



Padres Press Clips

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Padres nearly complete comeback vs. Cubs

San Diego scores 3 runs in final two frames, but outs at home prove key

By Matthew Martell

CHICAGO -- A day after snapping their seven-game losing streak, the Padres nearly completed a late comeback vs. the Cubs. The final push, however, wasn't enough to overcome their initial lull, as they lost, 5-4, on Friday afternoon at Wrigley Field.

"I thought it was a really good battle from our guys," manager Andy Green said. "I like the way the guys fought. It's a frustrating way to lose."

San Diego's first real shot at a rally came in the eighth inning. [Cory Spangenberg](#) and [Travis Jankowski](#) led off with consecutive singles, and the Padres caught a break when Cubs reliever [Steve Cishek](#) threw a potential double-play comebacker from [Manuel Margot](#) into center field, allowing Spangenberg to score.

It was 5-2, when, for the second straight inning, the first two Padres reached to lead off the ninth. Spangenberg followed with an RBI double to left to make it a two-run game, and Jankowski's groundout to first brought San Diego within one.

"I don't think there was a different approach as much as just guys sticking with the approach," Jankowski said of the Padres' late offensive life. "I can't speak for everyone, but the ball that I hit [in the eighth] was probably a mistake. He just left it over the middle of the plate.

"Everyone in here does their homework. Everyone has the scouting report on the pitchers in their 'pen. Guys stuck with it today, and it paid off. Obviously not the outcome we wanted, but I think there were a lot of positives to take from it."

The Cubs brought the infield in with one out and Spangenberg on third. It paid off, as he was thrown out trying to score on a fielder's choice to third baseman [David Bote](#). Pinch-hitter [Austin Hedges](#) struck out to end the game.

"You've got [Pedro Strop](#) on the mound," Green said of Spangenberg getting thrown out at home. "You can leave the guy at third base, and you're banking on the next guy getting a hit. It's a higher-percentage chance, by far. Obviously, it's a risk. The guy made a very nice play."

[Christian Villanueva](#)'s 20th home run in the fourth inning represented the Padres' only run through the game's first seven frames.

San Diego starter [Tyson Ross](#) allowed three runs on six hits and two walks in five innings. He said he didn't have his best stuff, but the Padres were well within reach when he was removed to start the sixth.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Three plays at the plate perhaps decided the outcome of Friday's game. The Cubs' third run came home when [Tommy La Stella](#) was called safe when first baseman [Eric Hosmer](#) tried to throw him out. Padres catcher [A.J. Ellis](#) pleaded his case with home-plate umpire Fieldin

Culbreth, but it was all for naught, as San Diego had already unsuccessfully used its challenge in the second inning.

Twice, once in each of the final two innings, the Padres had a runner on third who broke for home on contact. Both times, the runner was nailed at the plate for the second out. In the eighth, [Javier Baez](#) fired home to get Jankowski, and Bote retired Spangenberg with his throw to [Victor Caratini](#) in the ninth.

"Both those throws were on the money," Jankowski said. "If those throws are up the first-base line a little bit, give us an area to slide, one of those we're probably scoring."

HE SAID IT

"They've got a good club. They've been to the postseason. They won a World Series. We've got a ways to go to even be in comparison with them." -- *Green*

MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

The Padres decided to use their challenge to see if a pitch -- the second ball of the at-bat -- hit Villanueva as he was leading off the second inning. It was risky for Green to ask for a review with nobody out and nobody on in the second inning of a scoreless game, but he said he felt it was conclusive enough to overturn. The call on the field stood. San Diego was without its challenge for the remainder of the game, which proved significant when Green was unable to challenge when La Stella was called safe at home to score in the fifth inning.

"One time it's conclusive proof, and the next time it's like, 'Ah, that was close enough,'" Green said. "It's hard to understand what to replay at times."

"It's equally as frustrating when they blow a call at the plate that we know is an out, and we can't replay it at that point in time."

UP NEXT

Right-hander [Walker Lockett](#) was announced as the Padres' starter for Saturday's game against the Cubs shortly after the conclusion of Friday's contest. Lefty [Joey Lucchesi](#) was initially slated to pitch, but he was scratched due to a stomach illness. Lockett was roughed up in his first career start earlier this season, when he allowed four runs to the Reds in 3 2/3 innings. His only other Major League outing came in relief on July 9, when he surrendered two runs in two innings. The Cubs send righty [Kyle Hendricks](#) to the mound, with first pitch set for 11:20 a.m. PT from Wrigley Field.

Exams reveal Myers' left foot not fractured

Outfielder diagnosed with bone bruise after he fouled a ball off himself Thursday

By Matthew Martell

CHICAGO -- After getting an MRI exam and a CT scan on Friday morning, the Padres' [Wil Myers](#) was diagnosed with a bone bruise of his left foot, which happened when he fouled a ball off it on Thursday.

Manager Andy Green received Myers' medical report shortly after the Padres' [5-4 loss](#) to the Cubs at Wrigley Field. He could not say whether Myers would need to go on the disabled list for the bruise because he had yet to speak with Myers or the athletic trainers about the injury. All he knew, at the time, was Myers' foot was not fractured.

Myers left the Padres' 6-1 win in Thursday's series opener during the sixth inning. He had initially stayed in the game and played defense in the bottom of the fifth. He said the pain was too much to keep playing. X-rays performed Thursday night came back negative, but there were some expectations from both Myers and Green that the injury could linger. For now, he's still considered day to day.

"Definitely was not a normal foul ball off the foot," Myers said after the game Thursday night. "There was definitely something it hit that did not feel good."

Mitchell makes first rehab start

Right-hander [Bryan Mitchell](#) pitched 2 2/3 innings with Class A Advanced Lake Elsinore Thursday night in his first Minor League rehab start.

Mitchell, who has been on the disabled list with a right elbow impingement since the third week of June, allowed two runs on two hits, one of which was a two-run homer in the first inning. He walked one and struck out three before reaching his 50-pitch limit.

"We're going to stretch him out," Green said of Mitchell before Thursday's game. "We're bringing him back with the anticipation of him starting for us."

Padres farm system named best in baseball

By Jim Callis

When A.J. Preller took over as the Padres' general manager in August 2014, he hoped to return the club to contention instantly. In his first four months on the job, he traded a slew of prospects -- including [Jake Bauers](#), [Zach Eflin](#), [Max Fried](#), [Joe Ross](#), [Mallex Smith](#) and [Trea Turner](#) -- and young big leaguers for veterans who could provide immediate help.

That plan didn't work as hoped, so Preller did a 180 after San Diego went 74-88 in his first full season at the helm. On consecutive days in November 2015, he dealt [Joaquin Benoit](#) to the Mariners for two prospects (most notably, Enyel de los Santos) and [Craig Kimbrel](#) to the Red Sox for four more (including [Manuel Margot](#) and [Logan Allen](#)). Ever since, the Padres have been stockpiling Minor League talent via the Draft, the international market and more trades.

San Diego hasn't had a payoff at the big league level yet, but it should in the next couple of years. It topped [MLB Pipeline's farm system rankings in March](#) and continues to do so five months later.

The Padres' system is only getting stronger. They had another strong Draft, headlined by left-hander Ryan Weathers and shortstop Xavier Edwards, and acquired the best prospect who changed addresses in July, trading [Brad Hand](#) and [Adam Cimber](#) for catcher/outfielder [Francisco Mejia](#). They've also had several farmhands take huge steps forward, including right-handers [Chris Paddack](#) and Luis Patino and outfielder Buddy Reed.

Here is MLB Pipeline's updated ranking of the top 10 farm systems

Prospect Points are determined by awarding a team 100 points for the No. 1 prospect on the Top 100 list, 99 points for No. 2 and so on, down to one point for No. 100. Points are then tallied by team.

1. Padres

Preseason rank: 1

Top 100 Prospects (8): SS [Fernando Tatis Jr.](#) (No. 2), LHP Mackenzie Gore (No. 11), C/OF Francisco Mejia (No. 21), 2B/SS [Luis Urias](#) (No. 22), RHP Chris Paddack (No. 49), LHP Adrian Morejon (No. 50), RHP Michel Baez (No. 62), LHP Logan Allen (No. 88)

Padres Top 30 list

Prospect points (MLB rank): 503 (1st)

The Padres have it all. They have three elite hitting prospects in Tatis, Mejia and Urias and plenty of mound depth beginning with Gore, the **best left-handed pitching prospect** in the game. San Diego's eight Top 100 Prospects, a total that ranks second only to Atlanta's nine, testify to its fine work on the trade (Tatis, Mejia, Paddack, Allen) and international (Urias, Morejon, Baez) fronts. The Padres not only have the best system but also the deepest, and they'd still fit among the top 10 systems even without their Top 100 guys.

2. Braves

Preseason rank: 2

Top 100 Prospects (9): RHP Mike Soroka (No. 15), RHP [Kyle Wright](#) (No. 24), RHP Ian

Anderson (No. 39), 3B [Austin Riley](#) (No. 43), OF Cristian Pache (No. 57), LHP [Luiz Gohara](#) (No. 61), RHP [Touki Toussaint](#) (No. 76), LHP Kolby Allard (No. 91), OF Drew Waters (No. 99)

Braves Top 30 list

Prospect points: 404 (3rd)

Despite graduating superstars-in-the-making [Ronald Acuna](#) and [Ozzie Albies](#) to Atlanta in the past year, the Braves still lead all teams with nine Top 100 Prospects. The strength of their system is pitching, much of it acquired via first-round picks (Soroka, Wright, Anderson, Allard) and extending well past their Top 100 arms to left-handers Joey Wentz and Kyle Muller plus right-hander Bryce Wilson, among others.

3. White Sox

Preseason rank: 3

Top 100 Prospects (7): OF [Eloy Jimenez](#) (No. 3), RHP [Michael Kopech](#) (No. 13), OF Luis Robert (No. 25), 2B/SS Nick Madrigal (No. 32), RHP [Dylan Cease](#) (No. 44), RHP [Dane Dunning](#) (No. 64), OF [Blake Rutherford](#) (No. 89)

White Sox Top 30 list

Prospect points: 437 (2nd)

Of the White Sox's seven Top 100 Prospects, five were acquired via trade: Jimenez, Kopech, Cease, Dunning, Rutherford. General Manager Rick Hahn has navigated the early stages of rebuilding well, though he surely wishes he hadn't parted with Fernando Tatis Jr. to acquire [James Shields](#) from the Padres. Chicago may have added the two best college hitters from the 2018 Draft in Madrigal and outfielder Steele Walker, and is investing heavily internationally in talents such as Robert and outfielder [Micker Adolfo](#).

4. Rays

Preseason rank: 4

Top 100 Prospects (5): RHP [Brent Honeywell](#) (No. 23), LHP/1B Brendan McKay (No. 29), OF [Jesus Sanchez](#) (No. 31), SS, Wander Franco (No. 40), LHP Matthew Liberatore (No. 66)

Rays Top 30 list

Prospect points (MLB rank): 316 (4th)

The only team on this list to graduate three Top 100 Prospects (Willy Adames, Jake Bauers, [Christian Arroyo](#)) to the Majors this year, the Rays are still going strong. Honeywell is in the process of recovering from Tommy John surgery, but two-way star McKay has been impressive on the mound and international signees Sanchez and Franco continue to rise in stature. Tampa Bay restocked with three 2018 first-round pick in Liberatore, left-hander Shane McClellan and outfielder Nick Schnell, and it's rumored to be getting a Top 100-caliber prospect from the Pirates as the player to be named in the [Chris Archer](#) trade.

5. Blue Jays

Preseason rank: 9

Top 100 Prospects (5): 3B Vladimir Guerrero Jr. (No. 1), SS/2B Bo Bichette (No. 9), C [Danny Jansen](#) (No. 73), RHP Nate Pearson (No. 90), OF [Anthony Alford](#) (No. 92)

Blue Jays Top 30 list

Prospect points: 240 (7th)

Guerrero is the best prospect in baseball and Bichette isn't far off. While those sons of former big league stars hog most of the spotlight in the Jays system, there's also plenty of promising pitchers such as Pearson and right-handers Eric Pardo, [Sean Reid-Foley](#) and recent trade acquisition Hector Perez. Third baseman/shortstop Jordan Groshans and righty Adam Kloffenstein, teammates at Magnolia (Texas) High, highlight a strong 2018 Draft.

6. Twins

Preseason rank: unranked

[Top 100 Prospects \(4\):](#) SS Royce Lewis (No. 10), OF Alex Kirilloff (No. 30), SS/2B Nick Gordon (No. 74), RHP Brusdar Graterol (No. 79)

[Twins Top 30 list](#)

Prospect points: 211 (9th)

The only organization on this list that didn't crack [our 2017 midseason](#) or '18 preseason Top 10s, the Twins are firing all cylinders. Recent early Draft picks Lewis, Kirilloff, Gordon, Outfielder Trevor Larnach and first baseman/outfielder Brent Rooker all are playing well. International signees like Graterol and left-hander [Lewis Thorpe](#) are thriving, and Minnesota made some sneaky good moves at the Trade Deadline to land prospects such as right-handers Jorge Alcala and Jhoan Duran and outfielder Gilberto Celestino.

7. Reds

Preseason rank: 8

[Top 100 Prospects \(4\):](#) 3B/2B Nick Senzel (No. 4), RHP Hunter Greene (No. 18), OF Taylor Trammell (No. 19), 3B Jonathan India (No. 55)

[Reds Top 30 list](#)

Prospect points: 308 (5th)

With sweet-swinging Senzel, flamethrowing Greene and super-toolsy Trammell, the Reds are the only system that features three of the game's 20 best prospects. It's a top-heavy system that stands out more for its potential superstars than its depth, though India was the No. 5 overall choice in June and right-hander Tony Santillan, catcher Tyler Stephenson and second baseman/shortstop Jeter Downs are making a push for the Top 100.

8. Dodgers

Preseason rank: 10

[Top 100 Prospects \(4\):](#) OF [Alex Verdugo](#) (No. 28), C Keibert Ruiz (No. 37), C/3B [Will Smith](#) (No. 72), RHP Dustin May (No. 81)

[Dodgers Top 30 list](#)

Prospect points: 186 (11th)

Even after making Yusniel Diaz the centerpiece of the [Manny Machado](#) trade with the Orioles, the Dodgers have a deep stock of position players. That group begins with one of the best pure hitting prospects around (Verdugo) and baseball's best pair of catching phenoms (Ruiz, Smith), then continues with shortstop/second baseman Gavin Lux and catcher Diego Cartaya, the [top-rated international talent](#) on the 2018-19 market. May is having a breakout year on the mound, and right-handers [Dennis Santana](#), Mitchell White and Yadiel Alvarez all have made past Top 100s.

9. Astros

Preseason rank: unranked

Top 100 Prospects (3): RHP Forrest Whitley (No. 7), OF Kyle Tucker (No. 8), OF [Yordan Alvarez](#) (No. 41)

Astros Top 30 list

Prospect points: 247 (6th)

Whitley is the game's best pitching prospect and he and Tucker rival Tatis/Gore (Padres) and Jimenez/Kopech (White Sox) as the best hitter/pitcher prospect duo. Alvarez is another potent corner-outfield bat and could be the Astros' long-term solution at first base. Houston is showing a knack for getting the most out of its young pitchers, with left-hander Cionel Perez and right-handers Corbin Martin and Josh James among those who have taken their game to a new level this year.

10. Yankees

Preseason rank: 6

Top 100 Prospects (4): LHP [Justus Sheffield](#) (No. 27), OF Estevan Florial (No. 46), RHP [Jonathan Loaisiga](#) (No. 75), RHP [Albert Abreu](#) (No. 77)

Yankees Top 30 list

Prospect points: 179 (12th)

The Yankees continue to bring young players to New York ([Gleyber Torres](#) and [Miguel Andujar](#) are their most recent additions) and to trade prospects for veterans ([Zach Britton](#), [J.A. Happ](#), [Lance Lynn](#) and [Luke Voit](#) all arrived in July). Yet they still have one of baseball's deeper systems and seem to have a never-ending supply of pitching prospects: Sheffield, Loaisiga, Abreu, right-handers [Domingo Acevedo](#), Clark Schmidt, Trevor Stephan, Luis Medina and on and on and on.

Mejia hits first homer with El Paso

By Mike Rosenbaum

[Francisco Mejia](#)'s first home run as a member of the Padres organization both put his team on the board and proved the difference as Triple-A El Paso edged New Orleans, 5-4.

Mejia, the [Padres' No. 3](#) prospect ([No. 21 overall](#)), connected on a solo home run in his first at-bat, turning on an 0-2 pitch and depositing over the wall down the right-field line. He finished the game 1-for-3 at the plate, also reaching once via a hit-by-pitch.

The homer was Mejia's eighth of the season and his first in eight games since the Padres acquired him in exchange for reliever [Brad Hand](#) and [Adam Cimber](#) on July 19. He's posted a .308 average and recorded at least one hit in six of those eight contests.

What's more, the 22-year-old Mejia has now started seven times behind the plate for the Chihuahuas -- a trend that highlights the Padres' desire to have him remain at the position long term. But as one of the more advanced and Major League-ready hitters in the Minors, Mejia, a switch-hitter, could still force his way into the lineup at other positions, especially with glove-first.

- No. 3 overall prospect [Eloy Jimenez \(White Sox No. 1\)](#) is batting .387 through 28 games with Triple-A Charlotte after going 3-for-5 with a double and an RBI. The 21-year-old slugger is slashing a robust .341/.390/.605 this season, with 18 homers, 24 doubles and 60 RBIs in 81 games.backstop [Austin Hedges](#) starting in San Diego.

- No. 24 overall prospect [Kyle Wright \(Braves' No. 2\)](#) was unhittable for 5 2/3 innings as he recorded the win in his debut for Triple-A Gwinnett. The 22-year-old righty actually cruised through the first five innings --retiring 15 of 16 batters -- only to issue a pair of runs on four walks before departing with two outs in the sixth. He struck out five batters and generated another nine outs on the ground.

- No. 79 overall prospect Brusdar Graterol ([Twins' No. 4](#)) used his triple-digit fastball to rack up five strikeouts over six innings in a win for Class A Advanced Fort Myers. He allowed one unearned run on five hits, did not issue a walk and pounded the zone with 63 of 90 pitches in the outing. The 19-year-old fire-baller has completed at least five innings in five straight starts after lasting just three innings in his Miracle debut.

- [Brewers No. 26 prospect](#) Chad McClanahan and Je'Von Ward (No. 27) both had big nights offensively for Rookie-level Helena. McClanahan plated three runs, two on his eighth home run, while Ward tallied three doubles, scored four runs and walked once part of a 4-for-5 performance. They're batting .297 and .288 this season, respectively.

- [Cardinals No. 3 prospect](#) Nolan Gorman homered for a second straight game to help power Rookie-level Johnson City past Greenville, 9-7. Gorman's home run, a third-inning solo shot, gives him 10 through his first 32 career games, and he's shown that consistent power while slashing .325/.424/.659 with 21 walks.

- [D-backs No. 3 prospect Taylor Widener](#) was sharp in a no-decision for Double-A Jackson. The 23-year-old righty tossed six scoreless innings, mixing three hits with a walk and seven

strikeouts. Among qualified Southern League hurlers, Widener ranks first in strikeouts (142), second in ERA (2.64) and second in WHIP (1.01). Opposing hitters, meanwhile, are batting just .192 against him.

- **Orioles No. 5 prospect** Grayson Rodriguez posted three more scoreless frames in the Rookie-level Gulf Coast League as he extended his career-opening scoreless streak to 12 innings. The 2018 first-rounder allowed just one hit and struck out three in his longest outing as a professional.
- Making his organizational debut, **Rangers No. 7 prospect Taylor Hearn** tossed 5 1/3 innings of one-run ball for Double-A Frisco to earn the win. He allowed three hits (including a solo homer) and struck out eight while throwing 60 of 89 pitches for strikes. The 23-year-old lefty had pitched to a 3.12 ERA with a .198 BAA and 107 strikeouts in 104 innings (19 starts) for Double-A Altoona before joining the Rangers in the Trade Deadline deal that sent reliever **Keone Kela** to Pittsburgh.

Padres notes: Lockett to start for ill Lucchesi; DL possible for bruised Myers

[Kevin Acee](#)

It had become increasingly evident that rookie right-hander [Walker Lockett](#) would get his next chance to start this weekend.

It just seemed it would be Sunday, in place of [Clayton Richard](#).

Then Joey Lucchesi came down with a stomach bug and was confined to his hotel room Friday, and Lockett got word following the [Padres'](#) 5-4 loss to the [Cubs](#) that he would make his second major league start Saturday at Wrigley Field.

“I didn’t have a clue,” Lockett said a few minutes after manager Andy Green told him the news. “I knew what the situation was a little bit, but I didn’t really expect it.”

Still, Lockett knows what this is. He is first up in what looks to be two months of auditions for young starting pitchers.

“Another opportunity to try to set myself up and show these guys what I can do,” he said. “That’s what I’m going to treat it as. ... I’m ready for my audition.”

Lockett was called up June 1 to make his major league debut against the [Cincinnati Reds](#) at Petco Park. The 24-year-old right-hander threw 81 pitches in lasting 3 2/3 innings, giving up four runs on four hits and five walks.

“I think just staying composed, trying to stay within myself.” Lockett said of how he expects this time will be different. “Now that I have a couple under my belt here, I feel a little more familiar. I’m going to treat it like another fifth day.”

Lockett, who was as sent back to Triple-A the day after that first start, was recalled again July 9 and pitched two innings (two runs) in closing out an 8-2 loss to the Dodgers that night. He was again optioned the following day and has since made three Triple-A starts. In 19 starts for El Paso, he has a 4.92 ERA and 1.34 WHIP in 111 2/3 innings.

He has six quality starts and has made it into the seventh inning seven times.

“All my pitches have gotten sharper,” said Lockett, who was a fourth-round draft pick in 2012. “I’ve gotten better as a pitcher throughout the year, more comfortable and able to get through ballgames better.”

Brett Kennedy, who is 10-0 with a 2.72 ERA and 1.12 WHIP in 89 1/3 innings in Triple-A, made his 16th start of the season Wednesday night. That precludes him from pitching this weekend. He is expected up in the coming weeks.

The Padres pushed back Richard to give him an extra two days rest. He will start Tuesday in the opener of the series in Milwaukee.

Myers update

Further testing revealed left fielder Wil Myers has a bone bruise on his left foot. He remained in a great deal of pain Friday, a day after fouling a ball off the top of his foot in the fifth inning and leaving the game an inning later.

The Padres are confronted with a choice of waiting out the injury or placing Myers on the disabled list for a third time this season. Friday was the 57th game Myers has missed (of the Padres’ 112). His previous two times on the shelf were due to an arm injury and strains of his back and oblique.

Shutting him down for 10 days would hurt, in that the club is offense-challenged and Myers has hit .265/.322/.538 with eight homers and 10 doubles in his 34 games since returning from his last DL stint.

No “Stop” to Strop

After getting [Austin Hedges](#) swinging on a 2-2 slider to halt a Padres comeback and end Friday's game, Cubs reliever Pedro Strop hollered toward the third base line and pumped his fist twice like Tiger Woods sinking a long birdie putt in the final round of a major.

The Padres had no problem with the celebration of a mid-season victory over a last-place team.

"It's a big win for them after we tried to come back," Hedges said. "I've got no problem with that."

Said manager Andy Green: "Beat 'em. That's all there is to it. You can do whatever you want on the field. We've got to beat them."

Extra bases

- Cory Spangenberg stopped an 0-for-11 skid with a pinch-hit single in the eighth inning, stayed in the game at third base and added an RBI double in the ninth.
- Christian Villanueva's fourth-inning home run was his 20th of the season, extending his team lead and giving him the most by a Padres third baseman since [Chase Headley](#) hit 31 in 2012.
- Travis Jankowski has gone 2-for-4 in consecutive starts after getting one hit in his previous 23 at-bats.
- Hedges' strikeout lowered his on-base percentage to .303 in 175 plate appearances this season. When his OBP shot up to .305 on Thursday, it was the first time Hedges had an OBP above .300 since going 1-for-3 in his first game of 2016. That was also the only previous time his OBP was above .300. Hedges is batting .329/.381/.586 over his past 21 games (70 at-bats).

Cubs win the way Padres can't

[Kevin Acee](#)

The [Padres](#) clawed and scratched and grinded and all those things gutty little teams that can't try in order to make up for what they're not.

But the differences in the lineups of the [National League](#)'s best team and its worst team, as if not already abundantly clear, were on stark display on a brilliant Friday afternoon at [Wrigley Field](#).

Two runs for the visitors in the ninth inning allowed the Padres to once again talk about battling back, but the [Cubs](#) held on for a 5-4 victory.

"It's frustrating to lose when you compete your tail off," [Travis Jankowski](#) said.

"That's a heck of a lineup they have over there and a heck of a pitching staff. And we were right there neck and neck with them. So I think there's a lot of positives to take out of it."

That his sentiment rings true only accentuates where the Padres are.

Sometimes close. Still so far.

While [Manuel Margot](#)'s chopper to third that turned into [Cory Spangenberg](#) being cut down at the plate for the second out of the ninth inning served as the final real letdown and pinch-hitter [Austin Hedges](#)' strikeout ended the game, the differences in the two offenses was painfully evident on multiple occasions.

A gift that allowed one run to score and provided extra opportunity in the eighth inning, in fact, turned out to be merely a slap in the face – as it further exemplified what the Padres were up against, especially missing one of their best hitters.

That eighth inning began with singles by Spangenberg and Jankowski. Margot then grounded back to pitcher Steve Cishek, whose throw to second to try to get Jankowski

sailed wide and bounced across the center field grass. That allowed Spangenberg to score and make it 4-2 with two on and none out.

Perhaps because the Padres were without [Wil Myers](#), who suffered a bruised foot on a hard struck foul ball Thursday, that would be the end of that gasp.

[A.J. Ellis](#), batting second in the lineup in Myers' absence, laid down a sacrifice bunt that moved the runners up 90 feet. It was a move likely to avoid the 37-year-old backup catcher from grounding into a double play, and it certainly is something manager Andy Green would not have had Myers do.

Ellis, in the lineup to spell Austin Hedges in a day game played after a night game, took a strike before bunting.

“See if we can make something happen,” Green said. “... We gave our No. 3 and 4 hitters an opportunity to drive in the tying run.”

Hunter Renfroe's ground ball to second base got Jankowski thrown out at home – the first of the two Padres to be unable to get the ball to the outfield in the air with a runner on third and less than two outs. [Eric Hosmer](#) walked to load the bases, bringing up Christian Villanueva, who homered in the fourth inning. This time, he lined out to third.

The Cubs added what turned out to be the deciding run in the bottom of the eighth when [Javier Baez](#) led off with a triple against [Jordan Lyles](#) and scored on Ian Happ's sacrifice fly.

The Cubs took a 1-0 lead on Javier Baez's homer leading off the bottom of the second. After Padres starter [Tyson Ross](#) (6-9) left having allowed three runs in five innings, the Cubs stretched their lead to 4-1 on [Anthony Rizzo](#)'s solo homer off reliever Robert Stock in the seventh.

In between the two bombs, they scored two runs when their No. 9 hitter, third baseman [Tommy La Stella](#), reached base, went to third on Rizzo's single and scored on balls put in play by No. 2 hitter [Ben Zobrist](#).

In the third inning, La Stella walked and scored on Zobrist's sacrifice fly. In the fifth, La Stella singled and scored on Zobrist's fielder's choice grounder to first base.

It must be noted that the Cubs are playing without Kris Bryant, their most frequent No. 2 hitter at the start of the season. The former University of San Diego star, a career .286/.387/.474 hitter, has played in just 76 games, yet the Cubs' 63-46 record is best in the NL.

Meanwhile, with Myers out, Green had to start Jankowski against left-handed starter Jose Quintana (10-7).

With Jankowski's .191/.255 split against lefties (versus .263/.342 against right-handers), the manager's gambit to bat his starting pitcher eighth for the first time this season in order to push back Jankowski in the hopes of getting him as many at-bats against right-handed relievers as possible paid dividends in the form of Jankowski's two singles and an RBI grounder.

The latter drove in Jose Pirela to make it 5-4 in the ninth after Spangenberg's double scored [Freddy Galvis](#).

It wasn't enough because the Padres simply don't have enough.

"They've got a good club," Green said of the Cubs. "They've been to the postseason. They've won a World Series. We've got a ways to go to even be in comparison to them."

Talking with ... Padres first baseman Eric Hosmer

Kevin Acee

Eric Hosmer entered Friday's game on a nine-game hitting streak, having raised his batting average seven points to .252 and his on-base percentage nine points to .320 in that span.

Those numbers still hover around the lowest of his career at this point in a season.

Considering his eight-year, \$144 million contract, that is not the immediate return on investment the [Padres](#) envisioned. However, how Hosmer has handled his own struggles has demonstrated a facet of Hosmer's game the team also paid for.

In a conversation in the visitors' clubhouse at Wrigley Field prior to Friday's game against the [Cubs](#), the Padres first baseman talked about his leadership, why the team had a players-only meeting Thursday and the coolest thing about playing in San Diego.

Three day games in a row at one of the cathedrals of baseball. How do you prepare for it, especially with this first one coming after playing a night game?

It's definitely a quick turnaround, but this is one of the better atmospheres in the game. When you step on the field here, the crowd gives you a boost. You forget about the sleep you lost.

A veteran like yourself, you generally are able to tune out the surroundings and concentrate only on what's happening on the field. Is this one of those places you allow yourself to soak in the atmosphere?

There's no question. The more you play, you become, I wouldn't say immune to it, but you become more comfortable with larger crowds. But there are certain places where

you grew up watching the game – and especially now, the way the Cubs are playing, the team they have, the overall atmosphere, you embrace the games you play here and try to enjoy each and every inning.

You play one of the positions where you're close to the stands and have some interaction with fans and certainly get to hear some of the things that are said. You like that?

That's the cool part about here, in the Midwest, fans are so knowledgeable about the game. It's not just like them heckling. It's them sticking up for their team. Even if it is a negative heckle, you know it's all in good fun. Realizing how passionate these fans are about their team, it's something you come to appreciate a lot.

One thing you do see and hear in places like here, St. Louis, Philadelphia. They'll cheer the visiting team for good plays.

The different areas you go, you realize you get louder ovations for certain things, maybe moving a guy over or making a great play on defense. You really appreciate that.

I know you've been busy with your job since you moved to San Diego, but what have you enjoyed about the city?

You can't tell whether you're playing a game in April or July. The weather is so good on your body. That's one of the biggest things people would tell me. You come off the plane from a road trip and you feel that breeze and you know you're back home.

How many times a year at Kauffman Stadium would you have a rain delay, where at 4 p.m. or so you didn't know when the game would actually start?

There was a good amount, especially early on. A lot of teams have so many off days early in the season because they know there is going to be rain in those areas. It seems in April it's happening all the time. That's the crazy thing about San Diego. I don't think I've seen a tarp all year there.

We've talked about this quite a bit, so let's try to go deeper than you just taking about the philosophy that has gotten you through the ups and down of eight seasons – where you say you just ride the waves. Your numbers are generally way down. It's your first year with a new team, big contract, you're the guy. How difficult has it been?

It's been tough. I just want to help the team win any way I can. I feel like if I'm doing my job and driving in runs, that gives us a really good chance to win ballgames. There is no excuse for it. There's nothing different about what's happening. I just have to do a better job of getting it done.

You came in and went to work changing the culture of this clubhouse. The way you've affected guys, I've never seen anything like it. I know you had become that guy in Kansas City. How has it been different here?

I wouldn't say it's different. It's just you're starting from scratch when it comes to helping guys and molding guys. In Kansas City, we all kind of came up and learned together. Now it's certain things you continue to tell these guys – ways to play the game, how to be ready, how to prepare. These guys do a great job of that. That makes my job easy when it comes to being a veteran leader. There are not many times where I have to make sure guys are doing what they're supposed to be doing. A lot of these guys have a really good plan (regarding) what their routine is.

Yet so many guys in here are still learning. You've made it important to you – along with [Freddy Galvis](#) – to teach them how to deal with the highs and lows. And one thing Andy Green has stressed through your struggles at the plate is your attitude – almost like he has been somewhat shocked how positive you have remained and he is grateful you modeled that.

It's just understanding the game. It's the big leagues. It's tough. Yeah, there are going to be times you are tested. Everyone has gone through it. At the end of the day, you've got to continue to show everybody you're trying to win. You've got to continue to go out and give it your best effort. I'm not going to sit around and pout just because I'm not doing what I want to do. I still have to figure out ways to impact the game and try to get us on top.

To that end, every day you're talking to guys. One guy, two guys, five guys at a time. What made (Thursday) the day to have a whole-team meeting?

We came to a point where it was getting tough. We were in a really, really tough stretch. It was weighing on certain guys. We were trying to do certain things to get out of it. There are times you have to sit back and recognize it's not lack of effort, it's just not happening. Sometimes in this game you have to stake a step back instead of continuing to dial it up. I think it was one of those moments everybody realized all the work we're putting in and maybe we have to stop putting so much pressure on ourselves and go out and play the game and have a different attitude maybe and see if it works out.

You're one of the guys we can be reasonably certain will be around for a long time. I know you know who is coming. You follow the minor league system – Fernando Tatis, MacKenzie Gore, those guys. But you're really invested in the guys in this clubhouse now. Why is it important to you that some of these guys would be around when you expect this to be a winning team?

The beauty of it is these guys all have the opportunity to be part of that. Whatever that role is, you have to understand there is a role on this team that championship teams need guys to do. Christian Colon for us in Kansas City didn't have an at-bat in the playoffs, came up in the 12th inning of the clinching game of the World Series and got the game-winning hit. You realize everybody has an impact, whatever that role is. You have to know what that role is and do it to the best of your ability. That's what makes winning teams successful.

Minors MacKenzie Gore rounding into form with TinCaps

Jeff Sanders

The [Padres](#) top pitching prospect looked the part Thursday.

Left-hander **MacKenzie Gore** struck out eight over five shutout innings, giving low Single-A Fort Wayne a head start on a [5-4 win](#) over visiting Dayton.

Gore allowed two hits, two walks and threw 41 of his 56 pitches for strikes.

Since returning from his second DL stint (blisters), the 19-year-old Gore has 2.48 ERA, 54 strikeouts, 14 walks and is allowing a .506 OPS against opposing hitters over 40 innings.

For the season, Gore – ranked No. 2 in the organization and 11th overall by MLB.com – is 1-5 with a 3.75 ERA, 64 strikeouts and a 1.19 WHIP in 48 innings.

Right-hander **Austin Smith** (2.70) blew the save with three runs allowed in the eighth before right-hander **Dylan Coleman** (1-0, 0.93) struck out a batter in the ninth for the win.

Right fielder **Jack Suwinski** (.209) drove in three runs and hit his sixth homer and **Hunter Jarmon**, in his Midwest League debut, singled in the go-ahead run in the ninth for the walk-off win.

The TinCaps are 18-21 in the second half and 50-58 overall.

TRIPLE-A EL PASO (60-49)

- [Chihuahuas 11, New Orleans 4](#): LHP **Jerry Keel** (4-1, 3.34) struck out three and allowed two runs on six hits in six innings in the win. RF **Franmil Reyes** (.324) went 2-for-5 with his 16th homer and three RBIs, LF **Shane Peterson** (.271) drove in three runs on his 10th homer and CF **Auston Bousfield** (.256) drove in three runs on three doubles. 2B **Luis Urias** (.270) went 3-for-5 with a triple and an RBI.

DOUBLE-A SAN ANTONIO (21-19, 64-47)

- [Midland 8, Missions 2](#): RHP **Lake Bachar** (2-5, 5.95) allowed eight runs on 10 hits and two walks in five innings in the loss. CF **Buddy Reedy** (.164) went 1-for-5 with three strikeouts and two steals (10). 3B **Kyle Overstreet** (.272) went 1-for-3 with a walk and two runs.

HIGH SINGLE-A LAKE ELSINORE (19-22, 53-58)

- [Rancho Cucamonga 8, Storm 2](#): RHP **Bryan Mitchell** (0-1, 6.75) struck out three and allowed two runs on two hits and a walk in 2 2/3 innings in his first rehab start. Mitchell allowed a home run and threw 28 of his 52 pitches for strikes. RHP **Carter Capps** (6.75) allowed two runs on two hits and two strikeouts in the seventh inning. RF **Jorge Ona** (.242) drove in both runs on his sixth homer and walked in four plate appearances.

SHORT-SEASON TRI-CITY (5-5, 23-25)

- [Salem-Keizer 6, Dust Devils 4](#): RHP **Gabe Mosser** (1-1, 3.00) allowed two runs in two innings in the loss after RHP **Angel Acevedo** (2.88) struck out six and allowed four runs – two earned – on seven hits and a walk in seven innings. CF **Tre Carter** (.241) went 2-for-4 with an RBI, his eighth steal and a walk and RF **Luis Asuncion** (.275) went 2-for-4 with a double and a run.

ROOKIE DSL PADRES (27-25)

- [White Sox 7, Padres 1](#): RHP **Miguel Rondon** (2-1, 2.70) allowed four runs on five hits in two-thirds of an inning in the start. The Padres had four hits in the game.

Note

- Both AZL Padres games were postponed due to rain.

Transactions

- RHP [Colin Rea](#) was placed on El Paso's seven-day DL with shoulder tightness. Rea had struck out a season-high 10 batters over five shutout innings in a start on Monday. Rea is 2-5 with a 6.56 ERA, 57 strikeouts and a 1.77 WHIP in 60 1/3 innings spread between San Antonio and El Paso.
- RHP **Jacob Nix** was promoted from San Antonio to El Paso. The 22-year-old was 2-3 with a 2.05 ERA, 41 strikeouts and an 0.91 WHIP in nine starts (52 2/3 innings) with San Antonio.

Baez ties career high with 23rd homer, Cubs beat Padres 5-4

Associated Press

CHICAGO -- He's already an All-Star, but [Javier Baez](#) keeps finding ways to shine even brighter.

Baez tied his career high with his 23rd homer and took over the National League lead with 84 RBI, helping the [Chicago Cubs](#) defeat the [San Diego Padres](#) 5-4 on Friday. The infielder also tripled and threw out a runner at home in the eighth inning as the Cubs survived a late bullpen meltdown.

"Javy's game today was complete," manager Joe Maddon said. "Too many times in our industry we get hung up just on offensive numbers, but we won that game today on defense."

Baez, who's batting .299, is at the top of National League MVP candidates, at least as far as his teammates are concerned.

"His numbers are very good and very consistent offensively," said [Anthony Rizzo](#), who homered and had three hits. "Defensively, (running) the bases, he does it all."

"If he continues to do what he does ... and with a first-place team with a lot of expectations. He's just carrying the load."

Baez credits "baseball instinct" for his breakout season.

"It's just reacting to what you see, to be honest," Baez said. "I don't plan it, but as soon as I see it, I just react to it."

[Ben Zobrist](#) drove in two runs for the NL Central-leading Cubs, who entered one game ahead of Milwaukee. [Jose Quintana](#) (10-7) allowed one run and four hits in six innings, leaving with a 3-1 lead.

[Pedro Strop](#) nearly wasted a 5-2 advantage, allowing [Cory Spangenberg](#)'s RBI double and [Travis Jankowski](#)'s run-scoring grounder before third baseman [David Bote](#) threw out Spangenberg at the plate trying to score on [Manuel Margot](#)'s grounder. Baez had thrown out Jankowski at the plate in the eighth when Jankowski tried to score on [Hunter Renfroe](#)'s grounder to second.

Strop struck out pinch-hitter [Austin Hedges](#) with a man on for his sixth save in nine chances. "I thought it was a really good battle from our guys," Padres manager Andy Green said. "We had a lot of really good swings, some good at-bats. They made some big plays on us late in the game."

"Baez had a big one. Bote made a big one (from) third base there at the end."

[Tyson Ross](#) (6-9) gave up three runs and six hits in five innings as the Padres lost for the eighth time in their last nine games. San Diego is an NL-worst 43-69.

Baez led off the second with an opposite-field drive into the right-field bleachers, and Zobrist hit a sacrifice fly in the third.

[Christian Villanueva](#)'s 20th homer cut the gap in the fourth, but Zobrist grounded into a run-scoring forceout in the fifth and Rizzo homered off [Robert Stock](#) for a 4-1 lead in the seventh. Spangenberg scored when reliever [Steve Cishek](#) threw Margot's comebacker into center field for an error in an eighth, an inning that ended when [Brandon Kintzler](#) -- making his second appearance since his trade from Washington -- got Villanueva to line out with the bases loaded.

[Ian Happ](#) hit a sacrifice fly in the bottom half after Baez's triple.

TRAINER'S ROOM

LF [Wil Myers](#) was held out with a bruised left foot, sustained when he fouled off a pitch in sixth inning on Thursday. X-rays were negative and Myers was scheduled for an MRI and CT scan on Friday. Myers has missed 57 games this season with injuries. "I think he's got a bone bruise on his foot, no fractures," Green said.

Cubs: Chicago placed LHP [Brian Duensing](#) on the 10-day DL with left shoulder inflammation and recalled lefty Randy Rosario from Triple-A Iowa for the fourth time this season. Rosario entered in the eighth and walked [Eric Hosmer](#), his only batter. ... Manager Joe Maddon said INF [Kris Bryant](#) (left shoulder inflammation) is feeling stronger. Bryant has been out since July 23 with a recurrence of the injury that affects his swing follow-through. ... RHP [Yu Darvish](#) (right triceps tendinitis, elbow impingement) is scheduled to toss a bullpen session on Saturday.

UP NEXT

Padres LHP [Joey Lucchesi](#) (5-6, 3.74) faces Cubs RHP [Kyle Hendricks](#) (7-9, 3.97) on Saturday.

#PadresOnDeck: LHP MacKenzie Gore Throws 5 Shutout Innings

Luis Urías has 3 hits, Franmil Reyes hits 3–run homer

By Bill Center

Left-handed starter **MacKenzie Gore** pitched five shutout innings for Single-A Fort Wayne while **Luis Urías** and **Franmil Reyes** had big games with the bat Thursday night in the Padres' minor league system.

Gore, 19, is the [Padres' No2-ranked prospect](#) by MLB Pipeline and was the Padres' first pick (third overall) in the 2016 draft. He allowed two hits and two walks Thursday night while striking out eight to lower his earned run average to 3.78.

Urías, 21, the [Padres' No4 prospect](#), was 3-for-5 with a triple, a RBI and a run scored to raise his batting average to .270 for the Chihuahuas. Reyes, 23, was 2-for-5 with a three-run homer and two runs scored. He is hitting .324 for the Chihuahuas with 18 homers.

There were several other notable performances for El Paso.

— Left-handed starter **Jerry Keel** allowed two runs on six hits with three strikeouts in six innings. Keel is now 4–1 for the Chihuahuas with a 3.34 ERA.

— Center fielder **Auston Bousfield** (.256) had three doubles in five at-bats with three RBIs and a run scored.

— Left fielder **Shane Peterson** (.271) was 1-for-3 with a home run and a walk.

El Paso also had made a pair of moves. Right-handed starter **Colin Rea** was placed on the Pacific Coast League's seven-day disabled list. Right-handed starter **Jacob Nix**, the [Padres' No. 14 prospect](#), was promoted from Double-A San Antonio to El Paso.

Around the Farm:

TRIPLE-A EL PASO (60–49): CHIHUAHUAS 11, New Orleans 4 — RHP **Erik Johnson** (8.00 ERA) followed Keel and allowed a hit and a walk with a strikeout in a scoreless inning. LHP **Kyle McGrath** (3.54) allowed two runs on three hits in an inning. RHP **Rowan Wick** (2.92) issued a walk in an otherwise perfect inning. 1B **Allen Craig** (.300) backed Urías, Reyes, Bousfield and Peterson, going 2-for-4 with a run scored. 3B **Diego Goris** (.263) was 1-for-1 with a double and a run scored. C **Francisco Mejía** (.304) was 1-for-5 with two runs scored.

DOUBLE-A SAN ANTONIO (21–19, 63–47): MIDLAND 8, Missions 2 — C **Austin Allen** (.299) was 1-for-4 with a run scored. 3B **Kyle Overstreet** (.272) was 1-for-3 with a run scored. CF **Buddy Reed** (.164) was 1-for-5 with a stolen base. DH **Ty France** (.260), SS **River Stevens** (.250) and RF **Nick Schulz** (.155) were all 1-for-4. Starting RHP **Lake Bachar** (2–5, 5.95 ERA) allowed eight runs on 10 hits with two walks with four strikeouts in five innings to take the loss. RHP **Gerardo Reyes** (3.08) allowed a hit with a strikeout in two scoreless innings. RHP **Eric Yardley** (3.21) pitched a perfect inning.

ADVANCED SINGLE-A LAKE ELSINORE (19–22, 53–58): RANCHO CUCAMONGA 8, Storm 2 — RF **Jorge Oña** (.242) hit a two-run homer in three at-bats with a walk. 1B **Ruddy Giron** (.265) was 1-for-3. 3B **Hudson Potts** (.287) was 0-for-3 with a walk and a run scored. CF **Edward Olivares** (.269) and LF **Nate Easley** (.272) were each 1-for-4. RHP **Bryan Mitchell** made his first rehab start and allowed two runs on two hits and a walk with three strikeouts in 2 2/3 innings to take

the loss. RHP **Dauris Valdez** (4.81 ERA) struck out the only hitter he faced. RHP **Elliot Ashbeck** (2.44) allowed two runs on two hits with six strikeouts in three innings. RHP **Carter Capps**(6.75) allowed two runs on two hits with two strikeouts in an inning. RHP **Blake Rogers** (4.04) allowed two runs on three hits and a walk with an inning.

SINGLE-A FORT WAYNE (18–21, 50–58): TIN CAPS 5, Dayton 4—RF **Jack Suwinski** (.209) was 1-for-3 with a home run and a sacrifice fly. C **Jalen Washington** (.240) was 2-for-3 with a triple, a walk and a run scored. LF **Hunter Jarmon** was 1-for-3 with a walk, a run scored and a RBI in his debut for Fort Wayne. CF **Jeisson Rosario** (.281) was 1-for-3 with a walk and a run scored. SS **Gabriel Arias** (.223) had a double in four at-bats. 1B **Nick Feight**(.214) was 1-for-4. LHP **Fred Schlichtholz** (3.62 ERA) followed Gore and allowed an unearned run on four hits and a walk in two innings. RHP **Austin Smith** (2.70) allowed three runs on three hits with a strikeout in an inning. RHP **Dylan Coleman** (1–0, 0.93 ERA) struck out one in a perfect inning to get the win.

SHORT-SEASON SINGLE-A TRI-CITY (5–5, 23–25): Salem-Keizer 6, DUST DEVILS 4—Starting RHP **Angel Acevedo** (2.88 ERA) allowed four runs (two earned) on seven hits and a walk with six strikeouts in seven innings. RHP **Gabe Mosser** (1–1, 3.00) allowed two runs on three hits and two walks with a strikeout in two innings to take the loss. CF **Tre Carter** (.241) was 2-for-4 with a stolen base, a RBI and a run scored. RF **Luis Asuncion** (.275) was 2-for-4 with a double and a run scored. 2B **Luke Becker** (.229) had a RBI double in four at-bats. C **Blake Hunt** (.246) had a double in four at-bats with a run scored. LF **Grant Little** (.265) was 1-for-4 with a walk and a run scored. SS **Owen Miller** (.330) was 0-for-3 with two walks and a RBI.

DOMINICAN SUMMER LEAGUE PADRES (27–25): WHITE SOX 7, Padres 1—Starting RHP **Miguel Rondon** (2.70 ERA) allowed four runs on five hits with a strikeout in two-thirds of an inning.

ARIZONA ROOKIE PADRES:

PADRES-1 (15–18): The Padres-1 game was postponed by rain in the Phoenix area.

PADRES-2 (17–17): The Padres-2 game was postponed by rain in the Phoenix area.

Baez, Rizzo homer as Cubs beat Padres 5-4

AP

CHICAGO (AP) — CHICAGO (AP) — [Javier Baez](#) tied his career high with his 23rd home run and took over the National League lead with 84 RBIs, helping the [Chicago Cubs](#) defeat the [San Diego Padres](#) 5-4 on Friday.

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[Anthony Rizzo](#) homered and had three hits, and [Ben Zobrist](#) drove in two runs for the NL Central-leading Cubs, who entered one game ahead of Milwaukee.

Baez's solo shot in the second inning gave the All-Star 84 RBIs.

Tyson Ross (6-9) gave up three runs and six hits in five innings as the Padres lost for the eighth time in their last nine games. San Diego is an NL-worst 43-69.

Baez led off the second with an opposite-field drive into the right-field bleachers, and Zobrist hit a sacrifice fly in the third.

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