

## Sports

# Yankees tie homer-streak record in win over Jays

## Greinke homers, D-backs stop Dodgers' win streak

**NEW YORK:** Giancarlo Stanton hit his first homer of the season to highlight a seven-run sixth inning, and the New York Yankees tied a major league record by homering for the 27th straight game Monday night before holding on for a 10-8 victory over the visiting Toronto Blue Jays. The Yankees matched the mark set by the Texas Rangers in 2002 and won for the ninth time in 10 games by holding off a late Toronto comeback attempt. Aaron Hicks connected for the record-tying drive when he got a hold of a fastball by Aaron Sanchez (3-10) and lined it into the right field seats for a three-run shot that gave New York a 3-2 lead in the fifth inning. Stanton's 445-foot drive to a social gathering area beyond the center field fence put the Yankees up 10-2. CC Sabathia (5-4) allowed two runs and six hits in six innings while striking out a season-high nine hitters and issuing two walks. Aroldis Chapman gave up an unearned run in the ninth before sealing his 22nd save.

### INDIANS 3, ROYALS 2 (10 INNINGS)

Jason Kipnis homered to lead off the 10th inning, and host Cleveland recorded a victory over Kansas City. Kipnis deposited a 1-0 slider from Wily Peralta (2-4) over the wall in right-center field for his sixth homer of the season and his third career walk-off shot. Rookie Bobby Bradley and Jose Ramirez each had an RBI double for the Indians, who have won four in a row and nine of their past 11 games. Brad Hand (4-2) picked up the win after retiring the side in order in the 10th inning.

### DIAMONDBACKS 8, DODGERS 5

David Peralta drove in the go-ahead run in a four-run eighth inning, pitcher Zack Greinke hit a home run, and Arizona stopped Los Angeles' six-game winning streak with a victory in Phoenix. Arizona's Ketel Marte, returning to the lineup after missing two games because of a groin cramp, went 2-for-4 to tie Luis Gonzalez's franchise record with seven consecutive multi-hit games. Greinke gave up four runs and seven hits in six-plus innings. He struck out six and walked

one. Yoan Lopez (1-1) pitched a scoreless eighth inning for his first career victory in 45 appearances, and Greg Holland got the last out for his 11th save of the season and the 200th of his career.

### ROCKIES 2, GIANTS 0

Jon Gray combined with three relievers on a six-hit shutout, and David Dahl provided all the offense with a two-run home run, giving Colorado a victory at San Francisco. Gray combined with Jairo Diaz, Scott Oberg and Wade Davis on Colorado's fourth shutout of the season, all of which have been recorded on the road. The Colorado foursome outdueled Drew Pomeranz and two Giants relievers, who combined to allow just five hits while striking out 13. Pomeranz tied a career high with 11 of those strikeouts. Dahl delivered the game's only scoring after a one-out single by Charlie Blackmon in the third inning. The left-handed hitter went the opposite way to left field against Pomeranz.

### RED SOX 6, WHITE SOX 5

Marco Hernandez beat out an infield single with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning to lead host Boston past Chicago. Hernandez beat the throw of shortstop Tim Anderson, who got to the ball in the hole but couldn't get the runner on a jump throw to first. Andrew Benintendi came home after starting the inning with a double off Jace Fry (1-3) as the Red Sox battled back to tie the score on three separate occasions in the late innings. Eduardo Nunez was responsible for two of the rallies, including an RBI single grounded through the infield in the eighth inning to knot the score at 5. Brandon Workman (7-1) got the win, striking out Anderson (four K's) with a runner on second to end the top of the ninth. It was the only batter Workman faced.

### PHILLIES 13, METS 7

Jean Segura. Rhys Hoskins, Jay Bruce and Maikel Franco homered to lead host Philadelphia past New York. Segura led the way with four hits, Franco added three hits and three RBIs, and Cesar Hernandez had



**NEW YORK:** Giancarlo Stanton #27 of the New York Yankees hits a three run home run against the Toronto Blue Jays in the sixth inning at Yankee Stadium in New York City. — AFP

three hits. Scott Kingery also had three hits for the Phillies, who snapped a season-long seven-game losing streak. Bryce Harper added a pair of doubles and two RBIs. The Phillies, who had a season-high 19 hits, had scored 12 runs combined in their previous five games. Philadelphia starter Zach Eflin (7-7) tied his career high by giving up 11 hits to go along with six runs in five innings. Michael Conforto, Todd Frazier, Wilson Ramos and Dominic Smith homered for the Mets.

### CUBS 8, BRAVES 3

Jon Lester pitched six strong innings and sparked

a five-run rally that put the game away with a fifth-inning single, leading Chicago to a win over visiting Atlanta. Lester (7-5) allowed two runs, both unearned, on five hits with no walks and seven strikeouts. Lester singled with one on and none out in the fifth, then the next five batters each drove in a run to make it 7-0 — all runs charged to Atlanta starter Julio Teheran (5-6). During the outburst, Chicago got an RBI double from Kyle Schwarber, run-scoring singles from Kris Bryant and Anthony Rizzo, an RBI double from Javier Baez and a run-scoring grounder by Willson Contreras. — Reuters

## Refreshed Kerber relishing emotional return to Wimbledon

**LONDON:** Angelique Kerber was born on Germany's Baltic coast, but for her Wimbledon feels like the green, green grass of home. Especially this year when she will walk back through the All England Club gates as defending champion.

It is not new territory for the 31-year-old former world number one who on two other occasions arrived for the start of a Grand Slam having won it the year before. But she has never experienced that at Wimbledon—the title she cherishes the most.

"I think maybe it's the same but different in some ways because Wimbledon was the tournament I was looking forward to win one day," left-hander Kerber said at Eastbourne this week. "I think when I get there it will be very emotional and I will have a lot of great memories. I'm really happy to go back there and enjoy the memories, the people, the place.

"It's always really special, but especially this time." Kerber won the Australian Open and US Open in a remarkable 2016, but struggled the following year. She was back to her best last year, reaching the semi-final of the Australian Open, the quarters in Paris, before convincingly beating Serena Williams in the Wimbledon final when many had already given the title to the American.

This year there has again been a slump although illness and injuries, rather than the loss of drive of 2017, have been the root cause. An ankle injury during the claycourt season left her struggling and she lost in the first round of the French Open. That, she says, may have been a blessing.

"I feel much better after Paris, I had 10 days off for recovery and rehab, and right now I'm feeling good, the pain has gone, I'm not sick and I feel ready again," she said. "That's the most important thing for me, to be able to be ready to fight, I'm in match mode. I'm hungry after having a little break, I feel motivation and the energy. "It's a good sign." After the drudgery of clay, Kerber looked immediately at home on the Mallorca



Angelique Kerber

grass last week, beating former Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova and grasscourt threat Caroline Garcia before losing in the semi-final to Swiss Belinda Bencic.

Few players move better on grass than Kerber and her stock Wimbledon photograph could be one of her getting low, knees almost scraping the grass, to fire a backhand. "Grass is more natural for me than clay," the world number five, who owns a 30-10 record from her 11 Wimbledon, said.

"The serve is a big thing on grass. You have to play different on the first two balls after the serve or the return. The next few shots must be really aggressive." The other image would be her collapsing to Centre Court that sunny Saturday a year ago when she com-

pleted a 6-3 6-3 defeat of Williams having played near-perfect tennis.

"I've watched the video of the match a couple of times," she said. "I took all my chances that day." While the pressure will be amped up in a few days when Kerber leaves the chilled out surrounds of Eastbourne and heads to Wimbledon, she believes she is well-equipped to handle it and start another title quest.

"Everything starts from zero and everyone would like to beat me," Kerber said. "It is a pressure but I learned from the other two times I was defending slams that I must just focus on the next opponent, the next step, the next practice, same as when I won the slams. Keep it simple." — Reuters

## Wimbledon seeding system disrespects world rankings: Nadal

**MADRID:** Rafael Nadal has complained about Wimbledon's seeding system after the Spaniard was placed at number three, behind Roger Federer, for next week's grand slam in London. The other three major tournaments all match their seeding to the official world rankings but Wimbledon uses its own formula to dictate the order, combining ranking points with form in grass-court competitions.

It means Nadal will be seeded three and Federer two at the All England Club this year, despite their positions being the reverse in the rankings list. "Wimbledon is the only tournament of the year that does it like this," Nadal told Spanish television channel Movistar on Monday night.

"Obviously it would be better to be two than three but if they think I have to be three I will accept three and fight to win the matches I have to win. "Having

said that, the only thing that doesn't seem right about this issue is that it is only Wimbledon that does it. If they all did it, it would seem more correct.

"It's not only about my particular case. There have been many occasions when players have played well all year on all surfaces but Wimbledon does not respect the ranking they have earned. "And for this reason they get more complicated draws."

Nadal is yet to play an official match on grass this year while Federer warmed up for Wimbledon last week by winning his 10th title at the grass-court tournament in Halle. Federer and top seed Novak Djokovic will be at opposite ends of the Wimbledon draw, separated until the final, but Nadal is guaranteed to have either Federer or Djokovic in his half, and could meet them in the semis.

"For me personally, it means if I am three, to get to the final, Djokovic or Federer will be in my half," Nadal added. "But that can only happen in the semi-finals and to get there I have to win five matches. Today I'm far away."

Nadal claimed his 18th major title earlier this month by winning the French Open for a record-extending 12th time. He now sits behind only Federer's 20 grand slam triumphs in the all-time list of male champions. — AFP



Rafael Nadal

## Federer looks to turn number nine Wimbledon dream into reality

**LONDON:** Historically, emotionally and statistically, Roger Federer remains the man to beat at Wimbledon even at the 21st time of asking. Forget the creaking knees and advancing years—the Swiss will be 38 in August—not many in SW19 will bet against their adopted favourite achieving Wimbledon history with a ninth men's title to equal Martina Navratilova's record singles mark.

Victory would consolidate his position as oldest male champion, a record he set in 2017 when he won his eighth title without dropping a set at the age of 35 years and 342 days. Federer's cheerleaders will point to the confidence gleaned from 2019 tournament wins on the hard courts of Dubai—his 100th ATP title—and Miami.

This year's Wimbledon lead-up has been wrinkle-free after a positive showing at the French Open, where he lost in the semi-finals to Rafa Nadal, and his traditional grass tune-up at last week's Halle Open, where he triumphed for the 10th time.

But look through the glass differently and 2019 may tell a whole new story. Perhaps Federer's decision to compete at Roland Garros for the first time in four years was actually an acknowledgement that his great powers are waning.

Federer knows that every opportunity to boost his Grand Slam tally of 20 trophies must be grasped or risk being eclipsed by the rejuvenated Nadal.

The Spaniard's victory in Paris took his Grand Slam total to 18 while Novak Djokovic has won three of the last four blue-riband events to bring his career tally to 15. It is possible to make a strong case for all three, with Nick Kyrgios last week making special mention for Federer, whom he predicted will "be hard to beat" on his favourite surface.

Former French Open finalist Alex Corretja is another who has flagged up Federer. "Federer played a great claycourt season, which gives him the belief he can win Wimbledon again," said the Spaniard.

Grass has always suited Federer's aggressive style, which is based on footwork, pace and ability to find sharp angles. Perhaps the only remaining question is whether the Swiss has the stamina to slug it out against the game's young guns.

As always the aim remains to win but now it is to do so without expending too much energy. Last year there were signs that the balance is more difficult to achieve and the eight-times champion squandered match points against Kevin Anderson before exiting in the quarter-finals. Despite Anderson's raw power, few at Wimbledon expected Federer to lose that day because for so many years Wimbledon victories came so naturally.

All that can be said with certainty is that should anyone beat the man who has already pocketed \$124 million in prize money, he should consider himself champion in waiting. — Reuters