milwaukee. Josh Bell had four hits and two RBIs, and Colin Moran had three hits and an RBI for Pittsburgh, which has won three in a row and five of six. Brewers reliever Brandon Woodruff, recalled earlier in the day, allowed one hit in three scoreless innings and hit his first career homer. Travis Shaw also homered for Milwaukee, which has lost three straight and five of seven.

RANGERS 5, ORIOLES 4

Ryan Rua hit a tiebreaking pinch-hit three-run homer in the top of the seventh inning, leading Texas to victory at Baltimore. The game was tied at 1 when Robinson Chirinos got a one-out single off Baltimore starter Alex Cobb (2-12). Tanner Scott came on and walked Joey Gallo. Rua then came on to bat for Carlos Tocci and homered to left on a 1-0 pitch, a three-run shot that gave Texas a 4-1 lead. Nomar Mazara added an RBI double three batters later that made it 5-1.

PHILLIES 2, MARLINS 0

Jake Arrieta pitched seven scoreless innings to lead

Philadelphia past host Miami. Relievers Victor Arano and Pat Neshek (first save of the season) each pitched a scoreless inning to complete the shutout. Arrieta allowed just three hits and three walks, striking out three. He was supported by an RBI double from Aaron Altherr, who also started a run-saving play in the sixth inning. Maikel Franco added a solo homer in the ninth.

METS 4, NATIONALS 2

Noah Syndergaard wriggled in and out of trouble over five innings and earned the win in his first start in seven weeks, helping his cause with an RBI single in the second inning of New York's victory over visiting Washington. With the win in the second game of the four-game series, the Mets improved to 11-27 since June 1. The Nationals have lost 12 of 18. Syndergaard (5-1), who was sidelined with a strained ligament in his right index finger suffered in his previous start May 25, allowed one run on seven hits and two walks while striking out three. Seth Lugo tossed two scoreless innings before Robert Gsellman allowed one run over two innings to earn his fourth save.

DIAMONDBACKS 2, BRAVES 1

Shortstop Nick Ahmed had two hits, including the go-ahead single in the seventh inning, as Arizona won at Atlanta. Ahmed drove home Daniel Descalso, who had drawn a one-out walk from Atlanta's Sam Freeman (2-5) and advanced to second on Dan Winkler's wild pitch. Arizona starter Zack Godley (11-6) allowed one run in six innings. Yoshihisa Hirano, Archie Bradley and Brad Boxberger each pitched one scoreless inning to complete the game. Boxberger struck out the side in the ninth and earned his 23rd save.

ASTROS 3, TIGERS 0

Alex Bregman set a career high for homers and Dallas Keuchel posted his third scoreless start on the season as host Houston beat Detroit. Bregman clubbed a two-run blast off Tigers right-hander Mike Fiers (6-6) in the first inning, driving in George Springer and setting a new single-season mark with his 20th home run. He has recorded half of his season total since June 20, batting .344 with 22 RBIs during that 22-game stretch. Keuchel (7-8) continued his stellar pitching of late, allowing six hits and one walk over six scoreless innings. He recorded four strikeouts, including two in succession to close the third inning after surrendering consecutive hits to lead off that frame.

WHITE SOX 9, ROYALS 3

James Shields pitched 6 2/3 effective innings, and Chicago held off a late rally to defeat visiting Kansas City. Jose Abreu, Leury Garcia and Omar Narvaez hit



BOSTON: Sam Travis #59 of the Boston Red Sox slides safely past the tag of Russell Martin #55 of the Toronto Blue Jays in the second inning of a game at Fenway Park on Friday in Boston, Massachusetts. —AFP

home runs for the White Sox, who won consecutive games for the first time since taking three in a row from June 24-27. The Royals lost for the 12th time in their past 13 games and dropped to 5-30 since June 3. Shields (4-10) allowed four runs (two earned) on five hits. He walked two and struck out seven. Joakim Soria struck out two of the three batters he faced in the ninth for his 14th save of the season.

TWINS 11, RAYS 8

Joe Mauer homered and drove in four runs and Jake Cave had three hits, including a double and triple, and had two RBIs and two runs scored to lead Minnesota over visiting Tampa Bay. Robbie Grossman also had three hits, and Mauer, Eddie Rosario and Jorge Polanco each had two as Minnesota, which finished with 15 hits, won for the eighth time in nine games. Trevor Hildenberger (2-2), who

struck out all three batters he faced in the seventh inning, was awarded the victory. Jake Odorizzi, traded to the Twins on Feb. 17 after pitching in 127 games over five seasons for Tampa Bay, struggled in his first start against his old team, allowing six runs (five earned) on eight hits and a walk in just 4 1/3 innings.

REDS 9, CARDINALS 1

Matt Harvey allowed only one run in five innings, and Dilon Herrera and Scooter Gennett hit home runs as visiting Cincinnati continued its torrid play with a rout at St. Louis. Harvey (5-5) allowed just four hits, struck out five and walked two while winning for the fourth time in his past five starts. Carlos Martinez (6-5), who had won his past three starts, pitched five innings and allowed three runs and six hits. He struck out four, walked two and hit a batter. — Reuters

Sri Lanka beat S Africa by 278 runs in 1st Test

SRI LANKA: South Africa collapsed dramatically against Sri Lanka's spin to crash to 73 all out in the first Test in Galle yesterday, their lowest total since readmission to international cricket.

The dismal performance came a day after they were bowled out for just 126, which had been their previous lowest Test innings in Sri Lanka.

Offspinner Dilruwan Perera took six for 32, and veteran left-arm spinner Rangana Herath claimed three for 32, as the pair bowled in an unbroken partnership for 28 overs, after Sri Lanka set South Africa a target of 352 for victory.

Herath moved to ninth on the all-time wicket tally, with 423 career dismissals to his name, while Perera's five-wicket haul was the sixth of his career.

South Africa's match aggregate of 199 was 20 runs fewer than Sri Lanka opener Dimuth Karunaratne's individual score across both innings.

Only three of the visitors made it into double figures, and the highest partnership yielded just 22, as batsmen repeatedly fell in their attempts to take on the Sri Lanka spinners.

South Africa's top scorer was Vernon Philander, who made 22 not out, with opener Aiden Markram batting out the most deliveries, facing 46 balls for his 19. Perera made the first breakthrough in the third over after lunch, having opener Dean Elgar stumped, after the batsman ran down the pitch and failed to connect with a turning delivery.

Hashim Amla was caught at leg slip for a duck in Perera's next over, and Temba Bavuma was caught for two by the same fielder shortly after, reducing South Africa to 24 for 3. The wickets continued to tumble as Herath began to strike as well, with the next three batsmen out for 11 runs in the space of four overs.

It was not until left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj joined Philander at the crease with the score on 36 for 6 that South Africa began to show any resistance, and even that partnership was snuffed out in 22 balls.

Left-arm wristspinner Lakshan Sandakan was required only to take the final wicket of the innings, while paceman and stand-in captain Suranga Lakmal did not bowl himself in this innings at all.

South Africa had begun the day 272 runs in arrears, but had bowled with discipline to remove the last six Sri Lanka wickets for 79 runs.

Kagiso Rabada had struck twice in an over in the first hour of the day, before spinners Maharaj, Tabraiz Shamsi, and Dale Steyn took one wicket apiece to finish the innings off.

Sri Lanka's second innings 190 was built on 35 from Angelo Mathews, and a stroke-filled 33 off 46 balls from Lakmal, who came in at No. 9. South Africa were always going to struggle with a target of 352, but the rate at which they lost their wickets will be cause for serious concern ahead of the second Test in Colombo. —AFP

Root century sets up England's series-levelling win over India

LONDON: Joe Root's composed hundred laid the platform for England's 86-run win over India in the second one-day international at Lord's yesterday. Victory saw 2019 World Cup hosts England, first in the ODI rankings to India's second, level the three-match series at 1-1 ahead of Tuesday's finale at Headingley-Root's Yorkshire home ground.

Test skipper Root's 113, allied to fifties from white-ball captain Eoin Morgan and David Willey, guided England to 322 for seven. This was significantly more than their 268 all out during an eight-wicket loss in Thursday's series-opener at Trent Bridge and meant even India's powerful batting line-up faced a degree of scoreboard pressure.

England's pacemen then followed up by reducing India to 60 for three before they were all out for 236, with fast bowler Liam Plunkett taking four for 46.

Rohit Sharma, fresh from back-to-back hundreds, including a superb 137 not out on Thursday, and Shikhar Dhawan shared a brisk first-wicket stand of 49. But England were gifted a breakthrough when Sharma (15) was bowled by fast bowler Mark Wood after an ugly slog across the line.

Dhawan made a rapid 36, including six fours, before carving a wide ball from left-arm quick Willey to Ben Stokes at backward point. KL Rahul then fell for a duck when he was brilliantly caught by wicket-keeper Jos

Crusaders cruise into play-offs, Rebels hopes on hold

SYDNEY: Defending champions Canterbury Crusaders eased into the Super Rugby play-offs with a 54-17 thrashing of the Auckland Blues yesterday, while the Melbourne Rebels hopes of qualifying hung in the balance. The Rebels went down to the Otago Highlanders 43-37 in Dunedin after leaking 19 points late in the game which left their fate in the hands of the Coastal Sharks and Jaguares who clash later in the weekend in the final match of the regular season.

Australian conference champions NSW Waratahs were upset 40-31 by the ACT Brumbies in Sydney a week out from the finals. The Crusaders already had the top spot sewn up and were able to score points when it mattered against a poorly-performed Blues side.

But despite the eight-tries-to-three hiding, Crusaders captain Sam Whitelock was not totally hap-



LONDON: England's Jason Roy bats during the second One Day International (ODI) cricket match between England and India, at Lord's Cricket Ground in London yesterday. — AFP

py. "Definitely that middle part. We'll have a good review," he said referring to the Blues' two second half tries. "We gave away a lot of penalties, we didn't learn from our mistakes and if you give any side a number of opportunities they're going to score."

Tries to Jack Goodhue, George Bridge and Seta Tamanivalu saw the Crusaders lead 19-5 at the break with the Blues sole points coming from a Melani Nanai try. Bridge was to score two more tries in the second half to go equal top of the try scoring list with 14 for the season.

Although the Blues had parity with possession they lacked the Crusaders ability to recycle quick ball which nullified their attempts to build momentum until midway through the second spell when they bounced back with two tries.

One was a penalty try from a rare dominant scrum, and Nanai followed with his second to close the gap to 26-17. That was enough for the Crusaders to put the foot down again which saw Bridge score twice more with a try each to Whitelock and Bryn Hall.

The Rebels, looking to secure a play-off berth for the first time since they joined the competition in 2011 were the dominant force in their clash with the Highlanders until the final 17 minutes.

They had built a 34-22 lead, masterminded by fly-

caught the big-hitting Hardik Pandya (21) off Plunkett, India were deep in trouble at 191 for six with 11 overs left. With India's situation increasingly desperate, MS Dhoni (37) holed out off Plunkett before Yuzvendra Chahal was out off the last ball of India's 50 overs. England fans among a packed crowd at a sunny Lord's might have feared the worst when India left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who finished with stunning figures of six for 25 at Trent Bridge, again took early wickets. As he had done in Nottingham, Kuldeep struck with the second ball of his first over but this time his final figures were a more modest three for 68 after again removing openers Jonny Bairstow (38) and Jason Roy (40). —AFP

half Reece Hodge who finished with a match haul 29 points from three tries, four conversions and two penalties. The Highlanders were already assured of a quarter-final berth before kick off, rested most of their All Blacks including Ben and Aaron Smith. But when staring defeat in the face, the makeshift Highlanders scored three tries in 12 minutes to confirm their sixth place on the table and the Rebels had a question mark over their future. Hodge said the Rebels only had themselves to blame if they do miss the play-offs. "We were up by 13 or 14 points at one stage and we can't afford to slip against a team like the Highlanders. Hopefully we get another chance next week. If not that's the way it goes."

Less than a year after the Rebels' Super Rugby future was in doubt, during tense negotiations to trim the number of Australian sides in the competition, they have bounced back to win seven matches so far this year compared to one in 2017.

The Waratahs needed only a win to finish in second spot, guaranteeing the right to host two consecutive finals, but they fizzled against the Brumbies. Three Brumbies tries in the first 20 minutes blew the game open, in one of the ACT's best outings of the season and the momentum the Waratahs had built in recent weeks was sapped out of them along the way. — AFP