

Sports

BAKER VOLLEYBALL

Baker falls to Fruitland, loses a top player to injury

■ Sophomore hitter Lacy Churchfield suffers an ankle injury while making a kill

By Gerry Steele
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Baker entered Thursday's nonleague home volleyball match with Fruitland having won 4 of its past 5 matches. But that momentum ended abruptly against the Grizzlies, with Baker falling 26-24, 25-19, 25-17.

But that wasn't the loss for the Bulldogs.

Baker also lost one of its top players, probably for the season, when sophomore Lacy Churchfield injured her right ankle while making a kill midway through the second set.

Churchfield, an outside hitter/middle blocker, had to be helped from the floor and was taken to the locker room.

Following the match, Baker coach Chelsea Hurliman said she was uncertain as to the severity of Churchfield's injury.

Churchfield's injured ankle was wrapped in a bandage.

Baker has just three matches remaining during the regular season, and Hurliman said she doubts Churchfield will be able to return for any of those matches.

Hurliman said the injury to a key player also affected Churchfield's teammates.

"Lacy getting hurt really showed in the girls," Hurl-



Kathy Orr/Baker City Herald

Hailey Zikmund makes a set while Baker teammates Lauren Benson, middle, and Josie Lewis look on.

man said. "It really affected them."

Baker already was having a rough time against the Idaho power.

"Fruitland is a solid team," Hurliman said. "They have

very strong skills. They're a force to be reckoned with."

In the first set Baker actually forged a 22-16 lead only to have Fruitland rally for the win.

Baker trailed 19-17 in the

second set when Churchfield was injured. Fruitland then scored six of the final eight points.

In the final game, Baker led 2-1 before Fruitland pulled away to complete the sweep.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYOFFS

Dodgers dominate Nationals in opener

By Beth Harris
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES — The Dodgers overpowered the Nationals on the mound and at the plate, extending the dominance that led to a franchise-record 106 victories in the regular season right on into the playoffs.

Walker Buehler allowed one hit over six innings, Max Muncy drove in three runs and Los Angeles capitalized on mistakes to beat Washington 6-0 in Game 1 of their NL Division Series on Thursday night.

"Oh, they're good. They're really good," Nationals manager Dave Martinez said.

"That's why they have been in the post-season so many years in a row."

Buehler struck out eight, walked three and retired his final seven batters after earning the start over veterans Clayton Kershaw and Hyun-Jin Ryu, whose 2.32 ERA was lowest in the majors this season.

Cardinals rally, then hold off Atlanta

By Paul Newberry
AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA — Back in the playoffs for the first time since 2015, the St. Louis Cardinals look as gritty as ever.

The Atlanta Braves also started down a familiar path.

Marcell Ozuna and Kolten Wong each hit two-run doubles in the ninth inning as the Cardinals overcame shaky defense and a wild finish to extend Atlanta's postseason misery, holding off the Braves 7-6 in Game 1 of the NL Divi-

sion Series on Thursday night.

The Cardinals fell behind 3-1 — hurt by their normally reliable defense. But Paul Goldschmidt homered in the eighth, sparking a two-run outburst that tied it 3. In the ninth, the Cardinals blew it open against Braves closer Mark Melancon.

Dexter Fowler and Tommy Edman singled before Goldschmidt walked on four pitches to load the bases with one out. Melancon got ahead of Ozuna with two quick

strikes, only to give up a liner just inside the third-base bag that put St. Louis ahead for the first time.

Wong finished off Melancon with another two-run double, this one down the right-field line.

Seahawks edge Rams as late FG barely misses

By Tim Booth
AP Sports Writer

SEATTLE — For all the other times when Seattle's Russell Wilson was the best player on the field and made highlight plays, this was different.

It could have been the stage of prime time or facing a division nemesis in the Rams. Or the circumstances of building an early lead, losing it and then rallying once more in the fourth quarter.

Whatever the reason, Seattle received a performance from Wilson that'll be hard to top.

"It was one of the best, I think," Wilson said.

Wilson's 5-yard touchdown pass to Chris Carson on fourth-and-goal with 2:28 gave Seattle the lead, and the Seahawks held on for a 30-29 win over the

Rams on Thursday night when Greg Zuerlein's 44-yard field goal with 11 seconds left missed wide right.

Seattle earned a needed win against its NFC West foe after losing six of the past eight to the Rams. And while there were contributions from plenty of others, Wilson orchestrated a memorable night.

Whether it was his throws from the pocket or when he was forced to improvise, Wilson was at his best. It was one stunning play after another from Seattle's star, continuing the best start to a season in his career.

Even his opponents were left in awe.

"Russell Wilson is playing out of his mind right now," Rams safety Eric Weddle said.

Wilson was 17 of 23 for 268 and four touchdowns, and rushed for another 32 yards. He had touchdown passes of 13 yards to Tyler Lockett and 40 yards to DK Metcalf in the first half. He threw a 10-yarder to David Moore in the third quarter and he had a final answer after the Rams' had taken a 29-24 lead.

Wilson led Seattle 60 yards in 12 plays, helped during the drive by a roughing-the-passer call on Clay Matthews. After stalling inside the 10, Seattle faced fourth down at the 5. Wilson scrambled as he had all night, buying enough time to find Carson open in the corner of the end zone.

The running back scared nearly all of the 69,000 in attendance by juggling the pass before gaining control. Carson said he lost the pass in the stadium lights, which led to the juggle.

"I thought Russell played one of the best games I've ever seen him play," Seattle coach Pete Carroll said.

Seattle appeared to wrap up the victory when Tedric Thompson made a juggling interception of Jared Goff's pass while lying on the turf with 2:08 left. But the Rams forced Seattle to punt and took possession at their own 7 with 1:38 left.

In just seven plays, Goff had the Rams to the Seattle 30 after a 28-yard strike to Gerald Everett. The Rams stalled and a 9-yard pass to Everett on third-down set up Zuerlein's attempt. The snap was good, but the kick stayed just to the right.

Zuerlein had hit three field goals earlier in the game.

"It's one kick. He's made a lot of big kicks for us. He's going to continue to make a lot of big kicks for us," Rams coach Sean McVay said.

Goff finished 29 of 49 for 395 yards and one touchdown just days after throwing for a career-high 517 yards and tying an NFL record with 45 completions in a loss to Tampa Bay.

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