

13 Hamilton wins fourth career F1 title at Mexican Grand Prix



14 Wheeler scores 3 of Jets' 5 goals in first-period to rout Pens 7-1



15 PSG, Barcelona on verge of Champions League last 16



HOUSTON: Derek Fisher #21 of the Houston Astros slides in to home plate scoring the game winning run during the tenth inning against Austin Barnes #15 of the Los Angeles Dodgers in game five of the 2017 World Series at Minute Maid Park yesterday. —AFP

Astros edge Dodgers in thriller

Second-highest score for a losing team in history

HOUSTON: Alex Bregman singled home Derek Fisher with the winning run in the 10th inning and the Houston Astros reached the brink of their first World Series title Sunday by outlasting the Los Angeles Dodgers 13-12 in a tension-packed thriller.

The Astros seized a 3-2 lead in Major League Baseball's best-of-seven final and can claim the crown by winning game six on Tuesday in Los Angeles. The Dodgers, seeking a seventh championship and their first since 1988, must win to force a winner-take-all seventh game on Wednesday. In an epic game that mirrored the momentum swings a drama-filled series has produced, the outcome was decided after five hours and 17 minutes by standouts for each club.

Astros catcher Brian McCann started the decisive rally by taking first base when struck in the right arm by a pitch from Dodgers closing pitcher Kenley Jansen, who then walked George Springer to put the winning run on second base. The Astros inserted pinch-runner Fisher and Bregman followed with a single to left field that sent Fisher racing across the plate ahead of a desperate throw that was too late to prevent the deciding run and an emotional celebration by the Astros and their fans.

It was the second-highest score for a losing team in World Series history, the only similar slugfest in the event's

113 editions being Toronto's 15-14 game-four win at Philadelphia in 1993. The Astros led 12-9 in the ninth and were one strike from victory before the Dodgers equalized.

Yasiel Puig smashed a two-run homer into the left-field stands off Houston relief pitcher Chris Devenski with one out to pull the Dodgers within 12-11. It was the 22nd homer of this World Series, breaking the total homers mark of 21 set in 2002, and the game's seventh combined homer for both teams, matching a Series record from 1989.

Austin Barnes followed with a double and took third on Joc Pederson's ground out to shortstop. Dodgers leadoff batter Chris Taylor was down to his last strike before ripping a single up the middle to score Barnes and level the game. Houston's Yuli Gurriel smacked a two-out, two-run double in the Astros' half of the ninth to put a winning run in scor-

ing position but Josh Reddick flew out to force extra innings.

SPRINGER MAKES UP FOR MISS

Cody Bellinger tripled in Enrique Hernandez in the seventh after Astros centerfielder George Springer missed a diving catch attempt to give the Dodgers an 8-7 edge. Houston's Bregman then singled and scored on Jose Altuve's double, and Carlos Correa followed with a two-run homer that gave the Astros an 11-8 lead. The Dodgers answered in the eighth, Pederson blasting a double off the left-field wall and scoring on Corey Seager's double. But Brian McCann smacked a solo homer to boost the Astros' edge to 12-9, setting up the ninth-inning drama.

The Dodgers seized a 7-4 advantage in the fifth inning

after Astros relief pitcher Collin McHugh walked Seager and Justin Turner then surrendered a three-run homer to Bellinger, who was batting only 2-for-17 with 10 strikeouts in the World Series.

But the Astros equalized in the bottom of the fifth on Altuve's three-run homer over the left-field wall.

DODGERS SQUANDER BIG LEAD

Dodgers star left-hander Clayton Kershaw, 3-0 in the playoffs, allowed four runs in the fourth inning as the Astros pulled level, the first time this year Los Angeles squandered a four-run edge.

Gurriel, whose controversial racist gesture in game three aimed at Dodgers' Japanese pitcher Yu Darvish did not result in a World Series ban, smashed a three-run homer after a run-scoring Correa double. Gurriel was suspended for the first five games of the 2018 campaign for his game three actions. Astros left-hander Dallas Keuchel, game one's losing pitcher, surrendered four runs off five hits and an error over 3 2/3 innings in the shortest playoff outing by a Houston starter. The Dodgers jumped ahead 4-0 as Logan Forsythe hit a two-run single, Hernandez scored from third on an errant throw by Gurriel and Forsythe scored on a Barnes single. — AFP



Springer misses a diving catch attempt

Saudi women to be allowed into sports stadiums

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia will allow women into sports stadiums for the first time from next year, authorities said Sunday, in a landmark move opening up three previously male-only venues to families. The ultra-conservative kingdom, which has some of the world's tightest restrictions on women, has long barred women from sports arenas by strict rules on segregation of the sexes in public.

The announcement is in line with powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's ambitious reforms shaking up the kingdom, including the historic decision to allow women to drive from next June.

"Starting the preparation of three stadiums in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam to be ready to

accommodate families from early 2018," the General Sports Authority said on Twitter. Restaurants, cafes and video screens would be set up inside the venues, the authority added.

Last month hundreds of women were allowed to enter a sports stadium in Riyadh, used mostly for football matches, in a one-off event to celebrate Saudi Arabia's national day. Sunday's announcement implies that women in Saudi Arabia will be allowed for the first time to attend sporting events inside stadiums alongside men.

Under the country's guardianship system, a male family member—normally the father, husband or brother—must grant permission for a woman's study, travel and other activities.

But the kingdom appears to be relaxing some norms as part of its sweeping "Vision 2030" plan for economic and social reforms as it prepares for a post-oil era. Last month a royal decree said women would be allowed to drive. The kingdom is also expected to lift a public ban on cinemas and has encouraged mixed-gender celebrations—something unseen before.

"First women driving, now stadiums. What's next? Night clubs?" said one Saudi Twitter user, echoing a deluge of social media comments

expressing surprise over the accelerating pace of reforms. In a rare public appearance last week Prince Mohammed pledged a "moderate" Saudi Arabia, long seen as an exporter of a brand of puritanical Islam espoused by jihadists worldwide. MBS, as he is well known, promised his kingdom will return to "what we were before—a country of moderate Islam that is tolerant of all religions and to the world".

His comment, while unveiling plans for a \$500-billion development zone, chimes with his public image of a bold liberal reformer in a conservative country where more than half the population is under 25. But his vision for a new Saudi Arabia is fraught with risks and could trigger a backlash from conservatives, analysts warn. "Despite the bold statements, it is important to remember that the dominance of conservative thought since the late 1970's cannot be quickly reversed," said analysis firm Eurasia Group.

"Ultraconservative and radical elements continue to pose risks." The government appears to have clipped the wings of the once-feared religious police—long accused of harassing the public with rigid Islamic mores—who have all but disappeared from big cities.—AFP



RIYADH: In this Sept 23, 2017 file photo released by Saudi Press Agency, SPA, Saudi men and women attend national day ceremonies at the King Fahd stadium in Riyadh. — AP