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by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Royals' Game 7 win sets 'Missouri Series'

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Kansas City Royals, the team that would not quit, completed a stunning turnaround Wednesday night by beating the Toronto Blue Jays 6-2 behind Jim Sundberg's four RBI to win the decisive seventh game of the American League playoffs and advance to the World Series.

The victory set up an all-Missouri, "Show-Me State Showdown" in the World Series starting Saturday night in Kansas City between the Royals and the St. Louis Cardinals, who won the National League pennant Wednesday by beating Los Angeles, 7-5.

The Royals iced their complete comeback from a 3-1 series deficit, when Sundberg drove in three runs with a bases-loaded triple off the top of the right field wall in the sixth inning.

In any other year since divisional playoffs began in 1969, Toronto would have won, three games to one. But this year, for the first time, it was a best-of-seven format, not best-of-five, and the Royals took full advantage of the extra two games.

Sundberg finished the series with a team-high six RBIs, one more than teammate George Brett, the AL playoff's Most Valuable Player, who had eight hits including three home runs in 23 at-bats.

Kansas City's victory reversed AL East dominance in recent league playoffs. The 1980 Royals were the last AL West team to win a playoff and the Oakland teams of 1972-73-74 were the only other Western representatives to win since divisional play began.

Only four times in World Series history have teams rallied from 3-1 deficits. Of the 33 clubs that trailed by that margin, only Pittsburgh in 1925 and 1979, the New York Yankees in 1958 and the Detroit Tigers in 1968 came back to win.

The Royals won the game by ripping Dave Stieb, who led the league in earned run average this season.



Stieb, who won the opener and pitched powerfully despite getting no decision in Game 4, left the game after Sundberg's triple.

Stieb was charged with six earned runs, his second-highest total of the season.

Kansas City starter Bret Saberhagen, winner Charlie Leibrandt and Dan Quisenberry, who got the final two outs, gave the Royals the clutch pitching they needed for the third straight game.

In the final three games of the series, Toronto stranded 26 runners, 17 in scoring position. The Blue Jays, who hit just a shade under .300 with runners in scoring position during the regular season, stranded nine runners in their final game of the year, including six in scoring position.

Saberhagen, the Royals ace and one of only two 20-game winners in the American League, was forced to leave after three innings. He bruised his pitching hand in the first inning while trying to grab an infield hit by Willie Upshaw. There was no immediate indication whether Saberhagen would be available for the World Series.

Leibrandt, who started and lost Games 1 and 4, inherited a 2-0 lead. He went 5 1/3 innings, allowing a fifth-inning, run-scoring double to Upshaw among his five hits. After Barfield singled with one out and went to third on a double by Tony

Fernandez, Quisenberry entered the game.

Quisenberry gave up a run-scoring grounder to Damaso Garcia and then got Lloyd Moseby on a grounder to second to end the game.

Sundberg, just 2-for-20 in the postseason entering the game, singled home a run in the second inning. Pat Sheridan, with only one hit in 16 playoff at-bats, homered in the fourth for a 2-0 lead.

The Blue Jays halved the lead in the fifth on a single by Garcia and a two-out double by Upshaw, but Kansas City broke the game open in the sixth against a struggling Stieb.

With one out, Stieb walked Brett on four pitches and then hit Hal McRae with a pitch. Sheridan grounded into a forceout at third base, but a walk to Steve Balboni on a 3-2 pitch loaded the bases.

Stieb was clearly in trouble, having difficulty with his curve, and Jim Acker was warming in the bullpen, but Toronto Manager Bobby Cox stuck with his ace. It turned out to be the wrong move.

Sundberg hit a drive off the very top of the right-field fence, just above the glove of a leaping Barfield. The ball bounced back onto the field and Barfield lost track of it, with Sundberg winding up on third with a triple.

Cox then brought in Acker, and Frank White greeted the reliever with a soft single to center that made it 6-1.

The Royals' big inning silenced the crowd of 32,084 — more than 10,000 under capacity — who had watched in 45-degree weather in hopes that their Blue Jays could bring home a winner.

Instead, Kansas City won the game and set up just the second all-artificial turf World Series. The first one came in 1980 when the Royals played Philadelphia.

This year's World Series will also be the first intrastate one since 1974 when Oakland played Los Angeles.

Dodgers close to winning

Homer in 9th ends L.A.'s Series hopes

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Nobody had to tell the Los Angeles Dodgers how close they were to extending the National League Playoffs to the seven-game limit.

"We came within one out and we didn't get that out," said Dodger third baseman Bill Madlock, who had a home run and a single and drove in two runs in the 7-5 loss that sent the St. Louis Cardinals to the World Series.

The Dodgers, ahead 5-4 thanks to an eighth-inning home run by Mike Marshall, had their chances, but just let Wednesday's game get away.

"It just seemed like a game that was not meant to be," said Dodger starter Orel Hershiser, who was lifted in the seventh inning.

"We had a big lead, and they came back. Then we had the lead again with one at-bat left, and they got the big hit."

The Cardinals, known for their speed, came back and regained the lead on Jack Clark's long two-out, three-run homer in the ninth inning.

Andy Van Slyke, in the on-deck circle when Clark hit the game-winning off reliever Tom Neidenfuer, was surprised the Dodgers elected to pitch to the Cardinals' slugger with first base open and two men on.

"I was looking into the dugout waiting for (Los Angeles Manager) Tommy (Lasorda) to put up four fingers," he said. "I have to think they were going to walk him and pitch to me."

"I think Jack lit up inside when he knew they were going to pitch to him. What can you say? He stole the show."

Lasorda said he decided to pitch to Clark because Niedenfuer had struck him out in the seventh.

"If he had hit a long fly ball for the final out, nobody would be talking about it," said a dejected Lasorda. "After he hit the home run, everybody in the world knows who should have walked him."

Ag lady golfers feel no pressure in '85

By DOUG HALL
Sports Writer

The Texas A&M women's golf team and Coach Kitty Holley want to make it two in a row this year.

For some golf teams, that would mean two winning seasons in a row. But for the Aggies, two in a row means back-to-back Southwest Conference Championships.

And with four of last year's five top players returning for the '85-86 season, two in a row isn't out of the question.

"We've got a lot of experience on the team this year," Holley said. "We are pretty strong."

In fact, Holley went so far as to label A&M as "the team to beat" in the SWC, ahead of lady golfers from SMU, TCU and the University of Texas.

"SMU is going to be strong this year," Holley said. "They were good last year, but they were just too

young. They've got a lot of experience now and are going to be a very strong team."

"Texas is always strong and TCU is in a rebuilding program, but with a lot of young talent on the team. You never know when those people are gonna burst onto the scene."

Holley said being the defending champion has not placed any extra pressure on the Aggies — it just gives them another goal to shoot for.

"Even if there was (extra pressure), Holley said, "handling pressure is part of their job. These ladies are under pressure every time they tee up a golf ball."

"Besides, I really don't like the word 'defending.' We won that championship and no one is going to take it away from us. We'd like to win a second one."

"You accomplish your goals and then set new ones. And that (winning a second championship) is our new goal."

Leading the Aggies' charge for their second straight championship will be team captain Angela Atkins, a senior from Missouri City.

"I expect Angela to play really well," Holley said. "She has come a long way to become comfortable with her game. She's in a position to perform consistently and to perform well."

Along with Atkins, Holley said she hopes to see strong performances from her other returning upperclassmen — junior Fiona Connor, senior Susie Faccini and sophomore Hollie Frizzell.

Atkins' '84-85 stroke average of 78 was second only to Patricia Gonzalez' 77.3 average. Gonzalez, the only player from last year's top five not returning, is now playing professional golf.

But Holley isn't banking only on her returning upperclassmen.

She used the offseason to recruit three promising freshmen and

picked up walk-on sophomore Dee Davidson, who Holley said "has a lot of ability, as well as four years of eligibility."

Holley's freshmen recruits include Mariana Oyangueren from Houston, Adriana Penuela from Bogota, Colombia and Cheryl Riegel from Bossier City, La. — all have had substantial experience in either high school or junior level golf.

"We hope they (freshmen) will be able to qualify for some tournaments and get in there and help us out this year," Holley said. "But you really look to the juniors and seniors to hold the scores down, while these freshmen and sophomores are getting oriented and making their own place."

And if everything works out for the Aggies this year, their "place" will be next to the '85-86 SWC Championship trophy — again.

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