



AP Photo/Ben Margot, File

In this June 14, 2015, file photo, Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, left, is guarded by Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James during the second half of Game 5 of basketball's NBA Finals in Oakland, Calif. James knows there's no stopping Stephen Curry. The Cavaliers, healthier and better built for the NBA Finals than a year ago, feel their best chance to beat the Warriors is to contain the MVP and sideman Klay Thompson from splashing 3-pointers for four quarters.

Seattle uses 5 home runs to pummel Padres

SEATTLE (AP) — When the Seattle Mariners offseason makeover was complete, the expectation was they would be less reliant on hitting home runs.

Tell that to the rest of the league.

After Tuesday's 16-4 pummeling of San Diego that featured five homers — two by Seth Smith — no team in baseball has hit more home runs than the Mariners' 77.

Seattle scored 13 of its 16 runs with two outs, including three of the five home runs.

"Just get on base and see what the next guy can do and go from there. It's nice to see," Seattle manager Scott Servais said. "Our guys are just having a good at-bat. You're not always going to get hits. It's not always going to work out that way but today a number of times it certainly did."

The Mariners are at 30 wins entering the month of June for the first time since 2003, and rebounded from an unexpected weekend sweep by Minnesota.

Smith led the onslaught, hitting a three-run home run in the third inning that knocked San Diego starter James Shields from the game and adding a solo shot in the fifth. It was his seventh career multi-homer game and first since he was playing for the Padres in 2014.

But he wasn't alone. Kyle Seager had a three-run homer in the second, Franklin Gutierrez hit a two-run home run in the fourth and Adam Lind added a three-run shot in the fifth off reliever Luis Perdomo.

By the time five innings were completed, the Mariners had 16 runs and 14 hits.

"We've got guys throughout the lineup that can do it and some guys that have been doing it all season," Smith said. "It's unique when it comes together and everybody is doing it on the same day, but nothing anyone did today was surprising."

Shields (2-7) has been the subject of trade rumors, but Tuesday's performance won't impress any suitors. Shields tied a career-high with 10 runs allowed and could not close out innings. The most damaging was

Healthy again at last, MVP Curry chases second title

By JANIE MCCAULEY
AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Fresh charcoal gray NBA Finals cap on backward and wearing a wide grin, Stephen Curry summed up his wild, up-and-down postseason so far and reminded everybody he's not close to done.

The MVP's got his groove back, all right — looking healthy again at last after dealing with a troublesome ankle, right knee sprain that sidelined him and even a puffy elbow from an awkward dive into the stands.

"Now we're four wins away from our goal, and that's a pretty special accomplishment," Curry said Monday night after his Golden State Warriors wrapped up the Western Conference finals by beating the Oklahoma City Thunder in Game 7.

Curry is taking the 73-win Warriors back to the NBA Finals with a shot at a second straight championship, his plan from the get go.

Golden State's ultimate goal of a repeat title has been in the works since Day 1, even if the Warriors' chances of digging out of a big hole against Oklahoma City looked dire just last week. His body beat up, Curry had no choice but to watch fellow Splash

Brother Klay Thompson and others carry the Warriors for much of this postseason run while he worked his way back.

It's his time again. Just as he did after the Warriors won Game 5 to stave off elimination, Curry chanted through Oracle Arena, "We ain't going home!" as Golden State became just the 10th team to rally from a 3-1 deficit to win a post-season series with Monday night's 96-88 Game 7 victory.

Curry and his teammates earned a day off Tuesday before preparations begin in earnest Wednesday for a Finals rematch against LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers, who lost last season's title to Golden State in six games. Game 1 is Thursday night at Oracle Arena.

For Curry, there's just one more step to take to cap a remarkable, record-setting season. The 28-year-old global superstar was the first unanimous MVP award in league history, while also becoming the first player not only to make 300 3-pointers in a season but also 400 — he finished with 402 — before a series of injuries slowed him when it mattered most.

There was the injured ankle in the first-round Houston series, then he returned only to slip on a wet

spot in Game 4 against the Rockets and sprained his right knee. He made a dive into the Oracle Arena stands against the Thunder and gave himself a puffy elbow, and for a few games Curry hardly looked comfortable with his typically breezy ball-handling and shoot-from-anywhere rhythm.

Until he did again. His teammates have come to expect nothing less, even when Curry's body is hurting and speculation swirls about whether he is playing somewhere around 70 percent. He has learned to block out the chatter along the way, knowing that just comes with being the best.

"That's really one thing that I admire about him. He's a person that's never going to change for anybody. He hasn't changed to try to prove anything," said 2015 Finals MVP Andre Iguodala. "He just stayed true to himself."

Curry scored 36 points in the deciding game while making seven 3-pointers and dishing out eight assists. He wound up with 32 3s against the Thunder, the most ever in a seven-game postseason series.

"I feel joy, for sure," he said. "This is an unbelievable accomplishment, to go back to back to the Finals and continue this journey. So I'm kind

of just taking in the moment and enjoying it with my teammates."

And for anybody still questioning his toughness, Coach of the Year Steve Kerr brushes such things aside with another timely joke: "Because he looks like he's 12."

Perhaps it's easy to forget how Curry led the Warriors to an NBA-record 24-0 start and a record 73-9 finish.

"You have an MVP, two-time, and what he contributes every single night and what he means on the floor for them, you just have to have your antenna up even more," Cleveland's Kyrie Irving said.

Four more wins, that's all Curry cares about right now. However they come.

"The one thing with Steph is he understands that with all these accolades, MVPs, commercials, with all that comes great responsibility to his team, to the organization, the fans. He gets that," Kerr said. "He understands that if you play poorly, you're going to get blamed if you're the star. He's had a rough playoff go because of the injuries. I think he finally felt right physically the last couple games. And this is who he is. Having a clutch performance in a Game 7. That's Steph Curry."

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