

Sports

Fleury hits milestone, Knights take Pacific lead

Meier nets hat trick, Sharks rout Flyers

LAS VEGAS: Mark Stone scored two goals, and Marc-Andre Fleury moved into a tie for sixth place on the NHL's all-time wins list as the Vegas Golden Knights took sole possession of first place in the Pacific Division with a 4-1 win over the Arizona Coyotes on Saturday night in Las Vegas. Chandler Stephenson and Paul Stastny also scored goals, and Shea Theodore tied a career-high with three assists for Vegas, which snapped a two-game losing streak. Fleury, who had allowed a dozen goals in his two previous starts including seven in a 7-3 loss to Colorado on Monday, finished with 27 saves. He moved even with Curtis Joseph for sixth place with his 454th career victory. Michael Grabner scored for Arizona, which entered the contest tied with Vegas for first place. Antti Raanta stopped 12 of 16 shots before being replaced by Adin Hill early in the second period. Hill finished with 20 saves in his first appearance of the season.

SHARKS 6, FLYERS 1

Timo Meier collected his first career hat trick as host San Jose routed Philadelphia to snap a four-game losing skid. Mario Ferraro and Joel Kellman both scored their first NHL goals, and Patrick Marleau also tallied. Goaltender Martin Jones made 26 saves for the Sharks, who went into the game with just one victory in their previous 11 outings. Ivan Provorov scored the Flyers' only goal, on a power play less than a minute into the third period. Carter Hart made 23 saves for the Flyers, who had a four-game winning streak snapped in the first outing of a six-game road trip.

LIGHTNING 5, CANADIENS 4

Alex Killorn had two goals and an assist, and Victor Hedman had a career-high four assists as Tampa Bay rallied for a victory over visiting Montreal. Steven Stamkos and Anthony Cirelli each finished with a goal and an assist, and Mitchell Stephens also scored a goal for the Lightning, who extended their win streak against Atlantic Division opponents to 10 games. Andrei Vasilevskiy had 39 saves and also picked up his third assist of the season. Jesperi Kotkaniemi, Max Domi, Ben Chiarot and Jordan Weal scored for the Canadiens. Carey Price finished with 25 saves.

PENGUINS 6, PREDATORS 4

Jake Guentzel stuffed a puck in on a wraparound

move for a go-ahead power-play goal with 1:03 left in regulation as host Pittsburgh downed Nashville to sweep the home-and-home series. Bryan Rust scored twice, including an empty-netter, and added two assists; Alex Galchenyuk had a goal and an assist. Dominik Kahun and Kris Letang also scored; and Evgeni Malkin had three assists for the Penguins. Matt Murray, in just his third start in December, made 44 saves. Mikael Granlund scored twice, including the tying goal, for Nashville. Viktor Arvidsson and Craig Smith also scored, and Roman Josi had three assists. Predators' goalie Juuse Saros was pulled during the first period after giving up three goals on eight shots. Pekka Rinne stopped 25 of 27 shots in relief.

HURRICANES 6, CAPITALS 4

Warren Foegele scored two goals and added an assist as host Carolina defeated Washington, snapping a three-game losing streak. Lucas Wallmark, Dougie Hamilton, Martin Necas and Andrei Svechnikov also scored for the Hurricanes, who won at Washington in overtime in the second game of the season. Carolina goalie Petr Mrazek made 25 saves for the victory after losses in his last two decisions. Nic Dowd, Alex Ovechkin, Evgeny Kuznetsov and Richard Panik scored for the Capitals. Braden Holtby stopped 23 shots. It was only the fifth time in Holtby's last 23 games that Washington didn't secure at least one point.

RANGERS 5, MAPLE LEAFS 4

Tony DeAngelo scored 52 seconds into overtime as New York ended host Toronto's six-game winning streak. Ryan Strome had two goals and two assists for New York, while Brett Howden and Miika Zibanejad also scored. Artemi Panarin had three assists, and Alexander Georgiev stopped 44 shots. Auston Matthews had two goals, including the tying goal in the final minute of regulation, and added an assist for the Maple Leafs. William Nylander added a goal and an assist, Pierre Engvall had a goal, and Tyson Barrie had two assists for Toronto. Frederik Andersen made 33 saves.

STARS 3, AVALANCHE 2 (SO)

Alexander Radulov returned from injury to score the shootout clincher, and Ben Bishop made 41 saves as host Dallas avoided a third straight loss by beating Colorado for the third time in as many meetings this



LAS VEGAS: Adin Hill #31 of the Arizona Coyotes makes a save against William Karlsson #71 of the Vegas Golden Knights in the second period of their game at T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Golden Knights defeated the Coyotes 4-1. — AFP

season. Tyler Seguin scored his fifth goal in five games, Denis Gurianov posted his ninth goal of the season, and Joe Pavelski also had a shootout goal for Dallas, which had lost three of four. Bishop was solid all night and perfect in the shootout while snapping his four-game losing streak for the Stars, who also ended an 0-2-1 home slide. Colorado, meanwhile, got goals from J.T. Compher and Ian Cole and a 38-save performance from Philipp Grubauer. The Avalanche have dropped five of their last seven.

CANUCKS 3, KINGS 2

Elias Pettersson had a goal and an assist, including the tiebreaking tally at 7:05 of the third period, and Jacob Markstrom made 49 saves as Vancouver defeated visiting Los Angeles. Jake Virtanen and Tyler Motte also scored for the Canucks, who returned from their holiday break and won their season-high fourth game

in a row — during which they've outscored their opponents 16-9. Anze Kopitar and Tyler Toffoli had goals for the Kings, who were playing the second half of a back-to-back after winning 3-2 in overtime Friday night in San Jose. Jonathan Quick stopped 23 of 28 shots.

PANTHERS 5, RED WINGS 4

Dominic Toninato scored the go-ahead goal in the second period as host Florida rallied to defeat Detroit at Sunrise, Fla. Florida also got goals from Evgenii Dadonov, Brett Connolly, Mike Hoffman and Anton Stralman as the Panthers rallied from a 3-1 deficit. Hoffman added two assists. Panthers goalie Chris Driedger, starting just his fourth NHL game, made 35 stops to improve to 3-1-0. Detroit got goals from Darren Helm, Dylan Larkin, Frans Nielsen and Luke Glendening, but the Wings still lost their fifth straight game and have lost 17 of their past 19. — Reuters

Norway's Kilde leads Paris after super-G run in WCup combined

BORMIO: Norway's Aleksander Aamodt Kilde pushed Dominik Paris into second place after the super-G run of the men's alpine World Cup combined event in Bormio yesterday.

World super-G champion Paris had claimed back-to-back downhill wins on Friday and Saturday on his home piste. But the 30-year-old Italian was pipped by just 0.03sec by Kilde who led the first run down the "Stelvio" in the Italian Alps, with the slalom to come later on Sunday.

"I felt very tired. I made a mistake at (diagonal) Carcentina, now let's see what the slalom legs will be like," said Paris. Austria's Vincent Kriechmayr was third fastest at 0.35sec.

World combined champion Alexis Pinturault of France, who had been in doubt before the race with a thigh injury, posted the 11th fastest time at 0.97sec. "It was really not easy without training, with only yesterday on

skis after my small injury," said Pinturault, who remains the favourite going into the slalom.

"I tried my best tried to stay focused on what I had to do and at least it worked pretty well." The combined event has been revamped with the best skiers from the super-G starting first in the slalom, reversing the usual order with the aim of favouring the speed specialists.

"I'm satisfied for now, let's see how the slalom will go with the new format," added the French skier. "The thigh? While I was going down it didn't hurt. It's hard to say how it will work out, here at Bormio the downhillers can go really fast."

The super-G race was interrupted after Austria's Christopher Neumayer crashed off the course and was airlifted off the piste by helicopter, like teammate Hannes Reichelt in Saturday's downhill. The start of the slalom run was pushed back until 1315 GMT. — AFP

Murphy proud of Leicester fight in Harlequins draw

LONDON: Leicester Tigers coach Geordan Murphy saluted his struggling side's determination as they came from 14 points down to draw 30-30 with Harlequins in front of a 75,000 crowd at Twickenham on Saturday.

This was the 12th 'Big Game' at Twickenham and the match followed the inaugural edition in finishing in a draw when Murphy scored for the Tigers in a 26-26 clash with Quins back in 2008.

Leicester remained second-bottom in the English Premiership, with only reigning champions Saracens — hit with a huge 35-point deduction for salary cap breaches — below them in the table.

Tries in Saturday's final quarter from Jordan Taufua and Telusa Veainu helped Leicester to a share of the spoils after Quins were reduced to 14 men and Murphy was delighted by the way his team's pack paved the way for a couple of points.

"We knew that they were on a final warning scrum wise, we thought we had an edge there," he said.

"We used that to build us a platform and at 30-30 and when they were down to 14 with seven minutes to go, I thought we'd go on and win that game, so it certainly feels like a very strange game."

Quins boss Paul Gustard was frustrated by his side's failure to see out the game in a match played just round the corner from the London club's Stoop headquarters.

"For me, (I'm) gutted. I'm disappointed with the referee today and it feels more like a loss than getting two points," he said. "It was difficult, obviously, with sin-binning our tighthead prop, we had to move Joe Marler across."

Elsewhere Bath edged out Sale 16-14 in a thriller at the Recreation Ground to leave them just outside the top playoff places. It was a second straight win for Bath, whose hopes of reaching this year's European Cup knockout phase have been ended long before the finish of the pool stages.

Wales fly-half Rhys Priestland kicked three penalties for Bath, the last proving to be a match-winner after England centre Jonathan Joseph had gone over for a converted try.

Meanwhile Wales No 8 Taulupe Faletau came through a full match for the first time this season, a timely appearance ahead of new national coach Wayne Pivac's unveiling his inaugural Six Nations squad.

"He is pleased he has got through it," Hooper said. "Credit to him for the work he has put in and to our medical team." — AFP

Shiffrin cleans up in Lienz with slalom triumph

LIENZ: Resurgent American ski star Mikaela Shiffrin made it a clean sweep in Lienz after winning yesterday's alpine World Cup slalom, a day after charging to victory in the giant slalom.

Shiffrin posted the fastest time on both descents for the second day in a row, leaving Slovakia's exasperated Petra Vlhova 0.61sec back in second, while third-placed Michelle Gisin cried tears of joy to be on the podium.

The two clear victories at Lienz marks a return to form for the nervy American who had bombed to 17th in her previous performance in Courchevel before taking a week off to concentrate on training.

Defending overall champion Shiffrin finished her first run 0.26sec ahead of Vlhova, who produced a dynamic second descent to throw down the gauntlet.

"I needed to give it 110 percent to beat her and that's what I did," said Shiffrin, whose dextrous negotiation of the gates made the difference.

As Shiffrin swept over to hug her awaiting mother, Vlhova's disappointment was written all over on her face. This was in stark contrast to the Swiss Gisin, who had burst into tears earlier as she realised she would finish at least third as she watched Katharina Liensberger take a gate wide.



LIENZ: (L-R) Second placed Petra Vlhova of Slovakia, winner Mikaela Shiffrin of the US and third placed Michelle Gisin of Switzerland pose after the women's Slalom event of the Alpine Skiing World Cup in Lienz, Austria, yesterday. — AFP

Yesterday's win extends Shiffrin's lead at the top of the overall rankings to 295 ahead of Italian Federica Brignone, who finished over three seconds back in 13th.

It also consolidates her lead in the slalom classification and extend her number of individual World Cup wins to 64. Her triumph in the giant slalom on Saturday put her

out on her own in second place for women's wins, one ahead of retired Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell. She is closing in on men's skiing legend Marcel Hirscher's total of 67 but still has some way to go to catch compatriot Lindsey Vonn, who racked up 82 wins before hanging up her skis at the end of last season. — AFP

Montpellier held by Stade Francais

LYON: South Africa's Rugby World Cup winner Handre Pollard's first try in the French Top 14 was not enough as Montpellier drew 20-20 with Stade Francais on Saturday. Pollard, 25, who made his club debut last weekend after lifting the Webb Ellis trophy in early November, crossed in the final quarter of an hour after taking a quick penalty five metres from the Parisians line on his maiden home appearance.

Despite his efforts the visitors' 22-year old fly-half Joris Segonds slotted a penalty with six minutes to go to claim a draw for the side who remain bottom of the table. Argentina outside-half Nicholas Sanchez wasted nine points from the boot which would have claimed the Parisians' first away league win of the campaign. "I'm disappointed because it's a game we should have won but we didn't have the ingredients to win," Pollard said after the fixture. "The squad's lacking confidence because we're failing to win successive games," he added.

The hosts led 10-0 after 25 minutes as Pollard converted Arthur Vincent's try and kicked a penalty goal. Stade, owned by billionaire Hans-Peter Wild, sparked into action before the break as Australia's Sefa Naivalu and France's Gael Fickou crossed for a 14-10 lead but Pumas back-rower Pablo Matera left the field with a suspected back injury.

Pollard and Segonds traded a penalty each before the Springbok's moment of magic with 13 minutes to go as he took a penalty quickly to crash over. His conversion made it 20-17 but Segonds stepped up with have a dozen of minutes to play to deny Pollard a winning home debut.

Earlier, Lyon destroyed Bayonne with an emphatic 52-9 win that featured seven tries and hoists them provisionally to first spot in the table. The flurry of tries from six different scorers in front of a 16,000 home crowd at the Stade Gerland lifts early-season pace-setters Lyon onto 40 points.

Bordeaux-Begles, who are two points back in second, went into the weekend top and travel to struggling Pau on Sunday needing a win to put them back at the summit. Lyon got off to a flying start to the Top 14 season but three defeats in the past four outings were firmly put behind them Saturday.

The 21-year-old France centre Pierre-Louis Barassi was the chief motor of Bayonne's destruction and is a good bet to add to his one Test cap in the upcoming Six Nations. Bayonne coach Yannick Bru refused to take the defeat on the chin. "It was a bit of a spanking, but strangely, despite the score, we weren't far off," he claimed after the game.

Barassi dotted down four minutes into the second half before two quickfire tries from South African Hendrik Roodt led to Bayonne crumbling. Elsewhere on Saturday, newly promoted Brive lost at home in the league for the first time this season as hooker Camille Chat scored twice in Racing 92's 44-20 victory at Stade Amedee-Domenech.

Ex-France fly-half Francois Trinh-Duc made his debut in the Parisians' seventh win from their past eight games across all competitions. — AFP