



The
Desert
Sun

SPORTS

J.B. Holmes' comeback complete
GOLF, C7

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Hamlin wins Talladega **C2** • Nets, Spurs advance **C3** • COD softball advances **C4** • Kings, Ducks prepare for Game 2 **C6** • Aztecs favored in DVL tennis **C7**



Dodgers right fielder Yasiel Puig slams into the fence trying to catch Jeff Baker's two-out game-winning RBI double in the ninth inning at Miami. Puig was shaken up on the play. AP

MARLINS 5, DODGERS 4

Dodgers sink in 9th

Marlins rally 3 times; Puig hurt in collision with fence

By Steven Wine
Associated Press

MIAMI — Marlins ace Jose Fernandez was struck in the thigh by a sharp grounder and kept pitching despite discomfort. Dodgers right fielder Yasiel Puig slammed into the wall trying unsuccessfully for a game-saving catch and crumpled to the warning track in pain.

A seesaw struggle Sunday left both team hurting, but it stung more for Los Angeles. Mi-

NEXT FOR DODGERS

Opponent: Washington Nationals
When: 4 p.m., Monday
Where: Washington D.C.
Television: SNLA
Pitching: Dodgers, Zack Greinke (5-0); Nationals, Jordan Zimmerman (2-1)

ami improved baseball's best home record when Jeff Baker hit an RBI double off the wall with two outs in the ninth inning to win 5-4.

Puig slammed into the wall

trying for an acrobatic catch and was shaken up but not seriously hurt. Teammates ran out to check on him while the Marlins celebrated a wild victory.

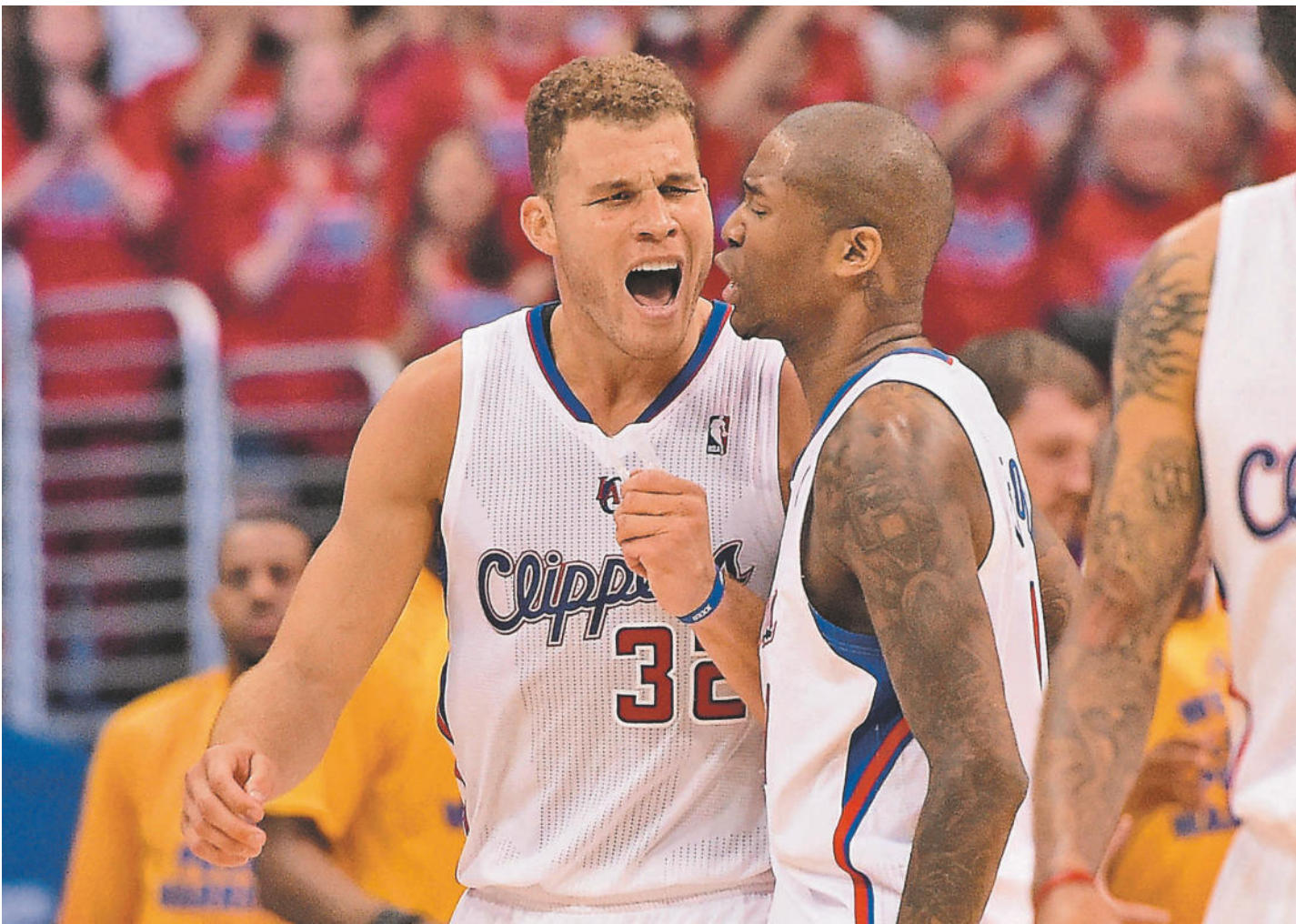
"Just exactly how we drew it up," manager Mike Redmond said with a grin.

Fernandez avoided a serious injury in the fifth when he was hit on the back of the left leg by a sharp grounder off the bat of Dee Gordon. Asked whether he expected to make his next start,

Please see DODGERS, C4

CLIPPERS VS. THUNDER » CONFERENCE FINAL AWAITS

HIGH-VOLTAGE SERIES



Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin celebrates with guard Jamal Crawford during the second half in Game 7 against the Golden State Warriors on Saturday in Los Angeles. The Clippers won 126-121. MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Clippers, Thunder expect run-and-gun-style matchup

By Cliff Brunt
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — The Los Angeles Clippers initially were reeling after the incendiary racial comments by owner Donald Sterling that got him banned from the NBA for life.

The team unified and rallied to beat the Golden State Warriors in seven games, setting up a Western Conference semifinal against Kevin Durant and the Oklahoma City Thunder that starts Monday.

"For us, it's basketball," Clippers point guard Chris Paul said. "Had we lost this game, it wasn't like they were going to let us go to the next round because of

NEXT FOR CLIPPERS

Opponent: Oklahoma City Thunder
When: 6:30 p.m., Monday
Where: Oklahoma City
Television: TNT

what we've been through. I think it just showed our will, our fight, and more so than getting through all that, it was getting through tonight."

The Thunder fought through a different kind of challenge — a familiar foe with a difficult style. Oklahoma City survived a grind-it-out series against the Memphis Grizzlies and prevailed in seven games.

There should be a lot less grinding

and a lot more running and gunning in this matchup.

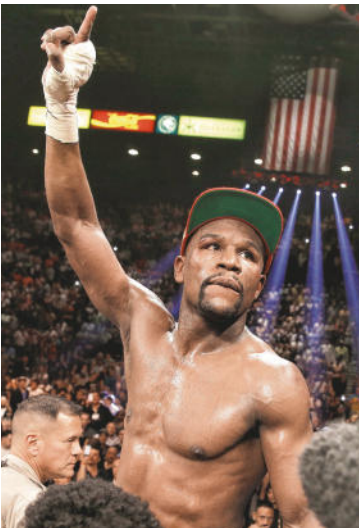
Los Angeles led the NBA in scoring during the regular season with 107.9 points per game. All-Star forward Blake Griffin has improved his all-around game, and Paul is perhaps the league's best point guard.

"This team runs at a high level, they pass the ball up the floor at a high level," Durant said. "They advance the ball, they have athletic guys and shooters all around. Our defense is going to be tested."

Durant is the league's scoring champion, and point guard Russell Westbrook

Please see CLIPPERS, C3

BOXING



Floyd Mayweather Jr. celebrates his victory over Marcos Maidana on Saturday in Las Vegas. AP

A close call for Floyd in Vegas

Mayweather lucky to be 46-0

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Floyd Mayweather Jr. was all smiles as he headed up an escalator with his large entourage, turning to flash a thumbs-up at fans greeting him.

Mayweather escaped to fight another night, and the fight may be against the man who came closest to handing him the first defeat of his 16-year pro career.

Marcos Maidana nearly did what 45 other fighters couldn't, taking the fight to Mayweather before losing a 12-round majority decision that angered both the Argentine and the fans at MGM Grand arena.

Mayweather was hit more than any bout in his career, and needed to rally from the middle rounds on to keep his unbeaten record. Maidana called the richest fighter in the world an ordinary boxer and said he deserved a rematch in September.

Please see MAYWEATHER, C6

GETTING TO KNOW — CHRISTIAN KONTAXIS

Excellence beyond tennis

Freshman inspired by father, brother

By Leighton Ginn
The Desert Sun

PALM DESERT — Christian Kontaxis has had quite the impact on the tennis court and in the classroom at Palm Desert High School as a freshman.

On the court, Kontaxis is playing No. 2 singles for the Aztecs, who are the second-ranked team in the CIF Division 2 Southern Section. In the USTA, he's ranked in the top 100 nation-

al in the boys 14 age group and is No. 13 in Southern California.

In the classroom, coach Randy Blalock said he's ranked at the top of the freshman class.

How long have you played tennis?

I've played for 10 years

How did you get started?

My brother played and I wanted to be like him. I took it up and I really love it.

Are you better than brothers at this point?

Absolutely. I've had his num-



ber the last 6-7 times. He's going to love that.

So I hear you keep a busy schedule with school and tennis. What else are you involved in?

I play a lot of piano, like concert piano. I enjoy classical piano. I also focus on my studies.

What are your academic goals?

I hope to be a neurosurgeon. My brother has autism and a tumor. I hope I can give back what he's given to me.

Oh really?

He suffers from epilepsy.

Please see KONTAXIS, C4

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RANGERS 14, ANGELS 3

Skaggs shelled by Rangers in loss

Texas bats back up sharp Darvish

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Tyler Skaggs knew he wasn't going to be around for long Sunday after throwing 36 pitches in the first inning and giving up three runs. In fact, it turned out to be the shortest of his 19 major league starts.

The Los Angeles Angels' left-hander lasted 2½ innings, surrendering six runs, eight hits and three walks in a 14-3 loss to the Texas Rangers. Two of the runs came on RBI doubles by Prince Fielder, who ended a drought of 39 at-bats without an extra-base hit.

"They were hitting the pitches I was throwing," Skaggs said. "They made their adjustments and had a good game plan. I fell behind in counts — and it's easy to hit when it's 2-0, 2-1. It's not like I was walking guys. ... I'll kind of erase this and put it behind me."

Manager Mike Scioscia is confident Skaggs will bounce back in his next start at Toronto.

"He'll be better next time. 'He'll reload,'" Scioscia said. "I think the progression of a young pitcher, sometimes when you're struggling, it's a good lesson. I don't think there's anything to say about it except: 'We're going to turn the page on this one.'"

The Rangers built a 5-2 lead

NEXT FOR ANGELS

Opponent: New York Yankees
When: 7 p.m., Monday
Where: Angel Stadium
Television: FSN
Pitching: Yankees, David Phelps (0-0); Jered Weaver (2-2)

after two innings with Fielder's identical doubles — line drives over the head of first baseman C.J. Cron just inside the foul line.

"That shift they used on him wasn't going to hold none of that stuff he hit today," Rangers manager Ron Washington said. "Cron didn't know where those balls were until they were past him."

The two RBIs matched Fielder's combined total in 37 at-bats over his previous 10 games.

"I was just trying to go up there with an approach and not really worry about the result. And good results happened today," the five-time All-Star first baseman said. "He's a tough lefty, so I was just trying to see a ball up in the zone that I could put the barrel on and hit hard. And I was able to do that."

"I was just happy to drive in a couple of runs, because that's a big part of my game. I haven't been pressing, but anytime you're not doing what you know you can do, it's definitely frus-



The Los Angeles Angels' Albert Pujols, right, is hit in the head by a pitch thrown by Texas Rangers starting pitcher Yu Darvish, of Japan, as catcher J.P. Arencibia, second from left, looks on during the fifth inning. AP

trating."

Yu Darvish (2-1) shrugged off first-inning homers by Erick Aybar and Albert Pujols to get his first victory since his season debut on April 6 at Tampa Bay. The right-hander allowed three runs, seven hits and no walks in 6½ innings and struck out nine. Darvish is 7-1 with a 3.82 ERA in 11 career starts against the Angels and has won his last six de-

cisions against them.

"He owns us, pretty much," said Pujols, whose 502nd career homer put him within Eddie Murray for 25th place all-time. "He was being pretty aggressive in the strike zone and he mixed his pitches pretty well. That's how he's been pitching the last three years I've been here. We have to figure out next time how to beat him."

Pujols shrugged off an 0-2 pitch by Darvish that glanced off the front of his helmet in the fifth inning as he closed his eyes and turned his head to the right. He remained in the game after a trainer checked on him at first base.

Darvish's teammates scored three more runs than they totaled in his five previous starts combined.

PADRES 4, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Alonso, Padres beat D-backs to end skid

Late rally just enough to win sloppy outing

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The way the San Diego Padres have been struggling offensively, it seemed fitting the ball didn't leave the infield on the play that carried them to victory against the lowly Arizona Diamondbacks.

Cameron Maybin reached base after an overturned umpire's call, then scored on Yonder Alonso's slow grounder with one out in the ninth inning to give the Padres a 4-3 win Sunday that stopped a four-game losing streak.

It was a perfect combination for the Padres — the speedy Maybin at third base, left-hander Oliver Perez on the mound, one out and the infield in, a ball that went just the right distance and another winning challenge by manager Bud Black. Maybin broke for home as Alonso hit a dribbler down the first-base line. Paul Goldschmidt bare-handed it and threw home, but Maybin had already slid across with the winning run.

"With a lefty pitcher there, I'm able to get a little bit bigger lead than usual," said Maybin, who was reinstated from the disabled list a week earlier. "And it was just a situation, man, where if it was a line drive I probably was going to get doubled up. I was going on the swing even more so than contact, so it worked out. It was probably the shortest RBI he ever had."

Said Alonso: "It could have gone 10 feet, and Cam would have scored. I know with Cam running, anything's possible in this game. My approach the whole time was just get it done. Whatever you do, don't strike out. Put the ball in play."

Even with all the factors turning out right, Black said it was "a pretty standard procedure in that situation, game-winning run. Worse-case sce-



The Padres' Cameron Maybin celebrates after scoring the winning run during the ninth inning at Petco Park on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

NEXT FOR PADRES

Opponent: Kansas City Royals
When: 7 p.m., Monday
Where: Petco Park
Television: FSND
Pitching: Royals, Yordano Ventura (2-1); Padres, Eric Stults (1-3)

nario is out at home, then you still have first and third with two outs. The proper grounder was hit, where it was not smoked, Cam had a good secondary lead, reacted to the swing in the hitting area as instructed, and beat the play."

Maybin started the winning rally with a chopper to second off Perez (0-1). He initially was called out, but Black challenged and the call was changed to safe, giving Maybin an infield single

and making Black 2 for 2 in challenges Sunday and 4 for 4 this season. Rene Rivera, who earlier hit a two-run double, doubled over right fielder Gerardo Parra to move Maybin to third.

"I wasn't a big fan at first," Maybin said of the new replay system. "But it worked out."

Said Black: "Those are close plays. In 2014, that's the beauty of replay, the technology."

The Padres scored their most runs in five games.

"It was huge, man," Maybin said. "You never want to get swept in a series. We've been playing some really tough, close games. We continue to compete, continue to play hard. It's good after making so many errors. We were very fortunate to get the win today."

Dodgers

Continued from C1

Fernandez said, "Probably I will be fine."

The Marlins improved to 13-5 at home, while their 2-10 road record is the worst in the majors.

"We have a comfort level here," Redmond said. "I love our approach here. We seem to play with so much confidence in this ballpark, and today you could just feel the energy."

Giancarlo Stanton homered twice and drove in three runs for Miami, giving him the NL leads with 10 home runs and 36 RBIs. Teammate Christian Yelich hit his second home run.

Los Angeles came from behind three times, and a blown save cost Fernandez the victory. With Marlins closer Steve Cishhek unavailable after pitching in three consecutive games, A.J. Ramos (2-0) tried to protect a one-run lead in the ninth for his first career save. But Chone Figgins walked and scored on a double by Andre Ethier with no outs.

A diving stop by shortstop Adeiny Hechavarria and an overturned call on a force play at second base helped the Marlins escape the inning with the score tied.

Hechavarria started the bottom of the ninth with a single off Jamey Wright (2-2) and advanced to third on a sacrifice and a groundout.

Baker followed with a drive to right, and a retreating Puig slammed his head and lower left leg against the fence. The ball deflected off the wall and hit Puig in the face, and he collapsed to his stomach.

Puig was slow to walk off the

field but passed a concussion test. The Dodgers said his status is day to day.

"He hit the wall good," manager Don Mattingly said. "He seemed to be OK when he was walking in, but I'm sure they are going to keep looking at him. He almost made an unbelievable play."

Fernandez briefly thought his day might be done when Gordon's comebacker struck him.

"It hit me hard," Fernandez said. "Right away my hamstring became really tight. I didn't know if I was going to keep throwing. After that it was a little tougher to pitch. It was getting tighter and tighter and tighter."

Fernandez went on to pitch seven innings, left with a 4-3 lead and remained unbeaten at home in 20 career starts. But he lacked his customary command, allowing four walks, and they led to both earned runs against him.

"It wasn't an easy game," Fernandez said. "Like everybody knows, the Dodgers are one of the best teams in the league. That's why they get paid the way they get paid."

Fernandez, the 2013 NL Rookie of the Year, has yet to allow more than two earned runs in a home start. The only other pitcher in the past 100 years to allow fewer than three earned runs in 20 consecutive home starts was Orel Hershiser in 1985-86.

Stanton hit a two-run tape-measure homer in the first inning, then lined another homer off the nightclub facade in left field leading off the sixth to put Miami ahead 4-3.

"It's almost like you sort of get used to it, which is crazy," Redmond said.

Kontaxis

Continued from C1

But he inspires me every day to keep in shape. You don't want to complain too much when you're around him.

What's your brother's name?

Nicolas and he just turned 18. **Isn't your father a surgeon?** No, he's an ER doc. He's at Eisenhower. I'm also inspired by him.

Do you dabble in other kinds of music on the piano?

I know everyone likes pop music. I try to improvise. I'm working on site reading. If someone wants me to learn a song, I can probably learn it in a night.

How long have you played piano?

Four years. Before that, I took a little break and played four years before that.

Any thoughts of playing Coachella?

I haven't quite thought of that. IT would be a dream. Who wouldn't want to play Coachella? I'm not sure they will take classical so I better work on pop.

As far classical, what do you like to play?

Chopin's "Minute Waltz." It's

a fun piece. It has to be played in a minute or sounds bad. It's a quick-tempo waltz and I enjoy playing that.

As far as pop, favorite?

I know how to play "Buy U a Drank" by T Pain and "Apologize" by One Republic. I know these are old songs.

When you say old, I thought you would say Elton John or Billy Joel.

Piano man, I know a little bit of that.

Do you sing to?

I'm trying to get more involved in church and the Byzantine chanting. It's pretty old stuff. There's tones and you sing and you chant. It's pretty fun. If you've seen old Greek chanters with beards and deep voices, it's kind of like that. My brother is a really good chanter. He's trying to get me to chant right now.

Being a freshman and playing, No. 2 singles, has there been pressure?

A little pressure at first, but once you start winning, it takes the pressure off.

How feel about teams' chances?

I like them more than any other team. We'll get to CIF finals for sure, but will have tough competition. Hopefully the leadership will come through and we'll win.

COLLEGE SOFTBALL

COD sweeps way to Super Regionals

Staff reports

Behind the arm of Natalie Padilla, College of the Desert softball team will be making a return visit to the Southern California Super Regionals after beating College of the Canyons 9-1 in six innings.

The game was called due to the mercy rule. Rylee Perez doubled home Lauren Perez that ended the game.

With the victory, COD swept Canyons 2-0. They won both games by a combined 15-2 score.

The Roadrunners plays at Cypress College in the super regional that begins Friday. COD will open up against Mount San Antonio in the late game Friday. In the other game, Cypress will face Saddleback.

Padilla allowed six hits and a

single run to pick up the complete game victory.

La Quinta's Lauren Ortiz and Roxanne Allen each scored three runs. Alyssa Fuimaono was 2-3 with a double and two RBIs. Danyelle Sturm was 2-3 with two runs, two RBIs and a home run.

With the victory Sunday, the Roadrunners improved to 36-6 on the season and was a perfect 15-0 in conference play.