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 Padres give up four homers, drop finale to Rockies

By Beth Maiman and Jay Paris / MLB.com | September 10th, 2015

SAN DIEGO -- Daniel Descalso hit a go-ahead home run in the eighth inning -- one of four Rockies homers on the afternoon -- to give Colorado a 4-3 win against the Padres on Thursday at Petco Park.

Facing San Diego reliever Joaquin Benoit, Descalso's shot to right field on a full-count pitch, which landed a projected 394 feet away from home plate, according to Statcast™, marked his fifth homer of the season and first since Aug. 9 in Washington. It followed dingers by Nolan Arenado, Corey Dickerson and Carlos Gonzalez, marking the third game in franchise history in which Colorado scored all four runs on four home runs.

"We will take four homers, but we would like to get them with guys on base and get some big innings out of them," Descalso said.

Rockies starting pitcher Jorge De La Rosa allowed three runs on six hits through five innings, while walking three and striking out six batters.

San Diego’s Tyson Ross allowed three homers through six innings after not allowing multiple home runs in 45 straight starts. Thursday marked only the second time in his career that the right-hander allowed three home runs in a game. Ross’ streak was the second-longest in franchise history behind Randy Jones.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Kemp goes long: Matt Kemp put the Padres on the board in the fourth inning with a homer to right-center field that landed a projected 407 feet away, according to Statcast™. De La Rosa has allowed five home runs to Kemp in his career, more than he has allowed to any other hitter. Kemp has 35 home runs against Colorado, the most among all active players.

AIR-enado: Arenado continues to lead the National League in home runs with 38 this season, as he blasted a 382-foot shot to left field on a 1-0 pitch from Ross in the first inning. Arenado now has eight home runs so far in the month of September, and 20 home runs on the road this season. Gonzalez trails his teammate with 37 homers, as he hit one in the seventh inning to tie the game at 3.

"I try not to think about [hitting 40 home runs,]" Arenado said. "When I am up there, it never crosses my mind how many homers I have, and I think that's why I have hit as as many as I have this year. I am just trying to hit the ball harder and have many good at-bats. If I hit 40, it will be an amazing accomplishment. We still have a lot of games left. I am just trying to do my job."

Put it on the board: The Padres love when Ross pitches because he doesn't give up the long ball. He entered the game leading the Majors by allowing 0.26 home runs per nine innings. But
on a humid day in San Diego, the Rockies rocked Ross for three solo home runs, only two fewer than he had surrendered before the first pitch.

"I made mistakes up in the zone and they put good swings on them," Ross said.

**Blackmon’s great grab:** With one out in the top of the ninth inning, the Padres’ Brett Wallace hit a ball that appeared to be on its way to a game-tying home run. However, Rockies center fielder Charlie Blackmon read the ball perfectly, jumping up against the wall to make the catch. Closer John Axford then struck out Justin Upton, earning his 21st save of the season.

"Wallace is locked in," manager Walt Weiss said. "He's hitting everything hard. I thought it was a home run off the bat. Charlie made a real nice play. It's a tough play right there. I thought it was gone when he hit it."

**SOUND SMART WITH YOUR FRIENDS**
San Diego is known for its mild climate, but not on Thursday. It was 93 degrees at first pitch, the warmest game ever at Petco Park, which hugs San Diego Bay. It was the warmest Padres home game since Aug. 30, 1998, also at 93 degrees, when the team played inland at Qualcomm Stadium.

"We were in Southern California, but it felt like Atlanta," Arenado said.

**QUOTABLE**
"They hit balls that were up in the zone and over the plate. That tends to happen regardless of the weather."

-- Ross on Thursday’s humid conditions

**WHAT’S NEXT**
**Rockies:** The Rox continue their 10-game road trip as they head to the Pacific Northwest to face the Mariners for a three-game series, beginning Friday at 8:10 p.m. MT. Colorado will start Chad Bettis, who will face Seattle for the first time in his career.

**Padres:** The Friars open a three-game series on Friday in San Francisco, sending right-hander Andrew Cashner (5-14, 4.11 ERA) to the mound for the 7:15 p.m. PT first pitch. Cashner has lost three straight starts and is trying to beat the Giants for the first time this season. He lost to them on May 5, surrendering six runs (four earned) and seven hits in six innings.
ROSS VICTIMIZED BY STOMACH BUG, HOMER BUG

By Jay Paris / Special to MLB.com | September 10th, 2015

SAN DIEGO -- The Padres' Tyson Ross wasn't himself Thursday, and he proved it by allowing three home runs.

"I didn't feel great physically out there," Ross said. "But I tried to grind it through, tried to make pitches and keep us in the ballgame."

What he couldn't do was avoid an upset stomach and Rockies home runs. Colorado hit three of them off a wobbly Ross en route to a 4-3 victory over San Diego on Thursday. He allowed just one other hit in his seven innings.

"There is a little bug going around, and I'm not feeling great," Ross said. "But I only get a chance to throw every five days, so I'm going to give it my best shot."

Long shots were tough to find on his stat sheet before Thursday. Ross was touched for just five homers this season over a span of 171 innings. No pitcher had a lower home runs per nine innings (0.26) rare than the righty.

But Nolan Arenado stroked his National League-high 38th in the first, and Corey Dickerson went deep in the sixth. Carlos Gonzalez stayed one behind Arenado in their race for the NL homer title when his effort in the seventh inning landed in the left-field seats. The last blast tied the game and stayed with Ross.

"Overall I was happy in how I threw the ball, except for giving up the lead there in the seventh," he said. Appropriately, the Rockies went ahead in the eighth on their fourth solo homer, Daniel Descalso's knock coming off reliever Joaquin Benoit.

It was clear on a sticky San Diego afternoon that baseballs had extra giddy-up.

"We were in Southern California, but it felt like Atlanta," Arenado said. "To win like that was kind of weird, but we will take it."

What the Padres couldn't seize was a key hit. They went 0-for-5 with runners in scoring position; twice they had bases loaded with no outs and came away empty.
That, as much as the Rockies' home runs, prevented Ross, who had six strikeouts, from notching his third win in four starts.

"For [Ross] to do what he did today -- he gave us a chance to win," interim manager Pat Murphy said. "I thought he was good. We just didn't take advantage of what we could have under the circumstances."

Ross didn't want to squander a chance to pitch. Even if his stomach was doing somersaults in the heat.

"They hit balls that were up in the zone and over the plate," he said. "That tends to happen regardless of the weather."
Alonso likely out for year; Myers mans LF for J-Up

First baseman has stress reaction in lower back; regular left fielder has ingrown toenails removed

By Jay Paris / Special to MLB.com | September 10th, 2015

SAN DIEGO -- Before the Padres completed their 11-game homestead Thursday, there was plenty of injury news.

First baseman Yonder Alonso likely won't return this season, while left fielder Justin Upton is limited after his big toes were fixed.

Alonso, who has been battling back stiffness, had a bone scan, and it revealed something more serious: a stress reaction in his lower back. He won't be joining the team on its trip to San Francisco, where the Padres open a three-game series on Friday.

"There's an absolute possibility he doesn't play again this season," assistant general manager Josh Stein said.

Alonso, who is hitting .282, left the Padres' game on Sept. 1 with lower back tightness. All indications are that was his final appearance this year. While Alonso's average is tops among Padres regulars, he has just five home runs and 31 RBIs in 103 games.

Upton's ailment isn't as serious, as he had two ingrown toenails removed on Thursday.

"He's a little sore," Padres interim manager Pat Murphy said.

Upton, though, was available to pinch-hit in Thursday's finale against the Rockies. Murphy said Upton will play the majority of games going forward. But his absence on Thursday had Wil Myers playing left field for the first time.

"I've never played left field in the big leagues," Myers said. "I'll just play left field like it is right field."

Right field is where Myers had most of his experience before coming to the Padres from the Rays. But this spring, Myers was asked to learn a new position -- center field -- and spot in the batting order -- leadoff.
Myers, who has been bothered by a wrist injury this year, also started eight games at first base, to go with his 32 in center.

He returned on Friday from his latest stint on the disabled list. He's hit .261 (6-for-23), which includes three hits in Wednesday night's 11-4 win over the Rockies.

"I feel good," he said. "It's just good to be back on the field. I'm still trying to find that consistent approach each and every at-bat."
The San Francisco Giants have enjoyed a slight advantage over the San Diego Padres this season, winning seven of 13 games. That edge could be endangered this weekend as the teams begin a three-game series Friday at San Francisco's AT&T Park.

In the series opener, the Giants must confront right-hander Andrew Cashner, whose career record against the Giants (2-4, 4.75 ERA) is deceiving. Cashner has consistently displayed decent stuff against the Giants, striking out 37 in 41 2/3 innings.

By comparison, right-hander Ian Kennedy's success against the Giants is unqualified. Kennedy, who starts Saturday for San Diego, owns an 11-5 record with a 2.41 ERA in 24 career starts against San Francisco. Fortunately for the Giants, they'll counter with two of their most solid starters, Jake Peavy and ace Madison Bumgarner, on Friday and Saturday, respectively.

**Things to know about this game**

- The outcome of the season series appears destined to conclude like last year's, which ended in a 10-9 edge for the Padres. The Giants, who have won four of six games at home against San Diego this season, have not finished with a losing record at AT&T Park against the Padres since 2010 (2-7).

- San Francisco has won 16 of its last 21 home games.

- Beginning Friday, the Giants will play 16 of their final 22 games at home.
Gyorko hitting better as a shortstop
Notes on Kemp, Solarte, Rea, Norris
By Bill Center / San Diego Padres | September 10th, 2015
Defensively, Jedd Gyorko has done a nice job in his 13 starts at shortstop for the Padres.

"He's proving to people that he's a viable shortstop candidate," Padres manager Pat Murphy said Wednesday before the Padres' 11-4 victory over the Rockies at Petco Park. "Jedd's a ballplayer. He understands time and space. He has a feel for the game. Some of his skills are better suited for shortstop than second base."

Murphy was talking about Gyorko's defense. But Gyorko is also hitting better as a shortstop than he did in 80 games at second base.

Gyorko the shortstop is hitting .340 (16-for-47) with two doubles, six homers and 14 RBIs. He has a .385 on-base percentage, a .766 slugging percentage and a 1.151 OPS.

Gyorko the second baseman was hitting .229 (63-for-275) with 11 doubles, seven homers and 33 RBIs with a .280 on-base and a .345 slugging for a .626 OPS.

The sample size at shortstop is small. But might there be something to it?

"I feel comfortable at short," says Gyorko. "That's where I played most of my life."

Gyorko hit a three-run homer Wednesday to snap a break a 2-2 tie. He is also hitting .300 (12-for-40) with four homers, two doubles and 11 RBIs on the 11-game homestand that ends Thursday afternoon against the Rockies.

"I'm swinging the bat right now," said Gyorko. "You're never satisfied, but my swing is where it needs to be right now."

From the scorecard
• Matt Kemp's 20th homer of the season in the first inning extended his on-base streak to a career-best 29 games, which is the longest by a Padres player since Adrian Gonzalez reached base in 30 straight games in 2006. Kemp's streak is the third-longest active streak in the Major Leagues. During his on-base streak, Kemp has hitting streaks of 15, five and seven games. He is hitting .322 (38-for-118) during the on-base streak, with nine homers and 34 RBIs.
• Third baseman **Yangervis Solarte** was 3-for-5 with two RBIs and a run to extend his hitting streak to 10 games. That is one game shy of the longest hitting streak in his career (July 25-Aug. 5 this season). Solarte is hitting .419 (18-for-43) during this streak with six RBIs. He has reached base in 11 straight games.

• Right-hander **Colin Rea** pinch-ran his way into trivia History when he scored as a pinch-runner Wednesday. A night earlier, he allowed two hits while pitching seven scoreless innings against the Rockies. Since divisional play began in 1969, Rea is just the fourth pitcher to throw at least seven scoreless innings one night and score the following game. Rea is one of two rookie pitchers in that mix, the other being Doug Brocail with the Padres in 1993.

• Catcher **Derek Norris** was 2-for-4 with a double Wednesday night. The double was his 10th against the Rockies this season, setting a Padres franchise record for the most doubles against one team in a season.
Thursday afternoon's game at Petco Park took place in what felt like a sauna, or maybe a spring-training venue. With paid attendance announced at 21,922 but the actual turnout a mere fraction of that, the Padres fell, 4-3, to the Colorado Rockies in a makeup of the teams' July 19 rainout.

Temperature at first pitch was a sweltering 93 degrees, a new Petco record and the warmest for a game in San Diego since Aug. 30, 1998. An announcement over the PA system invited all fans in the building to move down to the seats closest to the field, further adding to the March-in-Arizona atmosphere, but a large portion of the sparse crowd passed on the offer, choosing to remain in the shade of the overhang.

It was in these conditions that Nolan Arenado, Corey Dickerson and Carlos Gonzalez combined for a rare feat. Three at-bats into the game, Arenado sent a line drive bouncing off the second balcony of the Western Metal Supply building in left. In the top of the sixth, Dickerson crushed a baseball over the fence in right-center. Leading off the seventh, Gonzalez lifted a shot that narrowly cleared the wall in the left-field corner.

"I didn't have any walks today, but in those instances I made mistakes up in the zone and they put good swings on them," Padres starter Tyson Ross said. "That (the home runs) tends to happen regardless of the weather."

The last blast - if, with an estimated distance of 340 feet, it could be called that - made Thursday's start the first in which Ross had allowed three home runs since May 25, 2012. Back then, the Padres right-hander was a struggling young starter with the Oakland A's.

What Ross has since become is the top arm in the Padres' rotation, a positive amid this season's disappointment. Outside of the Rockies' three solo shots, he yielded only one hit, a second-inning single, and no walks.
"He wasn't feeling great," Padres interim manager Pat Murphy said of Ross, who was dealing with a stomach bug. "He gave us a chance to win."

Said Ross: "I only get a chance to play every five days, so I just gave it my best shot."

A testament to Ross' effectiveness: He entered his latest start having allowed five home runs in 171 innings this season, good for the lowest per-nine-innings rate in the majors.

A testament to the danger in the Rockies' lineup, despite their record: Until Thursday, Ross hadn't allowed more than one home run in a start since June 16, 2014.

Five of his eight home runs conceded this year have been hit by the Rockies (two apiece for Arenado and Dickerson, one for Gonzalez). Colorado added another against Joaquin Benoit, with Daniel Descalso hammering the go-ahead clout leading off the eighth.

Matt Kemp also had taken advantage of the humidity; like Dickerson, the Padres right fielder hit a home run to right-center, squaring the game at 1-all against Rockies left-hander Jorge De La Rosa. After that, however, the Padres (67-74) failed to take full advantage.

Twice - right after Kemp's home run and again in the fifth - they loaded the bases with no outs. Both times, they came away with only one run.

Ross, whose improvement has not been limited to the mound, helped himself to a 2-1 lead with a sacrifice fly. Derek Norris also recorded a sac fly, making it 3-1 in the fifth.

The way the ball was jumping for the Rockies (58-82), it wasn't enough. Following seven innings, four hits, three runs and six strikeouts, Ross received a no-decision. The Rockies left only one runner on base.

"We kind of got what we deserved. We didn't capitalize," Murphy said. "You don't win a lot of games when you give up four home runs. This game, we had a chance to."
Brett Wallace, who has been a highly effective pinch-hitter for the Padres, nearly did it again, putting a charge into a ball with one out in the ninth. Rockies center fielder Charlie Blackmon, however, made a leaping catch at the wall, preventing what would’ve been at least a double.

Benoit went on to suffer the bullpen's third loss in 10 games this month, while the club settled for a four-game split with the Rockies. The Padres headed for their final road trip of the season, San Francisco up first.

"Every time you think this team is going to get on a roll, something happens, just derails you a little bit," Murphy said. "No one to blame today. We're back at it tomorrow."
Alonso's season likely over due to stress reaction

Bone scan revealed injury in first baseman's lower back

By Dennis Lin | 11:54 a.m. Sept. 10, 2015 | Updated, 4:58 p.m.
Yonder Alonso's season may very well be over. The Padres first baseman has been shut down from all activity after a bone scan on his lower back revealed a stress reaction.

Alonso will not travel with the team on its final road trip, which begins Friday in San Francisco.

"There's absolutely the potential he doesn't come back this season," Padres assistant general manager Josh Stein said.

Alonso hasn't played since Sept. 1, when he exited a game due to lower back tightness. The game before, he'd executed an awkward slide into home.

"My lower half went one way, and my upper went the other," Alonso said. "I was dealing with (the tightness) a little bit prior to that, but it was playable; it wasn't like I was hurting it more. But obviously, that play just kind of took it over the top."

The Padres originally hoped Alonso would return within a couple days, but after he felt something taking swings, they backed off on his timetable.

"It was kind of one of those things where you give it two or three days, and you feel decent enough to play," Alonso said. "Once I went through a full day of activity, it just flared up. It was a frustrating thing for me."

The bone scan showed Alonso's injury to be more significant than initially thought. Without rest, Stein said, the stress reaction could lead to a stress fracture.

"It's the type of injury that could take a couple weeks," Stein said. "We're going to assess what that means for the rest of his season."
Alonso is batting .282 with a .361 on-base percentage, both team highs. By such measures, it has been the most productive year of his career, but he's continued to show limited power, with 18 doubles and five home runs in 103 games.

The 28-year-old also has been slowed by injuries going back to 2013. Various injuries to his right hand and forearm kept him to a combined 181 games over the last two seasons. The left-handed hitter missed 23 games in May with a right shoulder bruise.

"I've had some unique, interesting injuries throughout my career," Alonso said. "I think right now we're just being very cautious."

If Alonso doesn't return by Oct. 4, it would be the third straight year his season has been ended prematurely.

"I think we're going to give it a week to do all my rehab, let it calm down and see what happens," Alonso said.

Alonso is making $1.65 million. He becomes arbitration-eligible in 2016.
Did Rose really set hits record against Padres?

It's 30th anniversary of passing Ty Cobb, but controversy comes over whether it was 4,192nd hit in Cincinnati or 4,190th in Chicago

By Kirk Kenney | 6:30 a.m. Sept. 11, 2015

When Tony Gwynn approached 3,000 career hits in the summer of 1999, the Padres did several things to recognize the achievement.

One of the most visual examples was ringing the upper deck of Qualcomm Stadium with a banner for each member of the 3,000-hit club. The group numbered 22 players when Gwynn joined it. Membership has expanded now to 29, with the Yankees’ Alex Rodriguez joining this past June.

What I came to find out while researching some stories at the time was that six members of the 3,000-hit club — Cap Anson, Ty Cobb, Eddie Collins, Nap Lajoie, Tris Speaker and Honus Wagner — have career hit totals that are in dispute.

I revisit this now because we are about to observe the 30th anniversary of one of baseball’s most celebrated feats from the 1980s — Pete Rose passing Ty Cobb to become baseball’s all-time hits leader.

It occurred with the Padres in town. Or did it? There is no doubt the celebration took place during a Padres-Reds game.

Here’s how it unfolded:

It was Sept. 11, 1985, and Cincinnati was hosting the Padres at Riverfront Stadium. Right-hander Eric Show was on the mound for the Padres and Bruce Bochy was catching when Rose singled to left-center field on a 2-1 slider for the 4,192nd hit of his career.

Fireworks go off. Reds first base coach Tommy Helms and Padres first baseman Steve Garvey congratulate Rose. Padres shortstop Garry Templeton throws the ball to him.

“As outfielders, we talked before the game about running the ball back into the infield, and maybe having a chance to give it to him,” Gwynn said. “But Pete came around
first like he was going for two, and (left fielder) Carmelo (Martinez) had to turn and wheel and get it in. That was Pete Rose.”

Show also congratulates Rose, but what most people remember about Show is that he sat down on the mound while waiting for all the festivities to conclude at first base.

Overhead a lighted sign on the Goodyear blimp blinks: ‘Pete Rose, 4,192’ and on the field a red Corvette rolls out with the license plate PR 4192. The crowd of 47,237 gives Rose a seven-minute standing ovation.

Rose looks to the sky and sees the visions of his father and Cobb. In the book “Pete Rose: My Story,” he says: “Ty Cobb was in the second row. Dad was in the first.” Rose hugs his son, Petey, a Reds batboy, and cries.

A memorable, emotional scene.

There’s one problem with all of it — Cobb’s hit total, amassed from 1905-28, has been revised to 4,189 by most baseball sources.

That means Rose actually broke the record three days earlier at Chicago’s Wrigley Field with hit No. 4,190, a first-inning single to left-center off Chicago Cubs right-hander Reggie Patterson.

Cobb’s total was revised downward after research revealed a box score from a game in 1910 was counted twice (the revision also cost Cobb that year’s AL batting title).


Major League Baseball and the Elias Sports Bureau still recognize Cobb with 4,191 hits. Cobb’s Hall of Fame plaque still lists 4,191 as well, mostly because Cooperstown tends to follow MLB’s lead.

This is where it gets good. Or absurd, depending on your point of view.
Total Baseball is MLB’s official encyclopedia and historical record. Elias is MLB’s official statistician. And they don’t agree. What the heck?

MLB does not move quickly on such matters. A researcher discovered in 1977 that Hack Wilson’s record 190 RBIs in 1930 should actually have been 191 RBIs. MLB — after exhaustive review — didn’t make the change in its record book until 1999.

According to a New York Times story, the statistical database for mlb.com was purchased from Total Baseball. It included hundreds of statistics that MLB would dispute, Cobb’s hit total among them. MLB then manually changed Cobb’s hit total to 4,191.

MLB was aware of the 4,189/4,191 controversy in the early 1980s, well before Rose broke the record.

Here’s what commissioner Bowie Kuhn said when he addressed the issue in 1981:

“The passage of 70 years, in our judgment . . . constitutes a certain statute of limitation as to recognizing any changes in the records . . . The only way to make changes with confidence would be for a complete and thorough review of all team and individual statistics. That is not practical.”

Not practical? Several baseball historians — led by SABR — have taken it upon themselves to sift through box scores and scoresheets and set the records straight.

“A statute of limitations on the truth?” said John Thorn, co-editor of Total Baseball. “When you discover truth, you have to report it.”

At this point, MLB still isn’t budging.

Rose is said to have changed his jersey before each at-bat on the night he collected No. 4,192 in Cincinnati. The jerseys were sold for a generous sum to memorabilia collectors.

Bet they want Ty Cobb to have 4,191 hits, too.
Upton gets a day, Myers starts in left
Starting left fielder rests, Wil Myers makes first major league start in LF

By Dennis Lin | 12:43 p.m. Sept. 10, 2015

Padres left fielder Justin Upton received his first start off since Aug. 4 on Thursday. While Upton was available to pinch-hit, outfielder-first baseman Wil Myers made his first major league start in left.

Upton had two ingrown toenails removed Thursday, when he went 1-for-3 with a walk. In his last six starts, he is 3-for-21 with 10 strikeouts.

"If you're watching Justin closely the last few games, he needs a day," said interim manager Pat Murphy, who noted the Padres are in a stretch of 23 games in as many days.

"He's healthy," Murphy said. "You try to schedule different days off for different people. He'll fight you on it, but you've got to do what's best for the player. ... Today's the right day."

Myers, who has split time between center field and first base this season, took fly balls in left before Friday's game. Before coming over from Tampa Bay, he started the majority of his first two seasons in right field, but he hadn't played in left since he was in the minors (six appearances in 2011 plus two more on a rehab assignment last year).

"We've talked about versatility being an element of his game that we like," Padres assistant general manager Josh Stein said. "He's played a lot of corner outfield in Tampa and the minors. This is a new challenge for him."

With Matt Kemp in right field, left field has been mentioned as a possible spot for Myers in 2016. The Padres will speak with Upton and his agent when the season ends, but as one of the most coveted position players among impending free agents, he is likely to go elsewhere.
Meanwhile, center and first remain in play for Myers, the club having yet to commit to any one position.

"Wil's that type that if you're going to move him around, he's the guy that can move around," Murphy said. "He's played everywhere on the baseball diamond."
Minors: El Paso facing elimination
Chihuahuas fall short despite homers from Middlebrooks, Renfroe; Fort Wayne eliminated

By Jeff Sanders | 8 a.m. Sept. 11, 2015

Will Middlebrooks and Hunter Renfroe homered late, but Triple-A El Paso lost a 5-4 decision at Fresno on Thursday night to move a game closer to elimination from the Pacific Coast League playoffs.

Renfroe, Jake Gobbert and Jason Hagerty each had two this and Rymer Liriano went 1-for-3 with a double, a walk and a run scored.

Right-hander Chris Smith allowed four runs on seven hits and a walk in six innings.

Fresno starter Asher Wojciechowski struck out six and allowed two runs in six innings to move his team within one win of moving on to the next round.

El Paso hosts Game 3 tonight at 6:05 p.m. LHP Robbie Erlin will face former No. 1 overall pick Mark Appel.

LOW SINGLE-A FORT WAYNE

- **West Michigan 2, TinCaps 1**: CF Michael Gettys singled in the lone run as the TinCaps were eliminated from the Midwest League playoffs. 2B Josh VanMeter and RF Franmil Reyes each had two hits, while RHP Ernesto Montas allowed two runs in 4 2/3 innings in the loss as West Michigan completed the sweep.

SHORT-SEASON TRI-CITY

- **Hillsboro 2, Dust Devils 1**: RHP Adrian De Horta allowed a run in four innings and reliever Nathan Foriest allowed the go-ahead run in 1 1/3 innings in relief as Hillsboro moved within a win of clinching the Northwest League championship. SS Peter Van Gansen went 2-for-3 with Tri-City's only RBI and 1B Ty France collected two hits. Game 2 is 7:15 p.m. Saturday.
Jedd Gyorko, viable shortstop?

Padres middle infielder easily their best bat at position, but what about his defense?

By Jeff Sanders | noon Sept. 10, 2015

As Pat Murphy on Wednesday discussed the gains that Jedd Gyorko is making at shortstop (a quick first step, the ball to his right, etc.) the Padres' interim manager acknowledged the role that the coaching staff, defensive positioning and advanced scouting could play in expanding a perceived lack of range at the position. His middle infielder's offensive surge of late should provide the Padres all the motivation they need to continue to explore Gyorko's viability at the position.

The 26-year-old Gyorko hit his 14th homer of the season in an 11-4 win over the Rockies, driving in three more runs as he started a season-high fourth consecutive game at shortstop. The third-year pro has trended upward since his return from Triple-A El Paso (.267/.311/.466, 12 HRs, 38 RBIs) and has been especially productive on the current homestand, batting .300/.310/.650 (12-for-40) with four homers, two doubles and 11 RBIs.

However, the power he's displaying as a shortstop, in particular, is noteworthy, especially as compared to the earlier attempts to man the position:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OPS</th>
<th>DRS</th>
<th>UZR/150</th>
<th>FP (Inn)</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>RBI</th>
<th>SB</th>
<th>SO</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>OBP</th>
<th>SLG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jedd Gyorko</td>
<td>1.151</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>1000 (103)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.340</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLB SS average</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.973</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clint Barmes</td>
<td>.712</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-11.4</td>
<td>.971 (467)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.262</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexi Amarista</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.6</td>
<td>.964 (642.1)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Middlebrooks</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>1000 (39)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indeed, Gyorko's 1.151 OPS in 14 games at shortstop is nearly double what MLB shortstops are averaging, according to fangraphs.com, while a 1.000 fielding percentage indicates that he is making most, if not all, the routine plays. At times, Gyorko has even passed the eye test on difficult plays in the hole. In one observer's opinion (ahem), for what it's worth, he has looked particular smooth going right compared to left; he stopped a ball to his left on a dive Wednesday night but appeared noticeably slower than the likes of Everth Cabrera and even Alexi Amarista while trying to jump to his feet for a throw to first; the hitter was easily safe.
As far as advanced defensive metrics are concerned, Gyorko's 103-inning sample size is far too small to draw any concrete conclusions. The disagreement alone in two chief public fielding stats – his cumulative minus-3 defensive runs saved is considered below average while a 21.6 on a 150-game ultimate zone rating tops leader J.J. Hardy (16.4) – leaves one wondering precisely what Gyorko's ceiling is at shortstop, especially considering that neither metric accounts for defensive shifts or team-influenced positioning.

Knowing a pitcher is attacking the weaknesses of a particular hitter and his specific batted ball tendencies with a specific pitch might influence precisely where a shortstop positions himself on, say, an 0-2 offering. If executed perfectly and the predicted outcome aligns with reality, that fielder might find himself in a better position to make a play than if he'd started the play at the default spot.

In that scenario, Gyorko's perceived lack of range, in theory, isn't as important as having an instinctual, sure-handed fielder at shortstop. To say nothing of what the organization's proprietary data reveals, the question the Padres have deemed worth exploring is this:

Are the plays that Gyorko can't get to – when batted balls go off script (normal, right?) and into holes as speedy runners race down the line – offset enough by his production at the plate as well as who the Padres can slot into second base when Gyorko mans shortstop?

That answer is absolutely YES if Gyorko hits like he has over the last 10 days (he won't; who could?). If Gyorko's offensive profile is far closer to Gyorko's post-demotion OPS (.777) than his dismal start to each of the last two seasons, then the Padres may be on to something.

Time, in the field and in the box, will tell.
Arenado homers, Dickerson catch helps Rockies top Padres

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO -- Before Charlie Blackmon leaped at the center-field wall, Colorado manager Walt Weiss was convinced Brett Wallace had tied the score. "I thought it was a home run off the bat," Weiss said.

Blackmon jumped just at the wall and caught the ball near the top of the fence with one out in the ninth inning Thursday, preserving the Rockies' 4-3 win over the San Diego Padres. Nolan Arenado hit his NL-leading 38th home run for the Rockies. Carlos Gonzalez hit his 37th homer, and Daniel Descalso hit a tiebreaking shot leading off the eighth. Corey Dickerson also connected for Colorado.

The game was a make-up of a rainout in July 19, the second rainout at Petco Park, which opened in 2004. It was also the hottest gametime temperature in Petco Park at 93 degrees.

"That part was tough, knowing that we were in Southern California, but it felt like Atlanta," Arenado said. "We've played in weather like this before. To win like that was kind of weird, but we will take it."

Descalso homered off Joaquin Benoit (6-5), who had not pitched since Saturday because of back spasms. "I was just trying to get on base there looking for a good pitch to hit," Descalso said. "He left something out over the plate and I was able to put a good swing on it and drive it. I hit it really well, but this a big yard. But I was pretty sure it was gone."

Arenado has homered in eight of his 11 games in September. He leads the league with 108 RBI. "I'm just trying to hit the ball hard and have good at-bats," Arenado said. "To hit 40 would be an amazing accomplishment. We still have a lot of games left."

Justin Miller (2-2) struck out the side in the seventh and fanned all seven batters he faced in the series. John Axford closed for his 21st save in 26 chances.

Matt Kemp homered for San Diego and has reached base in a career-high 30 consecutive games. San Diego starter Tyson Ross allowed three runs and four hits in seven innings and also drove in a run with a sacrifice fly in the fourth. He struck out six and walked none.

"I thought Tyson went into the game he wasn't feeling good physically," Padres interim manager Pat Murphy said. "He was sick today. For him to do what he did today to give us a chance to win, I thought he was good. We just didn't take advantage of what we could have under the circumstances."

Ross had given up five home runs in 171 innings before the Rockies tagged him three times. He had gone 45 consecutive starts without allowing multiple homers.
"I think all three of them I was behind in the count," Ross said. "I didn't walk anybody today but in those instances I made mistakes up in the zone and they put good swings on them. That tends to happen. But overall I was happy in how I threw the ball, except for giving up the lead there in the seventh."

Colorado starter Jorge De La Rosa exited after five innings, allowing three runs and six hits. "Jorge struggled a little bit," Weiss said. "He got himself into a couple jams, but he's really good at limiting the damage. He kept us in position to win."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Padres: Padres 1B Yonder Alonso (back) is unlikely to return this season. OF Justin Upton (toenail) was held out of the starting lineup on Thursday but pinch hit in the ninth.

UP NEXT

Rockies: RHP Chad Bettis (6-5, 4.95) will make his third start since coming off the disabled list, looking to improve upon his last outing in which he allowed four runs in 4 1/3 innings as Colorado travels to Seattle. The Mariners will counter with RHP Hisashi Iwakuma (7-3, 4.03).

Padres: RHP Andrew Cashner (5-14, 4.11) takes the mound in San Francisco for the Padres on Friday. Cashner allowed six runs -- five earned -- over five innings in his last start at Los Angeles. The Giants counter with RHP Jake Peavy (5-6, 4.41).
Two Steps Forward, Two Steps Backward for Padres

Padres Finish 11-Game Homestand 4-7
By Ben Rosehart

Over the course of this season Tyson Ross rarely gives up homers.

He gave up 5 in all his previous games this year but the Rockies tagged him three times during his 7 innings on the mound.

Danny Descalso added Colorado’s 4th solo shot of the game off Padres reliever Joaquin Benoit in the 8th.

Those four home runs provided all the offense the Rockies would need to earn a split with the Friars.

They are not the Blake Street Bombers but Nolan Arenado (NL-leading 38 HRs) and Carlos Gonzalez (37 Homers) are a two-man wrecking crew for the Rockies.

Colorado centerfielder Charlie Blackmon robbed Brett Wallace of a potential game-tying homer with one out in the bottom of the 9th inning. It was a deflating moment for the home team but a great play by Blackmon.

Matt Kemp continued his sizzling second half with two more hits. Kemp crushed his 21st homer of the season and extended his on base streak to 30 consecutive games. He now has 94 runs batted in during the 2015 campaign.

Ross and Derek Norris added sacrifice flies to plate a couple more runs.

San Diego travels to San Francisco for the weekend. Andrew Cashner opposes former Padre Jake Peavy in Friday’s series opener.

The Giants are 8.5 games behind the first-place Dodgers and San Diego is 14 games behind LA in the division.