

Sports

Goldschmidt hits grand slam, second homer as Cardinals crush Brewers

Story hits 2 of Rockies' 4 HRs in win over Padres

ST LOUIS: Paul Goldschmidt hit two homers, including a grand slam, and drove in a career-high seven runs as the St. Louis Cardinals rolled past the visiting Milwaukee Brewers 10-0 Friday night. The victory kept the National League Central-leading Cardinals four games ahead of the second-place Chicago Cubs. The Cardinals have gone 39-19 since July 12 and 25-9 since Aug. 7. The injury-depleted Brewers snapped their seven-game winning streak and fell to third place in the division, five games off the pace. They also slipped a game behind the Cubs for the NL's second wild-card spot. Cardinals starter Adam Wainwright (12-9) allowed just two hits and struck out seven in six scoreless innings. He also contributed to the offense, hitting a double and scoring a run.

ROCKIES 10, PADRES 8

Trevor Story homered twice among his three hits, and Colorado beat San Diego in Denver. Garrett Hampson also went deep and had three hits, and Nolan Arenado had a home run, his 40th of the season, and a double for Colorado (63-85). Daniel Murphy, Pat Valaika and Drew Butera had two hits each to help Jeff Hoffman (2-6) win for the first time since May 29. Austin Hedges homered and Wil Myers, Josh Naylor and Luis Urias had two hits each for San Diego.

CUBS 17, PIRATES 8

Anthony Rizzo hit a grand slam, Willson Contreras homered twice, and Chicago overcame an early four-run deficit to defeat Pittsburgh for the eighth time in the past nine home meetings. Nicholas Castellanos and rookie Nico Hoerner hit two-run homers as Chicago capitalized on friendly wind conditions and produced its highest run total of the season. The wind was blowing out to center field at 20 mph at first pitch. Pittsburgh first baseman Josh Bell exited the game after the top of the fifth inning with an undisclosed injury.

BRAVES 5, NATIONALS 0

Nick Markakis celebrated his return to the roster with a pair of hits, and rookie Mike Soroka threw six shutout innings to help Atlanta earn a win at Washington. Markakis was activated before the game after missing 44 games with a left wrist fracture. He went 2-for-4 with a double, scored a run, drove in a run with a sacrifice fly and made three nice catches in left field in his return. Soroka (12-4), who had battled a stomach virus the last two days, gave up only one hit and earned his first career win against Washington. He gave up three walks and struck out four. Soroka lowered his ERA to 2.57, second in the major leagues.

GIANTS 1, MARLINS 0

Tyler Beede made a second consecutive scoreless start, and Buster Posey drove in the game's only run with a sixth-inning single as host San Francisco blanked Miami. Beede (5-9), Tyler Rogers and Shaun Anderson

combined on a four-hitter, helping the Giants win for just the second time in five tries on their seven-game homestand. Sandy Alcantara (5-13) was the hard-luck loser for the Marlins. He completed seven innings, allowing just one run on nine hits. He struck out six and did not walk a batter.

DODGERS 9, METS 2

Clayton Kershaw snapped a three-start losing streak by tossing 6 1/3 solid innings, and Gavin Lux gave Los Angeles the lead for good with a three-run homer in the fourth inning as the Dodgers won in New York. The NL West-champion Dodgers have won eight of 11. The loss damaged the playoff hopes for the Mets, who had their four-game winning streak snapped and fell three games behind the Chicago Cubs in the race for the second NL wild card. Kershaw (14-5) ensured he would not lose four straight starts — or four straight decisions — in the regular season for the first time in his career. He allowed two runs on four hits and three walks with five strikeouts.

BLUE JAYS 6, YANKEES 5 (12 INNINGS)

Bo Bichette led off the bottom of the 12th inning with a home run as Toronto defeated visiting New York. Bichette's 11th homer of the season came against Tyler Lyons (1-2). Toronto's Wilmer Font (3-2) pitched two perfect innings to earn the win. Yankees starter Masahiro Tanaka allowed four runs on eight hits with six strikeouts and no walks in five innings. Toronto left-hander Anthony Kay, making his second career major league start, allowed five runs, seven hits and one walk while striking out two in 4 1/3 innings.

RAYS 11, ANGELS 4

Tampa Bay blasted four home runs — including three in one inning — to roll past Los Angeles in Anaheim, Calif. The Rays remained in the second American League wild-card spot, one game ahead of the Indians and a half-game behind the Athletics. Willy Adames, Austin Meadows and Jesus Aguilar homered in the third inning, and Guillermo Heredia went deep to lead off the sixth for the Rays, who have won seven of nine. Angels center fielder Mike Trout was not in the starting lineup for the sixth consecutive game because of a nerve issue in his right foot. He is day-to-day.

ATHLETICS 14, RANGERS 9

Khristian Davis hit two home runs and drove in four runs, Ramon Laureano homered and had four RBIs, and Matt Olson and Marcus Semien also went deep as Oakland extended its winning streak to four games with a victory in Arlington, Texas. Sean Murphy doubled three times and scored four runs, and Sheldon Neuse went 4-for-5 with three RBIs for Oakland. Davis has 19 career homers at Globe Life Park, tying David Ortiz, Carlos Delgado and Tino Martinez for second most in stadium history by a visiting player, one behind



ST LOUIS: Harrison Bader #48 of the St. Louis Cardinals is thrown out at first base against Eric Thames #7 of the Milwaukee Brewers in the fourth inning at Busch Stadium in St. Louis, Missouri. —AFP

Jason Giambi. Shin-Soo Choo and Danny Santana hit three-run homers for Texas.

ASTROS 4, ROYALS 1

Gerrit Cole struck out 11 over eight solid innings, and George Springer hit a three-run home run in the ninth as Houston won at Kansas City. Cole (17-5) allowed one unearned run on four hits and two walks. It was the 18th time he's reached double figures in strikeouts this year, and he leads the major leagues with 292 K's. He has won 13 straight decisions dating back to March, sporting a 1.85 ERA in that stretch. With the game tied at 1-1 in the top of the ninth, Kyle Tucker singled with one out, and pinch hitter Michael Brantley walked. After Josh Reddick struck out, Springer bashed his 35th homer of the season to left-center.

REDS 4, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Joey Votto and Josh VanMeter hit two-run homers, and Luis Castillo went five innings for his 15th victory as visiting Cincinnati won in Phoenix, handing Arizona its sixth straight defeat. Votto had two hits, his fifth multiple-hit game in the last nine. Castillo (15-6) gave up two runs on four hits and three walks while striking out three. He extended his career highs in wins and strikeouts (211). Eduardo Escobar had two hits and an RBI, and Wilmer Flores had two hits but made a crucial error for the Diamondbacks, who fell 4 1/2 games

behind the Cubs for the second NL wild-card spot.

WHITE SOX 9, MARINERS 7

Yoan Moncada went 3-for-5 with a double, a triple and four RBIs as Chicago won at Seattle. Jose Abreu, Adam Engel and Eloy Jimenez homered for the White Sox, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Josh Osich (3-0) got the victory with 2 1/3 scoreless innings of relief. Alex Colome recorded the last four outs for his 27th save. Mariners starter Yusei Kikuchi (6-10) lasted only 2 1/3 innings, giving up five runs on 10 hits with a walk and a strikeout.

ORIOLES 6, TIGERS 2

Trey Mancini homered and drove in three runs, DJ Stewart added a two-run blast, and Baltimore defeated host Detroit. Aaron Brooks (5-8) earned the victory while giving up two runs on seven hits in 5 1/3 innings. Jonathan Villar added two hits, a run and a stolen base for the Orioles. The Orioles' Mason Williams walked twice, scored a run and drove in another in the opener of a four-game series between the teams with the majors' worst records.

TWINS AT INDIANS, PPD.

Minnesota's scheduled game at Cleveland was postponed due to inclement weather. The teams will play a day-night doubleheader later. — Reuters

Henshaw injury doubt for Ireland World Cup opener

MAKUHARI: Ireland's World Cup preparations have suffered a blow with centre Robbie Henshaw picking up a hamstring injury likely to keep him out of their opening match against Scotland. Head coach Joe Schmidt told reporters yesterday that the 26-year-old Leinster centre would have a scan later in the day.

"We'd be hopeful it's not too bad. Is it likely to rule him out of this week? Yeah, you'd have to say it is likely," admitted Schmidt ahead of Ireland's clash with Scotland next Sunday in Yokohama. It's a case of deja vu for Henshaw, who also missed the first two games of the 2015 World Cup through injury.

"It could be a cramp. We've travelled a lot. We've tried to be fully rehydrated, fully recovered. But if it is more than that and we do leave him out this week, we do feel we've got good cover," said Schmidt.

Ireland have three other centres to choose from — Henshaw's Leinster teammate Garry Ringrose, Bundee Aki and Chris Farrell — but Schmidt revealed he had requested Will Addison be pulled from Ulster's starting XV as cover, but that he was not yet on his way to Japan.

"That was precautionary just to make sure we have fit and able cover should we need a replacement for Robbie," said Schmidt.

'TOUGH ORDER'

Ireland are hoping to put the disappointment of their 2015 campaign behind them, when an injury-ravaged side were pummeled by Argentina in the quarter-finals. Since then the Irish have registered two historic wins over world champions New Zealand — in Chicago in 2016 and at home last November.

New Zealander Schmidt's remarkable six-year tenure, that has included wins over all the southern hemisphere nations, a Grand Slam and three Six Nations titles, will end after the World Cup.

Ireland face a tricky pool containing fellow Six Nations team Scotland and hosts Japan who are desperate to make history by reaching the knockout stages for the first time.

"I think it's a tough order. I think Scotland will be very difficult for us and I think just a six-day turnaround to Japan in Shizuoka will be very tough," he said.

"We're trying to take one match at a time, but we've certainly got an eye to the future and the quality that the Japanese team have," added Schmidt. In the run-up to the tournament, Ireland put an unconvincing 29-10 home win against Italy and a 57-15 hammering by England behind them to register two narrow victories against Six Nations champions Wales which took them top of the World Rugby team rankings ahead of the All Blacks.

"We know we've been less consistent this year but a lot of what we've been targeting is in the coming weeks," he said. "So that's really where we know we'll judge ourselves and others will judge us for this year." —AFP



BERLIN: In this file photo taken on May 23, 2014, Welsh rugby player Gareth Thomas (C) demonstrates during a training session with members of the Berlin Bruisers in Berlin. Former Wales and British and Irish Lions rugby captain Gareth Thomas has released an emotional video explaining his reason for going public on being HIV positive. —AFP

Ex-Wales rugby captain was blackmailed before HIV revelation

LONDON: Former Wales and British and Irish Lions rugby captain Gareth Thomas revealed yesterday he was blackmailed prior to publicly announcing he is HIV positive. The 45-year-old has released an emotional video on social media explaining that by going public, he hopes to remove some of the stigma over the disease. The BBC will broadcast a documentary on Wednesday where Thomas, who came out as gay in 2009, explains how in 2018 he felt like dying and speaks of the "shame" and "fear" he felt over keeping his condition secret.

Thomas was targeted by what he described as "sick" blackmailers, who threatened to reveal that he was HIV positive. "I've been threatened by people who said they would give away my secret. It's sick and I've been through hell," Thomas told the Sunday Mirror.

"I was being blackmailed and in my mind I thought you only get blackmailed for something really bad, which compounded the feeling of shame. "When someone else knows a secret as big as that they can determine your happiness or sadness every morning and use it as a weapon against you and your family. "It put me

in the darkest place ever. I felt I was losing control of my own life."

However, Thomas hopes that by coming forward publicly, others will also feel liberated in the knowledge they can still live a happy and active life while HIV positive. "The reason I'm doing this is firstly I want to remember what it's like to feel free," added Thomas.

"And by doing that, I want to empower so many other people who are in the exactly same position as me and probably be ten times worse." Among those offering support for Thomas was Prince William.

"Courageous as ever - legend on the pitch and legend off it. You have our support Gareth," read a message from William posted on Kensington Palace's social media channels. On Saturday, Thomas revealed the depth of shock and depression when he was first diagnosed, but believes there needs to be more public awareness that the disease is not fatal.

"When I first found out that I was going to have to live with HIV, the first thing I thought was straight away: I was going to die," he said. "It's not like I blame people for not knowing this."

"This is a subject that because of the 1980s scenarios people don't talk about it because that's the only information they have." Thomas says the condition has little impact on his day-to-day life given the advances in medicine other than taking a single pill every day and visiting the hospital for blood tests every six months. Thomas made his Test debut for Wales in 1995 and went on to win 100 caps as well as three for the Lions in 2005. He retired from professional rugby in 2011. Thomas took part in an Iron Man competition in Tenby in Wales yesterday, for which he learned to swim. — AFP

England in the 'right place' to win Rugby World Cup: George

MIYAZAKI: Leaner, meaner and better prepared than for their disastrous 2015 World Cup, England have the tools to capture rugby's top prize, hooker Jamie George warned yesterday. The English have waited four years to banish the nightmare of the last World Cup, and George believes they could go all the way in Japan after being meticulously prepared by Eddie Jones for what looks like being a wide-open tournament.

"He's not giving us too many messages now," George told reporters at England's training base in Miyazaki. "The messages have been sort of drilled into us for the last four years really. When (Jones) first came in, he said to you and he said to us that we're here to win the World Cup in four years," he added.

"We're in that place now, so I think we're in a good position to go out and do that." England, who in 2015 famously became the first hosts to crash out of the World Cup's group stage, have been drawn alongside France and Argentina in Pool C.

But while they hope to emulate England's 2003 vintage, still the only northern hemisphere team to lift the Webb Ellis Cup, George insisted the players were not looking beyond their opening game against Tonga in Sapporo on September 22.

"We've got a lot of hard work to go in order for us to get there," said the Saracens hooker, who has made the number two jersey his own over the past season. "We're not thinking too far ahead. Everything that we're focused on is on ourselves, mostly this week — and we'll look ahead to Tonga next week."

BAD SUSHI

Jones has said he wants his players to be ready for North Korean missiles, earthquakes and even bad sushi. England held a heat camp in Italy over the summer and part of the reason Jones chose the southern coastal resort of Miyazaki for England's World Cup base was to further acclimatise for the humidity that is likely to have an impact on teams during the tournament.

"A lot of acclimatisation happened in Treviso," said George, noting England could even play under a closed roof in Sapporo. "During training here obviously the humidity is pretty high. Regardless of whether we play with the roof on or off, we're not too bothered about it." —AFP