



MLB: Loons expect a far different SuperDraft. C5
U men's hockey: Gophers end Big Ten losing streak. C5
Winner, Top 10 Sports section in the nation



FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2018 StarTribune SPORTS STARTRIBUNE.COM/SPORTS · C3

SPORTS

GOPHERS WOMEN 90, WISCONSIN 65 Sunday: 3 p.m. vs. No. 20 Iowa (no TV)

U dominates Badgers

Kenisha Bell's 24 points lead Gophers to their 10th win in a row over Wisconsin

By HEATHER RILEY
Special to the Star Tribune

Call it a bounce-back game for Gophers junior Kenisha Bell. The speedy guard won six games in a row this season with 20-plus points. Then she failed to hit double digits in three of the past four games. Until Thursday night against rival Wisconsin.

Bell scored a game-high 24 points in the Gophers' dominant 90-65 victory over Wisconsin in Big Ten women's basketball at Williams Arena. It was the 13, 10th victory in a row in the Border Battle series. Minnesota is 15-5 overall (4-3 Big Ten), its best 20-game start since 1982-83.

"When I started drawing foul, I was more confident in what I was doing and not overthinking passes and overthinking shots," Bell said.

The Badgers (7-13, 0-7) couldn't contain Bell, who also had a team-high eight assists and scored 20 of her points in the first half. She was 10-for-30 from the free-throw line, tying a season high.

"So her star line is packed," Gophers coach Melrose Stimpert said. "But what I really liked to see was that she was playing, and in particular how smart she was playing in the first half."

The Gophers used an early 2-8 run to separate themselves from the Badgers. It was quickly followed by some quick points from sophomore forward Dajha Bell, who scored seven points and grabbed three boards in the final 1:30 of the first quarter.

All of a sudden, the Gophers had doubled up their opponent with a 24-12 lead.

"I just wanted to make sure that I come in and make sure that I'm efficient with the shots I take," said Bell, a reserve who was 6-for-6 shooting in 17 minutes. "And make sure that I play defense and rebound."

Bello kept playing well in the second half, too. She finished with her second

See U WOMEN on C3D



BELLE JAMES SCHREIBER - www.james@startribune.com

Gophers guard Kenisha Bell took a shot in the first half, when she scored 20 of her 24 points. She also had eight assists.

Rockets provide a lesson for Wolves

It's tough at the top in the Western Conference.

By BRYE ZOGA
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HOUSTON - Meeting the Western Conference's second-best team for the first time this season here in mid-January, the Timberwolves endured a 16-98 loss at Houston on Thursday night that might have reminded them just how far they need to go if they're serious about a playoff run.

Wolves 12 times in 15 games only four days earlier, the Wolves went winless on a two-game trip that started Tuesday in Orlando and now face four teams with winning records down ahead, three of them on the road.

"We just talked about that," Wolves coach Tom Thibodeau said after emerging from his team's locker room long after the game.

"Things can change very quickly in this league. We went from winning five in a row and now we've slipped and we've got to play with more of an edge and we have to bounce back. The games keep coming."

Rockets superstar James Harden returned to action after missing seven games because of a strained hamstring. He didn't score 20 points for the first time this season, a 32-game stretch to start the season that only

See WOLVES on C3E



MICHAEL WYER - Associated Press. Rockets guard Chris Paul tried to dribble past Wolves guard Jeff Pendergast on his way to 19 points and nine assists.

NORTH SCORE Analytics and the stories they tell

Wild limiting foes' most risky shots

So startling last in Corsi percentage is not so grave.

By CHRIS HINE
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The statistic known as Corsi percentage has grabbed a hold of the hockey world the way a defenseman grabs an opposing forward who pokes the goaltender after a whistle.

Corsi percentage sounds more complicated than it is. It's a measure of overall shot attempts, including saves: Does your team shoot more than your opponent? And, how often is your team on the offensive attack? More

shots mean more offensive zone time. Every shot counts the same, whether it's saved, blocked or misses the net.

The Wild is dead last in this darling of the analytics community with a 48.1 Corsi percentage during 5-on-5 play, according to naturalstatistic.com. Of the combined 1,700 shot attempts during 5-on-5 play counted in the Wild's 46 games, 2,120 have come from their opponents. By comparison, top-ranked Carolina is at 57.7 percent and Tampa Bay, which visits St. Paul on Saturday to end Minnesota's bye week, is third (52.8).

See CORSI on C7

MARYLAND 77, GOPHERS MEN 66 Saturday: 11 a.m. vs. No. 22 Ohio State • Madison Square Garden, New York (BTN)

Gophers drubbed in second half



BRUCE SHERMAN - Associated Press. Nate Mason, playing keepers by Anthony Cowan, played all 40 minutes Thursday night but shot only 5-for-16.

A 21-2 Maryland run put the U away suddenly.

By MARGUS KULLER
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COLLEGE PARK, Md. - With seconds winding down in the first half Thursday night, Maryland's Anthony Cowan drove hard to the basket at State Mason, but he lost the ball out of bounds at the buzzer.

What looked like a positive sequence going into halftime down only a point turned out a little concerning for the Gophers when Mason walked gingerly off the court, grabbing his hip in pain.

Cowan Richard Pendergast can't afford to lose any more key players already minus

two starters, so Mason ended up playing all 40 minutes a bit banged up.

But the Gophers didn't have the same fight in the second half, falling 77-66 to Maryland in front of an announced 13,736 at the XFINITY Center.

"I think he [Cowan] was making his drive in. It's hard on him. It's difficult, but it's the situation we have right now."

Mason finished with 14 points but shot only 5-for-16 from the field. Jordan Murphy had 19 points and 14 rebounds for the Gophers (4-7, 3-5 Big Ten), who fell to 1-4 without suspended center Reggie Lynch and injured guard Ante Collier (shoulder).

See GPHRS on C3D