

## Photo of the Day



Hannah Bergemann rides in Bellingham, USA. — Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

## Dhoni faces heat for go-slow in Chennai's chase

DUBAI: India great Mahendra Singh Dhoni faced criticism yesterday for his uncharacteristically slow start in Chennai Super Kings' unsuccessful run chase in the IPL against Steve Smith's Rajasthan Royals. Dhoni, the Chennai captain, sent up young England allrounder Sam Curran and Indian Premier League debutant Rituraj Gaikwad ahead of him in his team's chase of 217 in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, on Tuesday.

Finally coming into bat in the 14th over, the veteran wicketkeeper-batsman scored just 10 runs off his first 13 balls while partner Faf du Plessis was on a hitting spree in his 72-run blitz including seven sixes. The former India skipper, who announced his international retirement last month, only got going in the final over to hit three successive sixes but by then the chase was beyond Chennai who lost by 16 runs.

"This is not what you call leading from the front. Batting at No 7 when you're chasing what...213 (217)? The game was over. Faf was probably the lone warrior," former India opener Gautam Gambhir told ESPNcricinfo. "Yes, you can talk about MS Dhoni's last over, but it was of no use to be honest. It was just all personal runs." Curran had smashed 18 off six balls after being promoted ahead of Dhoni, who last played in India's semi-final exit of the 2019 World Cup, in Chennai's win over holders Mumbai Indians in the IPL opener last week. Dhoni, known for his finishing skills during the peak of his international career, said his lack of time in the middle prompted him to shuffle the batting order. "I haven't batted for a long time. 14-day quarantine (in the United Arab Emirates) doesn't help," Dhoni, who remained unbeaten on 29, said in the post-match chat. "Also wanted to try different things, give opportunities to Sam. Have the opportunity to try different things. If it doesn't work, you can always go back to your strengths." —AFP

## Indians punch playoff ticket with walk-off HR; Giants beat Rockies

Dodgers clinch 8<sup>th</sup> straight NL West crown

CHICAGO: Jose Ramirez belted a three-run homer in the 10th inning as the host Cleveland Indians clinched a postseason berth in dramatic fashion with a 5-3 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Tuesday. Chicago appeared poised to prevent Cleveland from punching its ticket to the postseason for the fourth time in five seasons after scoring twice in the top of the 10th inning.

Adam Engel ripped an RBI triple off Phil Maton (3-3) before coming around to score on Nick Madrigal's RBI single to stake the White Sox to a 3-1 lead. Undaunted, Francisco Lindor halved the deficit in the bottom of the 10th with an RBI double off the top of the wall in center field. Cesar Hernandez earned a walk off Matt Foster (5-1) to set the stage for Ramirez, who greeted Jose Ruiz by depositing his 2-2 fastball over the wall in right field for his team-leading 17th homer and sixth in as many games.

## Dodgers 7, A's 2

Corey Seager had a home run among his three hits as Los Angeles clinched its eighth consecutive National League West title with a victory over visiting Oakland. The Dodgers also clinched the No. 1 seed in the National League heading into the playoffs, which begin next week. Max Muncy, Chris Taylor and AJ Pollock also hit home runs while rookie right-hander Dustin May (2-1) was solid over five innings as the Dodgers won for the 13th time in their past 16 home games. Robbie Grossman hit a home run for the A's, who clinched the American League West title during their Monday off day when the Houston Astros lost to the Seattle Mariners. Frankie Montas (3-5) took the loss after giving up five runs on seven hits over four innings.

## Braves 11, Marlins 1

Marcell Ozuna hit two home runs and drove in five as Atlanta won the National League East for the third straight season with a win over visiting Miami. Ozuna hit a long solo shot with two outs in the first to put the Braves on the board and added a two-run homer in the eighth. They were his 16th and 17th homers, giving him the NL lead. Ozzie Albies added a towering solo homer to center field in the second inning, his sixth. Atlanta got a stellar starting effort from young right-hander Bryse Wilson (1-0), who pitched five shutout innings, allowed three hits, walked one and struck out a career-high seven. Jose Urena (0-3) took the loss after giving up four runs on six hits and two walks with three strikeouts over six innings.

## Astros 6, Mariners 1

Martin Maldonado and Michael Brantley hit home runs and Framber Valdez pitched seven strong innings as Houston won at Seattle to inch closer to a playoff berth. The Astros (28-27), who have five games left, hold a 3 1/2-game lead over the Los Angeles Angels (25-31) and a four-game lead over the Mariners (24-31) in the chase for second place in the American League West and an automatic postseason bid. Houston owns the tiebreaker with Seattle because it already has won the season series between the teams, but the Angels hold the tiebreaker over the Astros. Valdez (5-3) allowed one run on five hits with no walks and eight strikeouts.

## Giants 5, Rockies 2

Austin Slater had two hits, including a home run. Alex Dickerson also went deep, and host San Francisco beat Colorado. Joey Bart had two doubles to help the Giants move into a tie with Milwaukee and Cincinnati for the two National League wild-card playoff spots. Reliever Tyler Rogers (3-3) got the win despite blowing a seventh-inning lead, and Sam Coonrod picked up his third save. Raimel Tapia, Kevin Pillar and Matt Kemp had two hits apiece for Colorado.

## Pirates 3, Cubs 2

Jacob Stallings' home run in the ninth inning gave

Pittsburgh a win over visiting Chicago, ending the Pirates' five-game losing streak. While the game was in the eighth inning, the Cubs clinched a playoff spot when the Washington Nationals beat the Philadelphia Phillies to complete a doubleheader sweep. Pittsburgh blew a 2-0 lead before Stallings' one-out blast to left field off Andrew Chafin (1-2). It was Stallings' third homer this year and third career walk-off hit.

## Twins 5, Tigers 4 (10 innings)

Max Kepler's three hits included a game-tying homer in the eighth inning and a walk-off single in the 10th that gave Minnesota a victory over Detroit in Minneapolis. Byron Buxton and Mitch Garver also homered for Minnesota, which moved to within a half-game of the first-place Chicago White Sox in the American League Central. Taylor Rogers (2-4) picked up the win despite allowing an unearned run in the top of the 10th. Daz Cameron had two doubles and scored a run and Willi Castro and Miguel Cabrera also had two hits for the Tigers.

## Brewers 3, Reds 2

Eric Sogard delivered a tiebreaking RBI double during a two-run seventh inning and Brett Anderson threw six strong innings for Milwaukee, which evened its three-game with host Cincinnati to draw in even in their chase for a playoff spot. Milwaukee (27-27) was down 2-0 after one inning but fought back to win for the fifth time in six contests and catch Cincinnati (28-28) in winning percentage. Anderson (4-3) allowed only Nick Castellanos' two-run homer and three other hits while striking out seven without a walk. One of the two runs he yielded was unearned. Cincinnati, which lost for just the second time in 10 games, got five innings from Sonny Gray, who allowed a Tyrone Taylor home run and one other hit while fanning eight with one walk. It was his first start off the injured list after recovering from a back issue that kept him out 11 days.

## Nationals 5, Phillies 1 (Game 1)

Austin Voth tossed a complete game three-hitter to lift host Washington past Philadelphia in the first game of a

six innings as Los Angeles won at San Diego. Stassi's sixth homer of the season in the bottom of the second tied the game at 1-1. His 409-foot drive to straightaway center followed a two-out double by Taylor Ward corner and broke the tie in the sixth. Channing (2-3) issued five walks and had 10 strikeouts en route to the win. He retired 11 of the last 12 Padres he faced after working out of jams in the first and third innings—as San Diego scored a total of one run after loading the bases in both innings before Channing recorded an out.

## Red Sox 8, Orioles 3

Nick Pivetta struck out eight over five innings in his Boston debut, Christian Vazquez hit a three-run home run and the Red Sox beat visiting Baltimore in the opener of a three-game series. Pivetta (1-0) allowed one run on four hits and three walks as the Red Sox kicked off their final home series of the season. Pivetta, acquired from the Philadelphia Phillies last month, made his first major league start since July 17, 2019. The lone blemish on Pivetta's night came in the first inning, when he walked a



LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Dodgers pose for a team picture, after a 7-2 win over the Oakland Athletics, to win the National League West Division at Dodger Stadium on September 22, 2020. — AFP

## Yankees 12, Blue Jays 1

Aaron Hicks had three RBIs with a triple and a single, right-hander Gerrit Cole struck out seven in seven innings, and visiting New York defeated Toronto in Buffalo, NY. Gio Urshela added four hits and two RBIs to extend his hit streak to 11 games as the teams have split the first two games of a four-game series. Cole (7-3) allowed one run and five hits in beating the Blue Jays for the second straight start. Blue Jays right-hander Tanner Roark (2-3) allowed six runs and seven hits in 4 1/3 innings in his third straight start against the Yankees.

## Mets 5, Rays 2

A slumping Pete Alonso homered and finished with three RBIs and Seth Lugo bounced back from the worst start of his career by tossing 6 1/3 solid innings as host New York kept its playoff hopes alive while denying Tampa Bay a chance to clinch a division title. The Mets began the day three games behind the Philadelphia Phillies in the race for the final National League wild-card spot, but the Phillies were swept in a doubleheader by the Washington Nationals before New York's win was complete. The Rays entered Tuesday with a magic number of one for clinching the American League East, but the New York Yankees routed the Toronto Blue Jays 12-1. Lugo (3-3), who gave up four homers and six runs over 1 2/3 innings last Thursday against the Philadelphia Phillies, allowed two runs (one earned) on four hits and one walk while striking out seven.

doubleheader. It was the first career complete game for Voth, who tossed 105 pitches, struck out seven and walked one. Voth (1-5) entered the game winless with a 7.17 ERA. Juan Soto scored two runs and walked twice for the Nationals. Jean Segura hit a solo home run for the struggling Phillies, who dropped their third in a row. J.T. Realmuto and Andrew McCutchen had the other two hits, both singles. Philadelphia starter Aaron Nola (5-4) gave up six hits and five runs (three earned) in six innings. Nola struck out six and walked two.

## Nationals 8, Phillies 7 (Game 2, 8 innings)

Yadiel Hernandez's first career homer was a two-run walk-off shot in the bottom of the eighth inning Tuesday, lifting host Washington past Philadelphia in the second game of a doubleheader. Hernandez finished 2-for-4 with three RBIs in the nightcap. He had eight career at-bats in six games before the outburst. Juan Soto added a three-run homer for the Nationals, and Daniel Hudson (3-2) earned the win despite giving up an unearned run in the top of the 10th. Scott Kingery homered and Didi Gregorius added two hits and two RBIs for the Phillies, who have lost four in a row. Alec Bohm and J.T. Realmuto had two hits each for the Phillies, who took a 7-6 lead in the top of the eighth. Brandon Workman (1-4) took the loss after serving up Hernandez's homer.

## Angels 4, Padres 2

Max Stassi hit two homers as part of a four-hit game and Griffin Channing gave up just one run on two hits over

pair and allowed a run to score on a two-out single by DJ Stewart. Pivetta struck out the side in order in the second and later escaped a two-on, no-out jam in the fifth to end his outing.

## Cardinals 5, Royals 0

Dylan Carlson had three hits, three runs and two RBIs to help St. Louis defeat host Kansas City. Cardinals starter Austin Gomber (1-1) allowed four hits and no walks, striking out three, in six innings. His longest outing previously this season was three innings. Brady Singer (3-5) took the loss with the worst—and shortest—outing of his brief major league career. He gave up three runs on three hits in three-plus innings. St. Louis grabbed a one-game lead over Cincinnati and Milwaukee for second place in the NL Central and an automatic playoff berth, while the Royals were officially eliminated from postseason contention.

## Diamondbacks 7, Rangers 0

Carson Kelly slugged a three-run homer to cap a four-run sixth inning and help Arizona roll to a shutout victory over Texas at Phoenix. David Peraltá went 3-for-4 with an RBI as Arizona moved to within a win of getting to .500 at home (12-13). Eduardo Escobar went 2-for-4 as the Diamondbacks finished with 11 hits in the opener of the two-game set. Texas was shut out for the first time this season. The Rangers have dropped five of their past six contests. Eli White went 3-for-4 with a stolen base for the Rangers, while Sam Huff went 2-for-4. The Rangers were 0-for-8 with runners in scoring position. — Reuters