

NHL: Bruins Beat Flyers 4-1, Lead Semifinal Series 3-0

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Boston Bruins are one win away from a surprising trip to the Eastern Conference finals that has been 18 years in the making. Blake Wheeler and Miroslav Satan scored 94 seconds apart to stun the Philadelphia Flyers on their home ice and get Boston rolling in Game 3. Tuukka Rask took over from there and made all the huge saves.

Mark Recchi and Patrice Bergeron also scored for Boston in a 4-1 win over the Flyers that lifted the Bruins to a commanding 3-0 lead in the Eastern semifinal series on Wednesday night.

Boston is on the brink of a sweep and

a berth in hockey's final four for the first time since 1992.

"We are in good shape, but now we have to take care of business," Rask said. Rask finished with 34 saves after allowing a quick goal. The Bruins can complete the sweep in Philadelphia on Friday night.

"It was just one of those games when you see a lot of shots, you feel comfortable, you're not making any extra moves and you're standing there and everything seems to hit you," Rask said.

Wheeler and Satan scored in the first period to wipe out the Flyers' early lead, and the Bruins never looked back. They

won the first two games of the series at home — and the Bruins might not play in Boston again until the conference finals.

Arron Asham scored for the Flyers. Philadelphia has never won a series when trailing 3-0 (0-6). Only two NHL teams have recovered from such a deficit and advanced.

"We outplayed them pretty much in the first two periods. Our confidence was fine, we just couldn't get the puck past Tuukka," Asham said. "He made some big saves for them and blocked a lot of shots. I think if we play the same way Friday night, we will be fine."

The Flyers' first home playoff game

since April 20 had an unusual vibe from the start. There were large patches of empty seats — mostly in the upper deck — and the normally rocking crowd of 20,000-plus was quiet from the opening faceoff.

Perhaps they sensed something. The Flyers gave their fans a quick jolt, scoring first when Asham flipped the puck under a sliding Rask's glove only 2:32 in. It did more than give the Flyers the first lead of the game — it was their first lead of the series.

And their last one of the night. The Bruins took over from there, even as injuries forced center David Krejci and

Adam McQuaid out of the game. Krejci was leveled on a crushing hit from Flyers captain Mike Richards that actually led to Boston's go-ahead goal.

The loose puck was corralled by Milan Lucic, who got it to Satan for his fifth goal of the postseason and a 2-1 Boston lead.

BLACKHAWKS 5, CANUCKS 2: VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Big Chicago forward Dustin Byfuglien banged in a pair of power-play rebounds and added an assist to lift the Blackhawks to a 5-2 win over the Vancouver Canucks and a 2-1 lead in the Western Conference semifinal series on Wednesday night.

Kris Versteeg, Marian Hossa and Patrick Kane also scored, and Antti Niemi made 16 of his 31 saves in the first period. The Blackhawks picked up where they left off in Game 2 when they scored three goals in a third-period comeback win.

GPAC

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No. 5 Doane (29-16)

LEADING HITTERS: Anthony Hincy (.417, 1 HR, 26 RBI, 18 SB); Blake Snow (.360, 2 HR, 35 RBI); A.J. Spaniel (.354, 1 HR, 30 RBI); Mike Albert (.349, 5 HR, 32 RBI, 8 SB). TOP PITCHERS: Dexter Spitsnogle (6-1, 2.21 ERA); Ryan Otto (7-2, 3.96 ERA); Jacob Gathley (4-1, 4.24 ERA); Britton Scheele (4-3, 5.36 ERA). VS. MMC: Swept on March 28, lost 7-1 and 8-4.

No. 6 Northwestern (29-18)

LEADING HITTERS: Brad Payne (.469, 6 HR, 40 RBI, 16 SB); Stephen Englund (.423, 5 HR, 31 RBI, 19 SB); Mike Zoellner (.321, 1 HR, 29 RBI, 4 SB); Curt Bomgaars (.311, 1 HR, 35 RBI, 18 SB). TOP PITCHERS: Brad Payne (5-2, 4.22 ERA); Mike Zoellner (5-2, 4.62 ERA); Jesus Santoyo (3-1, 5.75 ERA); Jared Kirkeby (5-3, 7.12 ERA). VS. MMC: Swept MMC, winning 7-4 and 5-2 on April 25.

No. 8 Concordia (14-34)

LEADING HITTERS: Zach Goodrich (.377, 21 RBI); Nate Schmolli (.380, 6 HR, 38 RBI); Dustin Matlock (.307, 9 HR, 28 RBI); Martin Rodriguez (.236, 20 RBI). TOP PITCHERS: Brad Ramp (5-4, 5.55 ERA); Steven Ivanoff (2-7, 6.59 ERA); Jacob Yurich (2-5, 7.36 ERA); Jacob Shaffer (2-2, 1.77 ERA). VS. MMC: Split with the Lancers on April 11 - lost 13-0, won 4-3.

No. 7 Hastings (17-28)

LEADING HITTERS: A.J. Clark (.372, 1 HR, 26 RBI); John Rivera (.335, 10 HR, 47 RBI);

Mac Land (.318, 5 HR, 28 RBI); Geoff Hobbs (.314, 1 HR, 27 RBI). TOP PITCHERS: A.J. Clark (5-3, 3.59 ERA); Kirby Wells (4-3, 5.01 ERA); Michael Crain (4-3, 5.76 ERA); Jeff Burks (4-5, 7.27 ERA).

MMC

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Week Trey Krier. The senior (94, 2.10 ERA) pitched 12 innings in a 24-hour period last weekend, allowing one unearned run while striking out 11 and walking just one in victories over Morningside and Dakota Wesleyan. He took a no-hitter into the seventh Friday, and retired the final 14 batters of the game on Saturday.

The victories in back-to-back games proved crucial as the Lancers clinched the league title. "We had our own tournament within last weekend," Bernatow said. "First we were trying to knock out Morningside and keep ourselves alive. Then Dakota Wesleyan was trying to do the same to us."

Because the Lancers pushed many of their regular pitchers, it may change their lineup for this weekend. "We ran some arms tired," he noted. "That might affect who gets the starting nods in certain games."

Krier has recorded 71 strikeouts and just five walks in 64 1/3 innings this season. Josh Damewood (8-1, 5.27 ERA) has been the team's other left-handed ace, striking out 60 batters in 54 2/3 innings. Nick Huston (4-4, 6.59 ERA) and Allen Hemeyer (5-1, 7.30 ERA) have been the team's other conference starters. Nick Wenande (4-4, 9.64 ERA) has also been a starter for the squad.

Out of the bullpen, Schmidt (1-0, 3.26 ERA) has closed the door, striking out 31 batters in 19 1/3 innings pitched. Josh Homme (2-1, 5.48 ERA) and Jake Broscha (0-1, 5.06 ERA) have both made double-digit appearances. Damewood (.475, 4 HR, 63 RBI) and Schmidt (.455, 5 HR, 35 RBI) rank first and second in the GPAC in batting this season. Josh Wenande is also over the .400 mark, batting .404, while outfielder Zach Lambrechts (.395, 7 HR, 50 RBI) sits just under that mark. Krier (.326, 2 HR, 32 RBI), Jason Livermont (.321, 1 HR, 25 RBI) and Andy Turbak (.313, 6 HR, 47 RBI) have also been key offensive cogs.

Mientkiewicz Agrees To Minor League Deal With Marlins

MIAMI (AP) — First baseman Doug Mientkiewicz has agreed to a minor league contract with the Florida Marlins and will report to their Triple-A affiliate in New Orleans.

The Marlins confirmed the deal Wednesday.

The 35-year-old Mientkiewicz is attempting a comeback from a separated shoulder that required surgery last season and limited him to 18 at-bats for the Los Angeles Dodgers. He was with them in spring training this year but failed to make the team.

Mientkiewicz broke into the major leagues in 1998 with Minnesota and has a lifetime average of .271 in 1,087 games. He won a Gold Glove in 2001 with the Twins.

Mientkiewicz went to high school in Miami with Yankees star Alex Rodriguez.



Mount Marty senior pitcher Trey Krier is 9-0 this season with a 2.10 ERA, with 71 strikeouts in 64 1/3 innings.

five, more like two through seven." Bernatow said. "We're going to do everything we can to win that game, then move on to the next." Regardless of this weekend's outcome, MMC will be headed to a NAA regional, scheduled for May 18-21. Pairings will be announced on May 14. The winners of each of the nine five-team opening round brackets, as well as host Lewis & Clark State, will converge on Lewiston, Idaho for the NAA Championships, May 28-June 4.

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Vikings Stadium Bill Suffers Setbacks

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — A bill for a new Vikings stadium lost ground Wednesday after being defeated in a key House committee, undergoing major surgery in a Senate panel and losing the spotlight to a court ruling over last year's budget.

The bill's Senate sponsor refused to declare it dead, but Gov. Tim Pawlenty said stadium discussions are "not helpful" as he and lawmakers grapple with the implications of a Supreme Court ruling overturning budget cuts he made last year.

"I would hope the Legislature would turn its attention to these budget issues, which are of constitutional magnitude," Pawlenty said. "They are the first order of business, they are the most important order of business and we need to have focus on that."

Sen. Tom Bakk, the bill's Senate sponsor, said the proposal could still find a way through the legislative process, but the new budget wrinkle doesn't help its chances. The state constitution requires the Legislature to adjourn by May 17.

In two hearings, stadium backers took pointed questions from lawmakers about the proposal for

"The Vikings are a statewide asset, so we need a statewide solution."

— ELIZABETH GLIDDEN

a new \$791 million facility. A House state and local government operations panel rejected the proposal on a 10-9 vote.

The defeated bill would have tapped a stream of Minneapolis tax money now going to pay off bonds on the city's convention center. It also would have established a new lottery scratch-off game and envisioned the team paying a third of the cost.

Hours later, a similar Senate government operations panel approved a different version of the bill on a 9-3 vote. The version that passed was significantly made over from the original bill, which would have raised taxes on jerseys, hotel rooms and car rentals.

The Senate bill now contains a plan to bring in an unspecified amount of money by selling permanent seats in the new stadium. Sen. Rick Olseen, a Democrat from Harris, said good seats could go

for as much as \$20,000. Even so, Vikings executive Lester Bagley said a similar proposal for the Twins ballpark was scrapped because it didn't bring in enough money.

The Senate bill doesn't specify where the Vikings stadium would be built.

Minneapolis was an early focus, but City Council member Elizabeth Glidden outlined the city's reservations about giving up convention center money. She said the state's largest city shouldn't have to finance a stadium alone.

"The Vikings are a statewide asset, so we need a statewide solution," she said. Bagley said the quest for a new stadium continues. "Passing the stadium bill is never a straight line from start to finish," he said. "These controversial bills stumble. This is expected."

MLS: Galaxy Reverse Trend By Winning In Denver

COMMERCE CITY, Colo. (AP) — Alan Gordon scored in the first half and the Los Angeles Galaxy won for the first time in Denver in nearly eight years, beating the Colorado Rapids 1-0 on Wednesday night.

Edson Buddle was scoreless for the Galaxy (6-0-1) after scoring nine goals in the first six games of the season. Donovan Ricketts had his fifth shutout of the year.

Colorado (3-3-1) lost at home for the first time in eight games

dating to August 2009. The Rapids were shut out for the second straight game.

CHIVAS USA 4, REVOLUTION 0: FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — Jesus Padilla scored twice, and Justin Braun and Blair Gavina added goals for Chivas USA.

Padilla scored in the 26th and 48th minutes, Braun connected in the 33rd, and Gavin capped the scoring for Chivas USA (3-1-1) in the 81st.

For the second straight match, New England (2-4-1) was forced to play a man down after Marko Perovic was given a red card in the 29th minute.

FC DALLAS 1, DYNAMO 0: HOUSTON (AP) — Ugo Ihemelu scored in the 79th minute and FC Dallas, playing the final 18

minutes a man down, held on for its first victory of the season.

Ihemelu scored off Dax McCarty's free kick to help FC Dallas improve to 1-1-4.

FC Dallas went down a man in the 72nd minute when Jair Benitez received a straight red card and ejection for elbowing Houston striker Luis Landin in the face.

Houston dropped to 3-3-1.

DC UNITED 2, WIZARDS 1: WASHINGTON (AP) — Danny Alsoopp scored twice in the first half to help D.C. United win for the first time this season.

Alsoopp, acquired by United (1-5-0) as a free agent during the offseason, became the first Australian to score in MLS history. Kei Kamara scored in second-half stoppage time for Kansas City (2-3-1).

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