



◀ **More than Mahomes:** Pacheco was smart K.C. pick. **C2**

Huge weekend: Scoggins is ready for a football feast. **C6**

Top 10 Sports section in the nation

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SPORTS

AL WILD-CARD PLAYOFFS TWINS 3, TORONTO 1
Twins lead series 1-0 • **Game 2:** 3:38 p.m. Wednesday (ESPN)

Blasts purge the past



Photos by CARLOS GONZALEZ • carlos.gonzalez@startribune.com

Royce Lewis' day started with a two-run homer in the first inning, then got better yet when he added a solo shot in the third as the Twins beat the Blue Jays 3-1 in Game 1 of their wild-card series.

López honors history, then makes some

LA VELLE E. NEAL III



Johan Santana was the last Twins pitcher to win a postseason game, way back in 2004 when he threw seven shutout

innings against the Yankees in Game 1 of the American League Division Series. Then came 18 consecutive playoff games, a dubious distinction for a team that also has won two World Series titles.

Some Twins, in recent years, waved off the impact of the skid because they were only around for parts of it. Meanwhile, the specter of a never-ending playoff losing streak loomed over Twins Territory.

Nothing lasts forever, a wise man recently said. And that wise man, Pablo López, embraces history.

López entered Target Field on Tuesday wearing Santana's jersey — the No. 57 that once belonged to a fellow Venezuelan he idolizes and aspires to be. Once his own No. 49 was on, López was sharp, holding Toronto to one run over 5½ innings as the Twins took Game 1 of the wild-card series with a 3-1 win.

See **NEAL** on C3 ▶



Twins catcher Ryan Jeffers tagged out Toronto's Bo Bichette trying to score in the fourth inning Tuesday at Target Field, following a dazzling fielding play and throw by shortstop Carlos Correa.

Lewis homers twice to power Twins, who stop an 18-game postseason skid

By PHIL MILLER
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Now we know why the Twins let nearly 7,000 days go by with nothing but losses in the postseason. They were waiting for Royce Lewis to grow up and win one.

Lewis, a 5-year-old kindergartner the last time the Twins took a lead in a playoff series,

jumped directly from the injured list to the winner's circle Tuesday, smacking home runs in his first two postseason appearances as a professional.

As is custom in the postseason, the Twins' offense was otherwise largely absent, but Lewis' blasts were enough to end pro sports' longest postseason drought and deliver a 3-1 victory over the Toronto

Blue Jays in Game 1 of the American League wild-card series at Target Field.

After 18 consecutive losses since Game 1 of the 2004 Division Series, "we have a new streak going now," Pablo López crowed after holding the Blue Jays to five hits and one run in 5½ innings.

"We're 1-0," López said, See **TWINS** on C4 ▶

Crowd ranks with Lewis as stars of show

PATRICK REUSSE



There were heroes in many places for the Twins at Target Field on Tuesday, as the incredible hulk of losing streaks

came to an end with a 3-1 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays in the opener of a best-of-three wild-card series.

Eighteen in a row the Twins had lost in the postseason, and diligent mathematicians put the chances of that at one-in-Donald Trump's estimate of his wealth.

The most obvious heroic figure was rookie Royce Lewis, returning from a 10-game absence to account for the Twins' runs with home runs in his first two postseason at-bats.

Gary Gaetti did that for the 1987 Twins in the ALCS against Detroit, and that team won Minnesota's first World Series title.

OK, let's not get too giddy over a single victory after 19 years wandering in baseball's postseason purgatory. Let's just say Lewis was spectacular, this ballclub was sharp in other areas and then there were the surprise contributors:

See **REUSSE** on C3 ▶