

Thursday's results

MLB

Rockies 1
Brewers 11

Twins 7
Tigers 6

Mariners 2
A's 3

Giants 3
Mets 7

Reds rip Cubs with 7 homers

Lilly fails to earn 10th win, series sweep

BY RICK GANO
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO — David Ross and the Cincinnati Reds felt right at home with the wind blowing out of Wrigley Field on Thursday.

The Chicago Cubs' friendly confines was even nicer to a visiting team, for once.

Ross hit two of Cincinnati's seven homers, a long-ball barrage that included Ken Griffey Jr.'s 605th, and the Reds avoided a sweep with a 12-7 victory.

It was only Chicago's 11th home loss this season.

"It was a hot and humid day, and I've seen that ball travel here on these kind of days big time. Anything that was up in the air, you were always nervous," said Reds manager Dusty Baker, who skippered the Cubs for four years and knows all about wild games at the neighborhood park.

"That was big for the offense to break out like that and keep scoring. In this ballpark you're never comfortable. I don't care what the lead is, especially with the offense that they have over there."

Edwin Encarnacion, Brandon Phillips, Adam Dunn and Joey Votto also homered with the wind blowing out at 12 mph on a muggy day. The Reds tied their season high for homers — they also had seven against the Cubs at their longball-friendly yard, Great American Ball Park, on May 7.

Backup catcher Ross had one



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Cincinnati Reds' Ken Griffey Jr. hits a three-run homerun against the Chicago Cubs during the fourth inning of a baseball game on Thursday in Chicago.

homer all season before hitting solo shots in the fifth off Jon Lieber and seventh off newly acquired Chad Gaudin.

"I had a chance to play today and made the most of it," Ross said. "I think everybody wants to hit when the wind is blowing out here."

Griffey hit a three-run drive off reliever Michael Wuertz as Cincinnati scored four times in the fourth to take an 8-3 lead. He also had a run-scoring double and finished with four RBIs

"We were just trying to get base hits. Sometimes you get the ball in the air and it can go out," Griffey said. "The wind was blowing out."

Griffey's 12th homer of the season got him within four of tying Sammy Sosa for fifth on the career list with 609.

The Reds chased Ted Lilly (9-6) after 2-3 innings, his shortest outing of the season. The left-hander gave up six hits and four runs before he was removed by manager

Lou Piniella.

"An ugly inning," Lilly said of the third. "I understand why Lou wanted to go in a different direction."

Mike Fontenot homered for Chicago, which dropped to 35-11 at home.

All-Star outfielder Kosuke Fukudome fouled a ball off his leg in the eighth and was replaced in the field in the ninth. Fukudome said he was OK but playing every day could be wearing on the Cubs' first-year player.

NHL, Russian league reach transfer agreement

Deal ends threat of big-money offers; respects contracts

BY GRAHAM DUNBAR
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ZURICH, Switzerland — The NHL reached an agreement with a new Russian hockey league Thursday that temporarily ends the threat of players being lured away by big-money offers.

The pact to respect player contracts across all borders followed offers made last month by teams in Russia's Continental Hockey League — which begins play in September — to entice Evgeni Malkin out of the final year of his deal with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

It was reached at a meeting of the

NHL, the NHL Players' Association and international hockey leagues in Zurich, the home of the International Ice Hockey Federation.

"Everyone in the room agreed that for the foreseeable future everyone will respect everybody's contracts," NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly said.

Players' union director Paul Kelly said all parties recognized the need for "clear respect between leagues."

The deal was brokered with Russian league founder Alexander Medvedev, who had given his teams a green light to approach players.

Medvedev was nominated to the working group that will meet in New York in September in hopes of creating an international transfer agreement to replace the one that lapsed last month after six European leagues backed out.

Russia had withdrawn three years ago.

The group will also look at plans to globalize the game, including holding a World Cup in 2012.

"There is no sense to make a war," IIHF president Rene Fasel said. "Everyone agrees we could make a war very easily, but with no winner. The loser will be the game."

"Even if we don't have a transfer agreement today we have a very good understanding of each other."

The European nations — Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Slovakia and Switzerland — also want an increase in the \$200,000 compensation fee they get when an out-of-contract player leaves for an NHL franchise.

The Continental league, known as the KHL in Russia, will have

24 teams — including one each in neighboring Belarus and Kazakhstan — that can have five overseas players on a 25-man roster.

Daly said the NHL and KHL established a mutual understanding since meeting at the IIHF world championships in Canada in May.

"We don't view them as a threat," he said. "We still believe the best hockey players in the world will continue to want to play in the NHL."

"But having said that, they want to establish a new order and a new league that may one day be broader than Russia," Daly added. "It is an ambitious business plan and it looks like they have capable leadership."

With demand for players likely to drive up salaries, the NHLPA sees the Russian newcomer as a positive development.