



Sports

Boston Bruins goaltending crumbles during semifinal series against Tampa Bay Lightning

by **Tim Keaten**
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After Saturday's game against the Tampa Bay Lightning, the Boston Bruins are now down 3-1 in the Eastern Conference semifinals. Since the departure of Tuukka Rask from the bubble in Toronto, the Bruins have experienced nothing but constant struggles against the Lightning's offense with neither Bruins backup Jaroslav Halak nor Providence Bruins goaltender Dan Vladar being able to perform at the same level. The consistent theme of the series since Game 1 has been Boston being unable to defend their crease, putting extreme pressure on their goaltending talent.

Halak spent much of the 2019-2020 season playing in tandem with Rask for Boston, with Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy switching the two out every game. During the regular season, neither goalie outshined the other and both put up good, consistent numbers while in the crease. The pair earned the 2019-2020 William M. Jennings Trophy, annually awarded to the goaltender(s) that allowed the fewest goals scored against in the league. Halak ended the 2019-2020 regular season with 31 games played, 18 of those being Boston wins. He earned a goals against average of 2.39 and a respectable .919% save percentage. During the postseason series with the Carolina Hurricanes, Halak also performed well following the departure of



Boston Bruins goaltender Jaroslav Halak (41) reaches out to make a stop on Tampa Bay Lightning left wing Ondrej Palat (18) during the second period of an NHL Stanley Cup Eastern Conference playoff hockey game, Monday, Aug. 31, 2020, in Toronto. PHOTO BY FRANK GUNN, THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA AP

Rask, playing in the final three Bruins victories over Carolina. Vladar put up similarly impressive numbers while playing with Boston's American Hockey League affiliate, the Providence Bruins. During the 2019-2020 season Vladar played 25 games and let in 42 goals, earning a 1.79 goals against average and a .936% save percentage; leading the league in both statistics. He was ranked as the third most promising goalie prospect in the AHL in April in an independent NHL report by Patrick Williams. Before the

series ended early due to the AHL canceling operations because of the coronavirus pandemic, Vladar won his first playoff appearance, letting in two goals over 60 minutes of ice time. Even with the absence of Rask from the lineup, the Bruins have two very competent goaltenders at their disposal, which makes the last few games against the Lightning all the more disappointing. In Game 3 of the series, which also served as Vladar's NHL debut, the Bruins let in seven goals to the Lightning's

one. If the Bruins want to have any hope of making it to the Eastern Conference Finals, the first thing that needs to change is the work put in by their goaltending talent. Tampa Bay's Andrei Vasilevskiy is arguably the best ice hockey goaltender in the world right now, so Boston cannot simply rely on the team's experienced offensive lines to outscore the other team. Unless Vladar and Halak see significant improvement in the games scheduled for this week, Boston has no chance of lifting up the Stanley Cup.

When miracles end

by **Ashton Stansel**
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We all remember the sporting miracles. David Ortiz's hits to carry the Red Sox past the Yankees in 2004. The Miracle on Ice. These are the moments that define a generation of sports at the highest level, the plays that those watching will never forget and those born decades later will be shown. Esports has those plays, too; Coldzera's jumping awp kills at the MLG Major or Smeb's miraculous Gangplank steal of Baron to win a five-game epic against KT Rolster or Cloud9's comeback at home against Faze Clan to seal the Boston Major. These are the moments we remember.

Nobody remembers the moments that almost happened. Griffin almost completing the miracle run in their rookie split, before they fell one series short of a victory in the Grand Final and one series short of Worlds. Avangar and Ence, making Major finals only to be absolutely obliterated by Astralis. Team Liquid coming in second in so many CSGO tournaments in 2018 and 2019. Misfits going 2-3 against SKT at Worlds. This weekend, Schalke's miracle run came to a close in a 1-3 loss to the MAD Lions. The Lions simply were the superior team on the day, drafting powerful lineups that could pick off Schalke's players over and over again. It left Schalke defeated, inches from a finish line that two months ago was miles away, inches from the most impressive miracle in the history of esports, a miracle they now wouldn't complete.

For Schalke, it was a familiar closeness. The organization got fourth place in the Summer Split after the gauntlet in 2018 and 2019, meaning they were one series short for the last three years. For Odoamne, for Gilius, for these players who have been there before and who fought so hard to return only to fall short, getting so close only makes it hurt more.

In North America, Cloud9's fall from grace after their incredible Spring Split was cemented with a 1-3 loss against TSM that found the organization missing Worlds for the first time in its history. Another miracle run, another moment so close to being the best season in the history of North America, a team that was far and away the best team for months, defeated. Another miracle season ended, leaving fans to ponder what could have been. There's a saying in esports, which the LCS has echoed for many years: Nobody remembers second. It's those who win the titles who are remembered, not the people who they stepped over. Team Liquid won four titles in four splits, and many more people could tell you that fact than the ones who could tell you what teams they dominated en route. Success is what is remembered. Victory is what is remembered. For the teams who got close, but fell short, there is only the hope that next time, it's them who will be remembered.

See ESPORTS, p. 9

BMW CHAMPIONSHIP RECAP

by **Matthew Garry**
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The second round of the FedEx Cup Playoffs wrapped up this past Sunday at the BMW Championship. John Rahm defeated World No. 1 Dustin Johnson on the first playoff hole in a thrilling final round at Olympia Fields in Chicago. He moved into second place in the FedEx Cup standings heading into next weekend's Tour Championship, the final installment of the Cup. Rahm will start the tournament at -8, two strokes behind Johnson, who maintained his first-place position in the standings with the runner-up finish.

The course proved to be challenging throughout the entire tournament. A combination of fast greens, lengthy holes and windy conditions left only five players under par at the end of Sunday. However, Rahm was able to overcome the conditions and a slow start, shooting a 66 on Saturday and a 64 on the final day to head into the clubhouse with a one shot lead after his final round. Johnson was only -2 on Sunday, and even par on the back nine. He headed on to the eighteenth hole needing a birdie to force a playoff. After driving his ball into the right rough, he was able to land his approach on the

back of the green, leaving him with a downhill forty-foot putt for birdie over a ridge in the middle of the green, which he promptly sank to force a playoff hole with Rahm.

The group headed back to the eighteenth tee, with both golfers landing their drives in similar positions to where they were in regulation. Rahm landed his approach to the far back of the green, over sixty feet away. He was trying to set himself up for an easy par putt, but instead drained the longest putt of his professional career for a birdie, putting the pressure on Johnson once again.

Johnson was unable to force another playoff hole, leaving his birdie attempt just short and making Rahm the champion after a wild Sunday round.

If this is any indication of the play we can see from these two, we are in for a very exciting Tour Championship next week. East Lake in Atlanta is another difficult course, and will give the remaining 30 players in contention a challenge as they compete for the title and the \$15 million prize. However, the players have said they enjoy the strategy and precision that these hard courses require and are working hard to prepare for the final tournament of the Cup, which should make the Tour Championship the most exciting golf we have seen all year.



Dustin Johnson watches his tee shot on the second hole during the third round Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020, for the BMW Championship golf tournament at the Olympia Fields Country Club in Olympia Fields, Ill. PHOTO BY CHARLES REX ARBOGAST, AP

WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

Games we're watching this week

Utah Jazz vs. Denver Nuggets

Teams we're paying attention to

Cleveland Indians

Athletes we're paying attention to

Messi

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY

@Padres
The #Padres have acquired Mike Clevinger, Greg Allen and a PTBNL from the Indians.

TWEETS OF THE DAY

Andy Martino
[@martinonyc](#)
You guys are going to love Todd Frazier's story. Local kid, actually from Toms River NJ

ChrisSEXotic
[@schlongforto](#)
By acquiring Todd Frazier, Robinson Chirinos, and Miguel Castro the Mets have added a combined 2020 WAR of -0.3

If I'm a playoff team, i do NOT want to face the Mets

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MLB Top-100 Right Now: 10-1

Here it is. At long last, here's the final installment of the top-100 players in the MLB right now. Sure, we may have started this list months ago. And sure, baseball has been back for over a month now, but we had something special planned for the top-10.
We wanted it to go in print.
Now that we're back at school, that can finally happen. So

sorry for the wait, I know everyone is dying to find out who the top-10 players in baseball are, but here it is.
Also, don't forget that this list was made prior to the season start. Soto came in at No. 12. Tatis at No. 31. Bieber at No. 54. If we made the list right now, they'd obviously be higher.
And remember, we waited this long to put it out because we wanted it in print, not because we forgot. Totally not the reason.

No. 10 - Gerrit Cole: Mike 10, Ben 8, Jorge 12
Ben: In 2019, Gerrit Cole pretty much wrote the blueprint for how to cash in on a contract year. Pitching 212 innings for the American League champion Houston Astros, Cole threw up a microscopic 0.89 WHIP and 2.50 ERA, good for second and third in the MLB, respectively. He finished in the top five among pitchers in WAR (6.6, 5th), ERA (2.50, 3rd), WHIP (0.89, 2nd), wins (20, 2nd) and strikeouts (326, 1st). He was also able to back up his impressive regular season with a near-legendary postseason, going 4-1, with 47 K's and an ERA of 1.83. It's no wonder the Yankees paid this guy like royalty.



No. 8 - Alex Bregman: Mike 8, Ben 7, Jorge 10
Jorge: Bregman might not be the most popular player in baseball right now for reasons that we all know, but you can't deny his talent. An All-Star, Silver Slugger award winner and AL MVP runner-up last season, Bregman was clearly one of the best players in baseball. With 41 homers, 112 RBIs and an OPS of 1.015, he was unstoppable. It remains to be seen what's in store for him without, errr, help, but I really don't expect it to affect him too much. He'll still be elite.



No. 9 - Anthony Rendon: Mike 11, Ben 9, Jorge 7
Jorge: For the past couple of seasons, Rendon has been one of the most criminally underrated players in baseball. Last year though, people finally realized how great he is. He made his first All-Star game at long last despite averaging an OPS of .923 in the two years prior. In 2019, he hit 34 home runs, drove in 126 runs which led the MLB and had an OPS of 1.010, culminating in a World Series victory with the Washington Nationals. All of this earned him a 7-year, \$245 million deal with the Los Angeles Angels, which was more than deserved.



Mike: Justin Verlander has been one of the best starting pitchers in baseball for nearly a decade and a half, except for one down year in 2014. He has a career 3.33 ERA and struck out 290 and 300 batters the past two years, respectively. In his illustrious 16-year career, he has finished in the top-5 of the Cy Young voting in nine seasons, including two first place finishes and one second place finish in 2016 that should have gone to him. He has been injured this season, but overall he is an incredible difference maker. He is easily among the top-10 on this list.

No. 7 - Justin Verlander: Mike 7, Ben 10, Jorge 8



No. 6 - Mookie Betts: Mike 6, Ben 5, Jorge 6
Ben: After winning a World Series and the 2018 AL MVP, Mookie Betts had an underrated 2019 season. Yes, the wheels fell off on the Red Sox and Mookie's numbers didn't 100% line up with the year prior's but come on now, this is Mookie Betts; he's got Gold Glove caliber defense, Silver Slugger caliber offense, a winning pedigree and an enthusiastic personality. There's plenty his new teammates in Los Angeles will fall in love with. Yes, technically his .295 batting average from 2019 is a "drop-off" from his ridiculous .346 in 2019, but he can still hit with anyone in the MLB. Sharing a lineup with reigning NL MVP Cody Bellinger should make both superstars even more dangerous. Look out for the Dodgers in 2020. With Betts on board (now through 2032), they're the World Series favorite.



Mike: While I had Arenado above the next pick, Cody Bellinger, I am fine with him slotting in at fifth on this list. He is the best defender in baseball (sorry Matt Chapman), and he has the stick of a perennial MVP-candidate, which he has been for the last six seasons. He has been an All-Star in each of the last five seasons, finishing in the top-8 of MVP voting in each of those seasons. The third baseman has led the NL in homers in three out of the last five seasons and has not seen an OPS under .900 since he had an .898 in 2015. He has not been his peak this season, slashing .268/.319/.496 but he's still an above average hitter at an OPS-plus of 102. Nolan Arenado is a top-5 MLB player and there's an argument to be made for him to be higher on this list.

No. 5 - Nolan Arenado: Mike 4, Ben 6, Jorge 5



No. 4 - Cody Bellinger: Mike 5, Ben 4, Jorge 4
Mike: I got about half an inch away from trading Cody Bellinger in fantasy Monday, but that is no reflection of his talent. He is seriously one of the most impactful and promising young players in baseball. He already has an MVP to his name after winning one last year. Through three and a "half" seasons in the bigs, he has been worth 17.9 bWAR. He struggled to begin this season, but has ramped it up a bit in the past couple weeks. His .225 average and .783 OPS do not tell the story of Cody Bellinger, but rather that of the shortened season. Also, since this is the last sentence I will write in this series, I was right about Zac Gallen.



Jorge: Jacob deGrom is the best pitcher in baseball. Sure, there are challengers (Cole, Verlander, Scherzer and the like), but no one has been as good as deGrom in recent years. That's not even an exaggeration — no starter has an ERA better than deGrom's 2.05 over the past two seasons. Only one pitcher has even hit that mark in one of the past two seasons, much less maintaining that over two, and that was Blake Snell in 2018. Oh, and don't forget the two Cy Young awards. Until someone dethrones him, he's still the king. And since this is the last sentence I will write in this series, you should have listened to me about Sonny Gray.

No. 3 - Jacob deGrom: Mike 3, Ben 3, Jorge 2



No. 2 - Christian Yelich: Mike 2, Ben 2, Jorge 3
Ben: I am of the belief that Christian Yelich should have won the 2019 NL MVP award just as he did in 2018, cementing himself as the de facto second best player in the MLB. As excellent as Bellinger was a year ago, Yelich had him beat in just about every statistical category other than games played. Yelich hit .329, Bellinger hit .305. Yelich had an OPS of 1.100, Bellinger had an OPS of 1.035. Yelich stole 30 bases, Bellinger stole 15. The list goes on. Had Yelich not missed the final 26 fewer games than Bellinger due to injury, he likely would have passed Bellinger in homeruns (44 vs 47) and RBIs (97 vs 115) as well. Bellinger was unbelievable in 2019, but on a per-game basis, Yelich was just a bit better.

< 11-55 RECAP 56-100 >

- 11. Ronald Acuna Jr
- 12. Juan Soto
- 13. Max Scherzer
- 14. Freddie Freeman
- 15. Trevor Story
- 16. Stephen Strasburg
- 17. Xander Bogaerts
- 18. Aaron Judge
- 19. George Springer
- 20. Francisco Lindor
- 21. Rafael Devers
- 22. Pete Alonso
- 23. Ketel Marte
- 24. Jose Altuve
- 25. Javier Baez
- 26. Walker Buehler
- 27. Jack Flaherty
- 28. Matt Chapman
- 29. JD Martinez
- 30. Marcus Semien
- 31. Fernando Tatis Jr.
- 32. DJ LeMahieu
- 33. JT Realmuto
- 34. Josh Hader
- 35. Eugenio Suarez
- 36. Zack Greinke
- 37. Josh Donaldson
- 38. Jeff McNeil
- 39. Kirby Yates
- 40. Gleyber Torres
- 41. Carlos Correa
- 42. Mike Soroka
- 43. Kris Bryant
- 44. Clayton Kershaw
- 45. Yasmani Grandal
- 46. Hyun-Jin Ryu
- 47. Matt Olson
- 48. Max Muncy
- 49. Anthony Rizzo
- 50. Bryce Harper
- 51. Austin Meadows
- 52. Nelson Cruz
- 53. Jose Ramirez
- 54. Shane Bieber
- 55. Michael Brantley



- 56. Mike Clevinger
- 57. Paul Goldschmidt
- 58. Whit Merrifield
- 59. Josh Bell
- 60. Patrick Corbin
- 61. Yordan Alvarez
- 62. Charlie Morton
- 63. Yoan Moncada
- 64. Charlie Blackmon
- 65. Aroldis Chapman
- 66. Ozzie Albies
- 67. Trea Turner
- 68. Joey Gallo
- 69. Luis Castillo
- 70. Blake Snell
- 71. Jorge Polanco
- 72. Lucas Giolito
- 73. Max Kepler
- 74. Shohei Ohtani
- 75. Jorge Soler
- 76. Nick Castellanos
- 77. Tim Anderson
- 78. Michael Conforto
- 79. Miguel Sano
- 80. Mitch Garver
- 81. Bryan Reynolds
- 82. Tyler Glasnow
- 83. Willson Contreras
- 84. Tommy Pham
- 85. Justin Turner
- 86. Aaron Nola
- 87. Jose Abreu
- 88. Manny Machado
- 89. Yuli Gurriel
- 90. Chris Sale
- 91. Giancarlo Stanton
- 92. Marcus Stroman
- 93. Trey Mancini
- 94. Vladimir Guerrero Jr
- 95. Carlos Santana
- 96. Gary Sanchez
- 97. Starling Marte
- 98. Joc Pederson
- 99. Cory Seager
- 100. Zac Gallen

No. 1 - Mike Trout: Mike 1, Ben 1, Jorge 1
Mike, Ben & Jorge: He's Mike Trout. No explanation needed.

Photo of the Day | Simpler Times



Guard Brendan Adams hits layup vs. USF on Feb. 23, 2020 at Gampel Pavilion. UConn won the game 78-71. PHOTO BY ERIC WANG, ASSOCIATE VIDEO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Should I Stay or Should I Go? Another ‘Messi’ situation at Barcelona

by David Sandoval
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Virtually all soccer fans have heard the news by now, but in case you haven’t: Argentine legend Lionel Messi could be on his way out of the Camp Nou sometime in the near future after sending a burofax, or Spanish legal fax, to the club last week. Another thing to add to the list of things that can only happen in 2020.

This comes after an apparent meeting with newly appointed manager Ronald Koeman in which he said many of the current players weren’t pictured in his future squad and that Messi’s “privileges” will be long gone.

At the time of writing, Messi is the second most loyal active player to a single club, having stayed put for just over 16.5 years.

I think it’s only best for someone who has supported Barcelona for quite some time to give their take on the Messi conflict. With that, this is my stance: While many fans of the sport are baffled to hear reports of the six-time Ballon d’Or winner possibly leaving, I can’t say I’m surprised or anything of that matter. If anything, I would like for him to leave Barcelona. Plain and simple.

Now don’t get me wrong, I adore Messi for all he has done for Barcelona. He, along with Carles Puyol, Xavi and Iniesta, were the reason I became a Barcelona fan around 2009, watching Pep Guardiola command his Catalan side into a golden era



Artist TVBOY prepares to glue a painting depicting soccer player Lionel Messi dressed like Che Guevara named “Hasta Siempre Comandante,” or “Until Forever Commander” in English, in Barcelona, Spain, Friday, Aug. 28, 2020. Messi has told Barcelona he wants to leave the club after nearly two decades with the Spanish giant. PHOTO BY FELIPE DANA, AP

and getting the treble, or winning three trophies in a season.

Watching a legendary player like Messi over the years kind of starts to take a toll on you when you reflect on the many trophies and individual achievements he’s gotten, like breaking league records and winning the Ballon d’Or in four consecutive years, while only being at one club. However, like I said, Messi has done it all for Barcelona. In return? A board who sold Neymar, a player who was crucial in Barcelona’s front three at the time; a board who has not only ignored the players in what they wanted but also the fans; a board who in return has bought various

mediocre players for quite some money while the talented players at the club’s academy get bought and sent elsewhere in Europe; and a board that can’t get over the fact its star player wants to save his career and leave because the past few years have been an absolute embarrassment and they would rather keep him imprisoned at the club until his contract runs out. A mouthful, but I’m pretty upset with the board as well and 100% in support of Messi leaving. Even former teammate Carles Puyol commented on the conflict on Twitter showing his support for Messi.

Now there’s a lot of information going around about the situation,

but Messi’s contract has been the main talking point because of a certain (and rather confusing) termination clause established back in 2017 and runs out in June 2021. What Messi has been arguing about for this particular clause is that because of COVID-19 interrupting the club’s schedule, it allows him until the end of August to inform the club of his departure and leave on a free transfer. Reason being, if the pandemic had occurred next year, the board likely would’ve asked Messi to stay and to see how the following season would play out. However, and with La Liga on the club’s side, Barcelona has said that the clause

specifically notes that Messi would have to have put his notice of leaving for free by June 10, and that any interested club would now have to pay his astonishing €700 release clause (over \$836 million).

This kind of news is long overdue. Ever since the beginning of Barcelona’s downfall when they were shamefully beaten by AS Roma in the Champions League quarter finals back in 2018, Messi has made headlines here and there outside of the matches he played, a majority of which involved the Barcelona board.

As for the teams I can see him leaving for, I think it ultimately comes down to Manchester City. They clearly have the money and will most likely ride along the Financial Fair Play line once again, but I would say it’s worth it for a decorated player like Messi and for his reunion with Guardiola. Another team I would like to see him go to (though I think would only be possible if Messi leaves as a free agent) is Juventus, just to see him and Ronaldo finish their remarkable careers together.

On Sunday, Messi didn’t show up to Barcelona’s COVID-19 testing, and the following day he was also absent from Koeman’s first training session. He clearly wants to get out of the club even if Club President Josep Bartomeu resigned in order to keep him there. I don’t think he’ll have second thoughts on leaving. The past few years Barcelona have truly started to live up to their motto “mes que un club”: It has turned into a damn circus show.

DB’s Weekly Take: The Luka Doncic era has arrived

by Danny Barletta
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Luka Doncic is very good at basketball.

That’s it. That’s the article.

No, I’m just kidding, but basically, that’s the gist of the article. We already knew the young Slovenian was an emerging star in the league. He won the 2018-19 Rookie of the Year award almost unanimously. He made his first All-Star team this past February at age 20. He has already recorded 25 career triple-doubles, the most in NBA history before turning 22 and almost double the next closest player — a guy by the name of Magic Johnson had 13, maybe you’ve heard of him.

The bottom line is that we’ve known Doncic is special, but he brought it to another level in his first career playoff series against the Los Angeles Clippers. The Clippers were heavily favored in the series, and for good reason. On paper, the Clippers are light years ahead of Doncic’s Dallas Mavericks. The only way the Mavericks stood a chance of competing with the Clippers, who are widely considered to be the favorites to win the title this year, was if Doncic played out of his mind. Well, he did just that.

He kicked off his playoff career with a 42-point (most ever in a playoff debut), nine-assist, seven-rebound performance in a 118-110 loss. Despite the loss, he showed that he was going to keep Dallas relevant in the series. Even the soft-spoken, reserved Kawhi Leonard took notice of Doncic.

“He’s great,” Leonard said after Game 1, according to ESPN. “You know what I mean? He’s very poised. He’s very trusted on that team. He can get to his spots, find his teammates, gets them easy baskets. He makes tough baskets well. He’s a great player.”

Doncic followed that up with another great performance in Game 2, scoring 28 points in the Mavericks’ 13-point victory to even the series. Then in Game 3, he was limited to under 30 minutes after a left ankle injury forced him to miss much of the second half. Still, he was able to record his first career playoff triple-double with 13 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists.

There was uncertainty whether Doncic would be able to play in Game 4, but as a game-time decision, he suited up. Instead, it was second-leading scorer Kristaps Porzingis who didn’t take the floor due to a torn meniscus

in his right knee. He was later ruled out for the rest of the series, leaving Doncic as the only true scoring threat for the Mavs.

How did he respond? With one of the best playoff performances of all time capped off by one of the gutsiest shots I have ever seen. Doncic recorded another triple-double with 43 points, 17 rebounds and 13 assists. Still, none of it would have mattered if not for his final shot.

Down 133-132 with just under four seconds remaining in overtime, the Mavericks inbounded the ball to Doncic, who dribbled, took a deep stepback 3-pointer and nailed it for the win.

To be able to take and make that difficult of a shot with the game on the line shows the confidence Doncic already has in just his second NBA season. It was truly a remarkable game and a terrific shot that will be on highlight reels for years to come.

With the series then tied at 2-2, the Mavericks were putting up way more of a fight than the Clippers probably expected. But ultimately, the Clippers would prevail, winning Game 5 in blowout fashion, and then holding off another great showing from Doncic in Game 6 with 38 points, nine rebounds and nine assists. The

Clippers had the more talented and complete team, so there was only so much Doncic could do, especially without Porzingis for half the series.

It shows a lot in a series that featured two of the top stars in the NBA in Leonard and Paul George, Doncic was usually the most electric player on the court. He ascended to superstar status with his performance in this series, averaging 31 points on 50% shooting and almost single-handedly putting up a fight against arguably the best team in basketball.

It’s hard to believe that three teams passed on this guy in the 2018 draft. I’m sure all three are kicking themselves right now because we’re seeing something special happening right before our eyes. A new era

has arrived. Luka Doncic is the future of the NBA, and if the Mavericks can build a solid team around him, they will be competing for championships very soon.



Photo courtesy of AP

Rockies acquire Kevin Pillar from Red Sox

DENVER (AP) — The Colorado Rockies added outfield depth by acquiring Kevin Pillar and \$50,000 from Boston in a trade-deadline deal Monday.

In exchange, the Red Sox will receive a player to be named or \$100,000 along with \$161,200 in international amateur signing bonus pool allotment.

Pillar is joining his fourth team since being traded on April 2, 2019, from the Toronto Blue Jays to the San Francisco Giants. He signed a deal with Boston in February.

The 31-year-old Pillar batted .274 with four homers and 13 RBIs in 30 games for the Red Sox. He played a bulk of this season in right field, a spot occupied in Colorado by Charlie Blackmon.

Pillar figures to spend time in center, with David Dahl currently on the injured list. In 12 career games at Coors Field, Pillar has a .326 batting average with one homer and seven RBIs.

“We’re hoping that Kevin can

come in and provide a spark to our offense and play an above-average center field in a park that demands it,” Rockies manager Bud Black said. “He’s an aggressive, hard-nosed player. He’s a leader. I know it’s used a lot, but he’s a gamer.”

Black sees Pillar hitting all over the batting order — from leadoff to the No. 8 spot — just as he did in Boston. More than anything, Black appreciates Pillar’s grit.

“It’s more about the player and the winning type of game he brings every day,” Black said. “He plays hard. He’ll dive. He’ll crash into walls. He’ll try to steal a base. He’ll break up two. His style is his style. For me, from the other side watching him over the years, it’s a winning type of player.”

Pillar was originally selected by Toronto in the 32nd round of the 2011 draft. He’s a career .261 hitter and has five seasons with double-digit steals, including 25 in 2015.

“We made a point to try to



Boston Red Sox’s Kevin Pillar rounds the bases on his solo home run during the fourth inning of a baseball game against the Washington Nationals, Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020, in Boston. PHOTO BY MICHAEL DWYER, AP

take bases. It’s just another way to put pressure on your opponents,” general manager Jeff Bridich said. “Mr. Pillar can fit right into that.

“I’ve thought of him as a gamer, a grinder, an energetic type of a guy that is go-

ing to find a way to do something really positive and will his way to help a team win.”

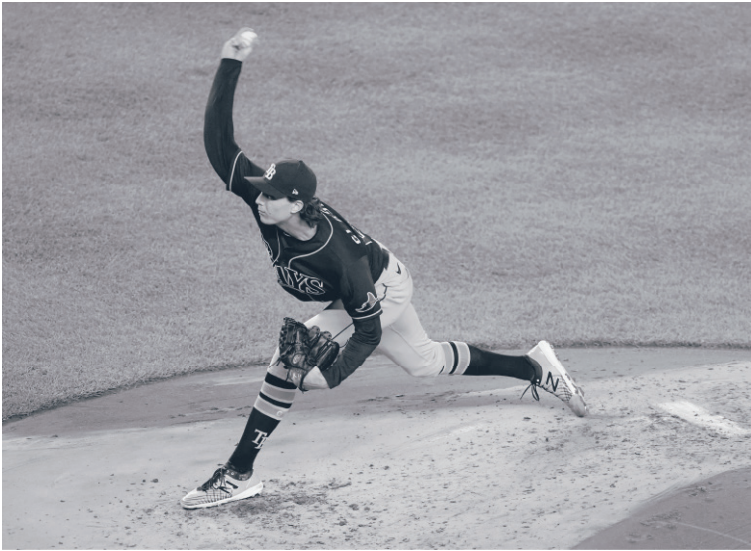
Boston’s payment to Colorado is due Sept. 15. The decision on a player to be named or \$100,000 must be made by Feb. 28.

SCHALKE’S RUN ENDS

ESPORTS, cont. from p. 12

The seven combined teams from the LCS and LEC have officially claimed their Worldspots. Rogue, Fnatic, G2, MAD Lions, TSM, Team Liquid and Fly Quest will be trying to win the first Worlds for the west since the first. These teams boast a mixture of rookies, like much of the MAD Lions roster, Team Liquid’s Tactical, etc., alongside experienced players like Doublelift, who will look to finally get out of Groups at the World Championship. The West is coming to play. And yet, these teams and these players are not just playing for themselves; they will go to China and play for their regions. For their fans. And for every team they left behind. For Schalke. For Cloud9. To make their own miracles happen, and to make sure they’ll be remembered.

Glasnow overpowers Yanks as Rays go to 7-1 vs NY this season



Tampa Bay Rays starting pitcher Tyler Glasnow winds up during the second inning of a baseball game against the New York Yankees, Monday, Aug. 31, 2020, at Yankee Stadium in New York. PHOTO BY KATHY WILLENS, AP

NEW YORK (AP) — After a decade spent chasing their big-budget AL East rivals, the Tampa Bay Rays are pummeling the New York Yankees.

“We’ve had some really good battles over the years and they’ve always kicked our butts here at their place,” Rays veteran Kevin Kiermaier said. “We’ve flipped the script here for 2020.”

Tyler Glasnow flummoxed the Yankees for six innings, Ji-Man Choi and Kiermaier homered off Gerrit Cole, and the Rays extended their mastery of New York with a 5-3 victory Monday night.

The AL East leaders improved to 7-1 against the Yankees this season and stretched their division cushion to 4 1/2 games. The clubs are set to complete their season se-

ries this week, and Tampa Bay could skip town as run-away favorites for its first division title since 2010.

“We want to make it nine of 10 leaving here in a couple days,” Kiermaier said.

New York had won three straight since snapping a seven-game skid but crumbled early with Cole, its \$324 million ace, on the mound.

The 6-foot-8 Glasnow (2-1) had a no-hitter through five and completed six innings of scoreless, two-hit ball. He struck out nine and walked one while working almost entirely with two pitches — a fastball averaging 97 mph and a plunging curveball.

“He had it all going,” Rays manager Kevin Cash said.

Glasnow lost his no-hit bid via replay review. With one

out in the sixth, DJ LeMahieu hit a grounder that shortstop Willy Adames fielded deep in the hole. First base umpire Roberto Ortiz ruled Adames’ throw beat LeMahieu, but that was quickly overturned.

“I mean, he was safe, honestly,” Glasnow said with a smile.

A day after erasing a five-run deficit against the Mets when they were down to their final out, the Yankees crept back against the Rays but couldn’t complete the rally.

Gio Urshela hit a solo homer off Edgar García in the seventh, and Luke Voit added his eighth homer in 12 games, a two-run shot off García in the eighth that made it 5-3. Voit has 13 homers this season, tying for the major league lead.

New York had the potential tying run at bat with one out in the eighth, but Urshela struck out and Mike Tauchman popped up against Pe-

ter Fairbanks. Diego Castillo stranded a runner in the ninth for his third save.

Cole (4-2) labored through five innings, allowing four runs, eight hits and four walks. He struck out seven — ending a six-game streak against Tampa Bay with double-digit strikeouts — and had a runner reach at least second base in each inning.

“I thought he competed well for having a lot of traffic and kind of managed his way through it,” Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

Choi hit a two-run homer into the second row in right field in the first inning, and Kiermaier drove a solo shot into the second deck in right an inning later.

Cole has allowed 12 home runs this season, matching Ross Stripling for most in the majors.

Cole said hitters are am-

bushing pitches when he comes over the plate and thought a variety of factors could be at play — falling behind in counts, tipping pitches or just plain bad luck.

“I haven’t really put my thumb on it,” he said. “But I’m certainly aware of it and certainly trying to get ahead of it.”

Choi and Adames had three hits apiece, and Choi also walked twice. Choi was pulled late in the game with an upset stomach.

Two of Choi’s three home runs this season have come against Cole, and he’s 9 for 15 with three homers in his career against last year’s AL Cy Young Award runner-up.

“I don’t understand how anybody hits Gerrit Cole, to be honest with you,” Cash said. “Ji-Man has had some good at-bats against him. Looks like he’s gotten into counts and done some damage on a pitch



New York Yankees starting pitcher Gerrit Cole (45) reacts after allowing a two-run home run to Tampa Bay Rays’ Ji-Man Choi during the first inning of a baseball game, Monday, Aug. 31, 2020, at Yankee Stadium in New York. Cole was the losing pitcher in the Yankees’ 5-3 loss to Tampa Bay. PHOTO BY KATHY WILLENS, AP

NFL stunner: Jags waive Fournette after failing to trade him

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — The Jaguars moved another step closer to purging Tom Coughlin’s tumultuous tenure in Jacksonville.

The team waived running back Leonard Fournette on Monday, a stunning decision many outsiders view as the latest in a series of head-scratchers that could help the franchise get the No. 1 draft pick in April.

“If that’s the case, then the realization is if that happens, then I’m not going to be here,” coach Doug Marrone said. “At the end of the day, if I don’t win enough games or do enough with this team, I don’t foresee me still being employed. I’m doing everything I can to make sure we have the best team to make sure we win football games. That’s as simple as I can be on it.”

Coughlin, the team’s personnel chief the previous three years, wanted Fournette as the centerpiece of his old-school, run-first philosophy. It worked in 2017, although it became clear that Fournette needed to be a better pro. He was fined repeatedly for being late and skip-



Jacksonville Jaguars starting quarterback Gardner Minshew II, left, hands the ball off to running back Leonard Fournette during NFL football training camp, Saturday, Aug. 29, 2020, in Jacksonville, Fla. PHOTO BY BOB SELF, THE FLORIDA TIMES-UNION VIA AP

ping mandatory functions.

Coaches were ready to move on, but Coughlin wouldn’t do it. It was no coincidence that not long after Coughlin was fired last December, Fournette landed on the trading block.

General manager Dave Caldwell spent months trying to unload the player drafted fourth overall in 2017 — ahead of quarterbacks Patrick Mahomes and Deshaun Watson — even though

he was coming off a career year. Fournette was on the block during the NFL draft and again over the summer.

“We couldn’t get anything, a fifth, a sixth, anything,” Marrone said.

So they dumped the 25-year-old former LSU star one day after trading the 2017 Pro Bowl defensive end Yannick Ngakoue to Minnesota for two draft picks. Jacksonville also traded Jalen Ramsey, fellow

cornerback A.J. Bouye and defensive end Calais Campbell in the past 10 months.

“I am excited about what will come next for myself,” Fournette said in a thank you message to Jacksonville posted on social media.

“Wherever that may be, know that you will get a player who is focused, motivated, and ready to get to work.”

The Jaguars have made it clear they’re trying to revamp

what had become a fractured locker room, a setting partly blamed on Coughlin’s tyrannical ways and paying the wrong guys (Blake Bortles, Marqise Lee, Nick Foles).

“It’s going to fall to me as to who those best players are,” Marrone said. “At the end of the day, I’ve got to be able to field a team that I believe gives us the best chance to win. That’s what my role is and that’s what I’m doing.”

Still, no one expected the Jags to part ways with Fournette less than two weeks before the opener. They did so partly because new coordinator Jay Gruden wants to use a multitude of backs in his West Coast system, different guys for different formations and attacks, and there was no need to pay Fournette that kind of money and be wondering how he would react if he wasn’t the man.

He is due \$4.17 million this season, a figure that was initially guaranteed. Any team that claims him would take on that salary. If he clears waivers — an unlikely scenario — he would become a free agent.