

Sports

Kepler, Rosario each hit three HRs to lead Twins to 6th straight victory over White Sox

Suarez helps Reds pull away for 10-2 win over Cubs

MINNEAPOLIS: Max Kepler and Eddie Rosario each hit three-run home runs, and Jake Odorizzi allowed one hit over 5 1/3 innings to lead the Minnesota Twins to their sixth straight victory, a 7-0 win over the Chicago White Sox on Sunday afternoon in Minneapolis. Odorizzi (7-2) walked one and struck out nine, including the last four batters he faced, to pick up his seventh win in his past eight starts. It also marked the fifth time in his past six starts that he didn't allow a run. Kepler finished 2-for-4 with four RBIs for Minnesota, which won its seventh series of the season while improving to 19-6 in the month of May. The six-game winning streak is the longest of the season for the Twins, who have won 11 of their past 12 games while also increasing their AL Central lead to 10 games over the Cleveland Indians. Dylan Covey (0-4) suffered the loss for the White Sox. Covey allowed four runs on just three hits and two walks over six innings while striking out six.

A'S 7, MARINERS 1

Brett Anderson allowed one run in 6 1/3 innings as Oakland completed a three-game sweep of visiting Seattle and extended its winning streak to nine games. Josh Phegley went 2-for-3 with a double, home run and three RBIs for the A's, and Matt Chapman homered in the first inning for the second consecutive game. Seattle's only run came on Jay Bruce's solo homer off Anderson in the seventh inning. It was Bruce's 13th home run of the season, one shy of team leader Daniel Vogelbach.

REDS 10, CUBS 2

Eugenio Suarez went 2-for-3 with a double and three RBIs, and Cincinnati pulled away to win at Chicago. Curt Casali hit a two-run homer, and Joey Votto and Kyle Farmer drove in one run apiece for Cincinnati, which claimed the rubber match of the series. The Reds finished with 17 hits and had seven players notch multiple hits. Willson Contreras and Javier Baez each hit solo home runs for the Cubs, who lost Kris Bryant for the game after a scary outfield collision during the sixth inning. Bryant chased a fly ball toward the gap in right-center field, where he slammed into teammate Jason Heyward and stayed down on a knee until trainers arrived.

ROYALS 8, YANKEES 7 (10 INNINGS)

Whit Merrifield hit a scorcher past third baseman

Gio Urshela in the bottom of the 10th inning to lift Kansas City over visiting New York in the final game of a three-game series. The game-winning single came after the Royals blew a three-run lead in the ninth. The Yankees rallied against closer Ian Kennedy to tie the score, getting an RBI single from DJ LeMahieu and a two-run single from Aaron Hicks. The Royals hit four homers to avoid the sweep and end the Yankees' seven-game winning streak.

ROCKIES 8, ORIOLES 7

Tony Wolters had three hits and delivered a game-winning sacrifice fly in the bottom of the ninth inning, and Colorado rallied to beat Baltimore in Denver. Nolan Arenado homered, and starting pitcher German Marquez tripled and drove in three runs for Colorado. Ian Desmond's full-count walk in the ninth forced home the tying run, before Wolters' walk-off fly to left. Jonathan Villar and Trey Mancini had two hits each for Baltimore, which hasn't won two in a row since early May. The Orioles have lost 15 of their past 18 games.

BREWERS 9, PHILLIES 1

Brandon Woodruff retired the first 15 hitters, allowed one hit in eight dominant innings and Milwaukee averted a three-game sweep to visiting Philadelphia. Woodruff (7-1) won his sixth straight decision and picked up his league-leading seventh win. He lost his perfect game bid and shutout when Andrew Knapp opened the sixth with a homer. After allowing Knapp's first homer, Woodruff retired the next nine hitters and ended his outing by fanning Knapp on a 98-mph fastball. Woodruff struck out a career-high 10 hitters and finished every inning with a strikeout, fanning Bryce Harper and Odubel Herrera three times apiece. At the plate, he added an RBI double and RBI single.

BRAVES 4, CARDINALS 3 (10 INNINGS)

Visiting Atlanta erased a three-run deficit in the ninth and took the lead when Brian McCann drew a bases-loaded walk in the 10th to stun St. Louis. The Braves had runners on the corners against reliever Tyler Webb (0-1) with two out in the 10th, and the Cardinals opted to intentionally walk slugging rookie Austin Riley to face McCann. But the cagey veteran catcher drew a walk to give the Braves the lead. The winning pitcher was Jacob Webb (3-0), with Luke Jackson pitching a scoreless inning, striking out two, to earn his seventh



MINNEAPOLIS: Eddie Rosario #20 of the Minnesota Twins hits a three-run home run against the Chicago White Sox in the third inning of the game at Target Field in Minneapolis, Minnesota. — AFP

save. Atlanta won two of three games in the series and finished the season 4-2 against the Cardinals.

DODGERS 11, PIRATES 7

Corey Seager and Joc Pederson homered, and Matt Beatty drove in four runs for visiting Los Angeles, who outslugged Pittsburgh to complete a three-game series sweep. Justin Turner was 5-for-5 with a walk and three runs scored during his first career five-hit game for the Dodgers, who over the past three seasons are 17-2 against Pittsburgh and have won 10 straight. Los Angeles finished its road trip with a 6-2 mark. Bryan Reynolds and Adam Frazier homered for Pittsburgh, which concluded a 1-5 homestand.

RED SOX 4, ASTROS 1

Eduardo Rodriguez worked six strong innings, and visiting Boston averted a series sweep by parlaying some assertive baserunning into a win over Houston. The Red Sox won the series finale against the Astros

for a second consecutive weekend, with Houston claiming the season series 4-2. Rodriguez (5-3) was instrumental in keeping the Houston lineup shackled, allowing four hits while issuing only one walk against five strikeouts. Rafael Devers homered, and he and Eduardo Nunez each had two hits as Boston handed Justin Verlander (8-2) his second loss.

ANGELS 7, RANGERS 6

Mike Trout homered, doubled, scored twice, drove in two and walked once to help lift Los Angeles over Texas in Anaheim, Calif. Trout's RBI double in the seventh was part of a six-run inning that turned a 5-1 deficit into a 7-5 lead, and eventually the Angels' second win in the three-game series. David Fletcher chipped in with three hits, a run scored and a stolen base as the Angels finished with 11 hits in all. Los Angeles reliever Justin Anderson gave up an RBI double to Shin-Soo Choo in the ninth, but closed it out for his first save of the season. — Reuters

Na claims third US PGA Tour title at Colonial

LOS ANGELES: Kevin Na fired a final-round 66 at Colonial Country Club on Sunday to win the US PGA Tour's Charles Schwab Challenge by four strokes over fellow American Tony Finau.

Na continued his mastery of the classic course in Fort Worth, Texas, starting the day with a two-shot advantage that was never really challenged. Na's six birdies included a 33-footer at the fourth and a 20-footer at the eighth.

He rolled in a 12-footer at the 72nd hole to cap his four-under par round with a birdie for a 13-under total of 267. "It feels great," said Na, who celebrated with his toddler daughter, Sophia, in his arms.

Na, 35, boasts an impressive record at Colonial, where he thrust himself into contention with a second-round 62. That was his third score of 62 or better on the course, where he matched the record of 61 on the way to a fourth-place finish last year.

He said he eyed the club's "wall of champions" on the first tee Sunday, "and in my head I engraved my name on it. 'Every year I come here I know I had a chance to win and I knew before my career was over I was going to definitely win here,'" added Na, who believes the compact course is one of "seven or eight" that offer him a chance to win on the US tour without a big-hitting game.

It was the second win in less than a year for the 35-year-old Na, a Las Vegas resident who was born in South Korea but came to America when he was just 8 years old.

He last won at the 2018 Greenbrier event in July, and his best finish this season prior to Fort Worth was a tie



FORT WORTH: Kevin Na of the United States poses for a photo with his wife, Julianne Na, and daughter, Sophie Na, after winning the 2019 Charles Schwab Challenge at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas. — AFP

for fifth at the WGC Match Play in March. Na was also given a 1973 fully restored blue Dodge Challenger as one of his perks for winning the tournament which he quickly turned over to his caddie Kenny Harms.

Today before the tournament started, Harms asked Na if he could have the car if they won the tournament. Na agreed. "I don't know how my caddie convinced me to give him the car, but he's a good salesman, I guess. He sold me into it. But I'm more than happy to give it to him. He deserves it."

"I got something cooler right here," said Na holding his trophy. Finau, who was among a group of five players to start the round two shots behind Na, moved with-

in one shot of the leader with his birdie at the second.

He was two adrift on the back nine but the gap widened when Na birdied 14 and Finau bogeyed 16. Finau finished with four birdies and two-bogeys in a two-under 68 for 271. It was a further stroke back to American Andrew Putnam (66) and Taiwan's Pan Cheng-tsung (69).

Local favorite Jordan Spieth, who also started the day two off the lead, couldn't maintain his hot streak on the greens. He closed with a two-over par 72 that left him eight back and still in search of his first victory since he captured his third major championship at the British Open in 2017. — AFP

Sugar Ray says boxing not dead, rival Duran not so sure

LOS ANGELES: American boxing great Sugar Ray Leonard says that while the sport may not be the national obsession it was during his prime, it is still healthy, an assertion disputed by longtime rival-turned-friend Roberto Duran.

In a joint interview to promote a new film on the Panamanian's career, entitled "I Am Duran", the former enemies traded barbs - and laughs - about the state of the sport as well as the nature of their historic battles which captivated the sporting world in the 1980s.

"Boxing is not dead like some say it is," said Leonard, who lost his WBC Welterweight title to Duran in the "Brawl in Montreal" in 1980 before winning it

back in an infamous rematch later that same year.

"But the sport itself has to fix itself. Don't just say you're the best - show the people or the fans that you are the best by fighting the best and let them be the judge," he told Reuters.

Duran, 67, made it clear he did not think much of the current crop of fighters. "No respect," he said through an interpreter when asked about the personalities who populate the ring today, such as heavyweight world champion Anthony Joshua and WBC heavyweight titleholder Deontay Wilder. "We were born in the time period of the real fighters," he said.

"If you compare today's boxers to the boxers like us from back in those days, these guys would have never won."

Duran, who fought his way out of poverty to become an icon in his native Panama, said he did, however, like Mexican Saul "Canelo" Alvarez, who currently holds three of the four mid-dleweight titles.

"I admire the Mexican kid who obviously is doing very well. I always think

that Americans are the ones making the big bucks here in this sport," he said.

"However, we have Canelo now. He's not only a Mexican but he's also a Latino who's doing really well and making a lot of money."

'WHO HIT THE HARDEST?'

Leonard said Duran, whose relentless, aggressive fighting style and punishing punches earned him an astounding 103-16 career record, is among the best he ever faced. "People ask me that all the time, who hit you the hardest?" Leonard said.

"And a lot of times I say Roberto Duran because Duran hit me so hard-and so many times in so many illegal places-that it felt like a few people in the ring," he said, flashing his trademark smile.

"He was so quick and so elusive. Just an amazing, amazing champion."

Leonard, who won 36 and drew one of his 40 fights, said he lost the first meeting with Duran, a 15-round unanimous decision, in part because he chose to stand toe to toe with Duran instead of relying on his superior speed.

Leonard has said he wanted to hurt Duran after he made disparaging remarks about Leonard's wife in the lead up to the fight, the only fight Leonard said he ever went into angry.

The two would face off in a rematch later that year in a fight dubbed "No Mas" after Duran shocked the world by quitting midway through the eighth round.

Leonard successfully changed his tactics in the rematch, moving constantly and taunting Duran in ways that unnerved the champion. Duran said he was forced to stop fighting due to overwhelming muscle pain that he said was connected to the rapid weight loss he went through to make the weight for the rematch.

Duran, who is known for his acerbic wit and love of a good time, had packed on the pounds while celebrating his win over Leonard.

But time heals all wounds and Leonard says he is happy to call him a friend, even if it took some getting used to. "It seems so surreal when I see him because the first thing I want to do is do this," said Leonard, putting up his fists. — Reuters

Hamilton talent saved us from defeats says Mercedes boss

MONACO: Lewis Hamilton's individual ability 'saved' Mercedes and delivered the team's emotional tribute victory to Niki Lauda at Sunday's dramatic Monaco Grand Prix, according to team chief Toto Wolff.

Without his "performance of a champion" drive on badly-worn and incorrectly-chosen medium compound tyres, in which he resisted near-incessant pressure from Max Verstappen's Red Bull, the Silver Arrows' season-opening winning streak may have been over.

"Obviously, it was the wrong call," admitted Wolff, referring to the decision to fit 'mediums' instead of 'hards' at Hamilton's pit-stop after only 10 laps. "We thought the tyre would make it to the end."

"But, of course, it didn't. He saved us. His driving saved us. It is something that we really need to analyse now. "We calculated that the medium would make it, if we changed on lap 15 or 16, with the right management. It seemed a straightforward strategy."

"It didn't seem like a huge stretch, but then we realised 20 laps into it that some graining was appearing on the front left - and he started to complain. "Under-steer resulted from the graining and it was clear it would be very, very difficult to make it to the end..."

"Everybody knew it would be a huge stretch and, probably 20 laps from the end, he had nought percent rubber left and with massive under-steer at slow speeds. "You could see that around the Loews hairpin - the car wouldn't turn anymore... We were close to losing and if it was a normal track - like in Montreal - you lose that race."

Hamilton secured his third Monaco victory career 77th by resisting every attack from Verstappen, behind him on hard tyres, with one of the greatest stints of defensive racing ever seen on the unforgiving streets of the Mediterranean circuit.

His agitated radio exchanges with engineer Pete Bonnington punctuated the contest and allowed him relief from his concentration during what he later described as the hardest race of his life.

"It's just difficult when you're out on your own for so long and 'Bono' can't say anything," said Hamilton. "Nothing he can say, or anyone can say, or do to help - it was all down to me to bring it home for the team and for Niki. The just felt immense."

Three-time world champion Austrian Lauda, Mercedes non-executive chairman, died last Monday, aged 70. It was a measure of his achievement that Hamilton's former team-mate and rival Nico Rosberg gave him unstinting praise. — AFP