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Jenks irritated by challenge to 'prove myself'

By Eric Gilmore

MLB.com

July 23, 2010

OAKLAND -- Two days after Bobby Jenks' 11th-inning meltdown in Seattle, White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said he is sticking with his plan to consider other options at closer in order to give Jenks a chance to "regroup."

"I've been the closer for this team, this is my sixth year closing," Jenks said before Friday night's game against the Oakland A's. "I shouldn't have to go out there and prove myself over and over again. I think I've done that, and it looks like I'm going to have to do it again."

Apparently so. His struggle Wednesday against the Mariners came on the heels of Sunday's ninth-inning implosion against the Twins.

Guillen tried the same tack earlier in the season, although a save situation never arose during Jenks' brief break from closing.

"That doesn't mean he loses his job," Guillen said. "We want him to get back on track and get back to where he belongs."

Jenks said he's taking Guillen's decision as a challenge, albeit irritating.

"It's both," Jenks said. "I don't want to really overstep my boundaries as far as manager-player goes. Even Mariano [Rivera] had a couple bad games in a row. In my case, I just go out there and when I get the ball, I go out there and do my job. That's all I can do."

When asked what Jenks' problem was at Seattle, Guillen said a lack of velocity wasn't the culprit.

"His velocity was OK, 93, 94 [mph]. That wasn't that bad," Guillen said. "Location was bad. The breaking ball [wasn't] doing anything. We want him to be back, to be sharp. That's the reason we're going to do it."

Guillen said he has "a lot of options" to close games. Matt Thornton and J.J. Putz have to be at the top of the list. Putz has 105 career saves. Thornton has saved five games this season.

Quentin returns, will DH more

OAKLAND -- White Sox right fielder Carlos Quentin returned to the starting lineup Friday night against the Oakland A's after missing three games with a bruised right hand.

"We need Carlos," manager Ozzie Guillen said before the 5-1 White Sox victory. "Carlos has got to stay healthy. Carlos plays hard, one way and one way only."

"[If] those guys in the middle of the lineup stay hot, swing the bat the way they swing the bat, I don't see why we're searching for trades."

In his previous 24 games, the right-handed-hitting Quentin hit .351 with 11 home runs and 31 RBIs. He entered Friday's game hitting .244 overall with 19 home runs and 64 RBIs and went 0-for-1 with two walks and two RBIs.

The White Sox are searching for a left-handed bat for their lineup.

"I always say, 'Why [are] you looking for left-handed hitters?' ... You're looking for a good hitter. Carlos makes our lineup a lot stronger," Guillen said. "He makes a lot of people a lot better around him. The last month, he's been swinging the bat very well."

Guillen said in an effort to keep the ultra-intense Quentin healthy, he'll occasionally have him DH.

"He will DH this weekend, maybe Saturday, tomorrow, or Sunday. Ideally both," Guillen said. "But in the meanwhile, we're going to see how we do. DH is not easy. This guy when he's DHing, he looks like a bull before he goes to the ring. He's so anxious."

"This guy never stops swinging. Every time he DHs, I wear him down."

Kotsay enjoyed time with A's

OAKLAND -- When White Sox designated hitter Mark Kotsay came to the plate in the top of the second inning, he received a warm reception from the small crowd at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum.

A's fans still appreciate the work he did for their team from 2004-07 before he was traded to Atlanta.

"I always enjoy coming here," Kotsay said before Friday night's game. "This was a great place for me."

Kotsay hit .314 for the A's in 2004, .280 in 2005, .275 in 2006 and just .214 in 2007 when he returned to action after undergoing back surgery during the offseason.

Kotsay played for an A's team in 2006 that made the playoffs and beat Minnesota in an American League Division Series before losing to Detroit in the ALCS.

Kotsay said he enjoyed playing for manager Bob Geren "and especially having Billy [Beane] as the general manager for four years and playing on winning teams. He gave me the opportunity to get to the playoffs for the first time in my career. I definitely enjoyed my time here."

Kotasy's favorite memory from his years in Oakland came in that 2006 postseason against Minnesota when he had an inside-the-park home run at the Metrodome.

Playing against former teams is nothing unusual for Kotsay. The White Sox are his sixth team.

"My career has been a tour," Kotsay said. "I had 3 1/2 years in Florida, three years in San Diego, four years here. And then Atlanta, Boston and Chicago in the course of 2 1/2 years.

"Each place has its own set of memories, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be wearing the uniform for 14 seasons. ... Sometimes you don't really like to think about what lies in the future as far as when the uniform comes off. I'm still enjoying it. This team that I'm on, we've got a group of guys that's pretty special. We've got a great manager that keeps it always entertaining."

Worth noting

Omar Vizquel went 2-for-4 Friday night against the A's and passed Luke Appling for sole possession of 50th place on baseball's all-time hits list with 2,751. ... Alex Rios went 2-for-4 with a double and is batting .359 over his past 14 games. ... Over his past 11 games, Gordon Beckham is batting .475. He went 1-for-4 Friday night. ... Paul Konerko went 0-for-4, snapping his nine-game hitting streak. ... A.J. Pierzynski snapped an 0-for-13 skid with a two-run, ninth-inning single Friday. He also stole his first base of the season. ... Mark Kotsay singled in the ninth inning, ending an 0-for-19 streak. ... The White Sox have won five of their past six games in Oakland after going 6-28 in their previous 34.

Buehrle beats A's, Coliseum hex

By Eric Gilmore

MLB.com

July 23, 2010

OAKLAND -- White Sox left-hander Mark Buehrle wasn't perfect Friday night, but he was good enough to beat the A's in Oakland for the first time in his career.

On the one-year anniversary of his perfect game against Tampa Bay, Buehrle threw his second straight complete game and 26th of his career, allowing four hits in a 5-1 victory.

"I was waiting for my beer shower," Buehrle joked about his first win at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. "It was one of those games that was fun. Everything was working. They weren't finding holes. Making pitches, getting ahead in the count. We have that five to eight times a year and when it happens, it's fun."

The Coliseum had been a house of horrors for Buehrle throughout his career until Friday. Entering the game, he was 0-6 with a 4.66 ERA lifetime against the A's at Oakland in 12 appearances, 10 starts. Overall, he was 3-12 with a 3.93 ERA against the A's.

"That's hard to believe," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said of Buehrle's record in Oakland. "All those years Mark's been pitching good. ... Mark pitched a great game. He was good. He made their guys swing the bat, and we played good defense."

Buehrle said he's often pitched well in Oakland in the past, just not well enough to win.

"Yeah, I think courtesy of Jermaine Dye. He's killed me," Buehrle said. "Record-wise it's terrible. Everything else isn't too bad. Getting matched up with [Mark] Mulder 100 times. Jermaine hit a two-run homer or solo home run late in the game to win it. I've pitched well. I haven't been able to pull it off."

This time Buehrle did. He needed just 101 pitches, 69 of those strikes, and didn't walk a batter for the 86th time in 321 career starts.

With Buehrle working fast and producing ground ball after ground ball after ground ball, the White Sox needed just two hours and 16 minutes to beat the A's and win for the 12th time in their past 16 games. They increased their lead in the A.L. Central to 2 1/2 games over Detroit, which was rained out against Toronto, and three games over Minnesota, which lost to Baltimore.

"Ground balls, no walks, changing pitches, using all his pitches, mixing it up on them. It was vintage Buehrle," White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski said. "He works fast, gets you out of here fast. It was fun. It was a fun game, well played on both sides, well pitched. I mean, [A's starter Trevor] Cahill pitched pretty darn good, too. There weren't a lot of runs. There weren't a lot of opportunities to score. We were just able to cash in a couple more than they were."

Buehrle cruised through the first six innings, allowing just a pair of hits, Jack Cust's second-inning double and Coco Crisp's third-inning single. Eleven of the A's first 18 outs came on ground balls, most of those weak. He needed only 62 pitches through the first six innings, retiring the A's in order four times.

The A's finally got to Buehrle for a run in the seventh. Kevin Kouzmanoff roped a one-out double down the left-field line before Cust brought him home with a double to the base of the right-field wall. Buehrle got the next two A's in order.

"Same thing as always," A's second baseman Mark Ellis said of Buehrle. "He was just around the zone, working quick and making pitches. You never get the same thing twice in a row and that's just what he does. We were prepared going into the game and knew exactly what we were going to get and he did that tonight. He just beat us.

"He works quick. He'd be a great guy to play behind in the infield and the outfield. They play good defense behind him, because when we did hit a ball good tonight, they made good plays behind him."

The White Sox took a 1-0 lead in the fourth inning. Alex Rios led off with a double down the left-field line off Cahill. Rios moved to third on Paul Konerko's groundout to second and scored on Carlos Quentin's sacrifice fly to right.

The White Sox made it 3-0 in the sixth. Juan Pierre worked a leadoff walk and moved to third when Omar Vizquel slapped a single to left past a diving Kouzmanoff at third. Rios brought Pierre home with a sharp grounder that shortstop Cliff Pennington botched. Vizquel later scored on Quentin's dribbler to Cahill.

Buehrle improved to 9-8 overall and 6-2 in his past eight starts, lowering his ERA from 5.40 to 3.96 during that span.

"As a starting pitcher you're going to have so many good ones and then you're going to have bad ones throughout the year," he said. "I think I had so many bad ones at the beginning, I'm due to go on a little streak here and have a good one. Just keep it going."

In the ninth inning, the White Sox stole three bases and added two runs off A's reliever Henry Rodriguez. With runners on second and third and no outs, Pierzynski grounded a two-run single up the middle.

On this night, that was more than enough run support for Buehrle, who said he spent zero time thinking back to his perfect game.

Buehrle was asked if he was going to request to pitch on July 23 every season.

"There's only one left," he said, referring to his contract status after 2011. "Next year, then I'll have to go from there. If I pitch like this, I might not be able to retire."

Garcia seeks win No. 10 against A's

By John Schlegel

MLB.com

July 24, 2010

From the very start every night, the White Sox are making it tough on their opponents. That trend is continuing into their weekend series at Oakland.

With Mark Buehrle giving up one run in a complete-game victory Friday night, White Sox starters have allowed just that one run in their last 29 1/3 innings of work entering Saturday's second game against the A's.

Veteran Freddy Garcia will be tasked with keeping that roll going, as he faces A's right-hander Vin Mazzaro in a Saturday afternoon affair at the Oakland Coliseum.

The White Sox enter the game having won 12 of 16 to continue their torrid summer run, while the A's still have come out on top in seven of their past nine games.

Pitching has been key for both clubs this season -- the A's rank second in the AL in ERA, and their staff is right behind the White Sox in terms of its performance in the month of July.

But the White Sox are taking it to a new level lately. White Sox starters are now 23-7 with a 2.41 ERA in posting 33 quality starts in their last 39. The last run a White Sox starter had given up before Buehrle allowed the one in his gem Friday night was by Daniel Hudson in the first inning Monday at Seattle.

White Sox: Quentin returns in RF, will DH

Carlos Quentin's return to the lineup came in right field Friday night, but he will be finding his way into the DH slot this weekend. Quentin, who missed three games with a bruised right hand, went 0-for-1 with two walks before being replaced late by Andruw Jones. White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen hopes one way to keep Quentin healthy is to use him as a DH, but he even goes hard enough at that, too. "He will DH this weekend, maybe Saturday ... or Sunday. Ideally both," Guillen said. "But in the meanwhile, we're going to see how we do. DH is not easy. This guy, when he's DHing, he looks like a bull before he goes to the ring. He's so anxious. This guy never stops swinging. Every time he DHs, I wear him down."

A's: Mazzaro on a roll

Having allowed only one run in three of his last four starts, Mazzaro has gone 3-0 with a 1.93 ERA during that span, while allowing a mere .214 opponents' batting average. The 23-year-old pitched a career-high 7 2/3 innings in his

last outing against the Royals, impressing veteran DH Jack Cust, whose three-run homer gave the A's enough breathing room to withstand a furious Kansas City rally. "Vin's been great," Cust said. "He's got the stuff, it's just the confidence behind it and throwing the ball with that confidence."

Worth noting

The White Sox enter play Saturday 14-8 vs. the AL West this season. With one more victory, they'd match their win total vs. the West in 2009, when they went 15-18 vs. the division. ... The A's are in a stretch in which they're playing 12 of 15 games against first-place clubs.

White Sox recap

Chicago Sun-Times

July 24, 2010

Happy anniversary

Friday was the one-year anniversary of **Mark Buehrle** throwing the 18th perfect game in major-league history, against the Tampa Bay Rays at U.S. Cellular Field.

Staying hot

Today's starter, **Freddy Garcia**, remains the Sox' most consistent pitcher. Garcia is 6-0 with a 3.37 ERA over his last nine starts.

Bench time

Why did manager **Ozzie Guillen** stay away from **Andruw Jones** on Friday? The veteran outfielder is 2-for-17 in his last five games.

Ozzie realizes 'Q' at DH can be tricky

Chicago Sun-Times

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Life with **Carlos Quentin** isn't always easy.

On the one hand, manager **Ozzie Guillen** would like to protect the high-effort, high-intensity outfielder from injury by putting him in the designated hitter spot a bit more. On the other, Guillen knows in doing that, he has to protect Quentin from himself.

"There is one thing about it," Guillen said, "he will DH this weekend, maybe [today] or Sunday. Ideally, it will be both. But in the meanwhile, we have to see how we do. DH is not easy. And this guy, when he's DHing, he looks like a bull going to the ring. He's just so anxious. It takes more out of his at-bat. But when you play in the outfield, you make an out, you go in the outfield and think about playing defense. When you DH, you come in here and swing and swing and swing and swing. This guy never stops swinging. That's why when I DH him, I wear him down."

"Every time he comes back, he goes down into the tunnel and keeps swinging. That's stuff you have to think about. Hopefully, he's fresh to play, and we'll see where we go the next couple of days."

Quentin returned to the lineup Friday, as promised, after leaving Sunday's game in Minnesota with a bruised right hand. He walked twice and had two RBI in the Sox' 5-1 victory over the Athletics.

It was the second time in the last few weeks the hand had bothered him, so Guillen wanted to be extra cautious with his return.

Before the hand, it was a sore left knee that sidelined Quentin for several days.

"We need Carlos," Guillen said. "Carlos has to stay healthy. Carlos plays hard. He knows only one way and one way only. But if those guys in the middle of the lineup swing the bat like they swing the bat, I don't see why we're searching for trades. I always say, 'Why are you looking for left-handed hitters? Anybody can be a left-handed hitter. You're looking for a good hitter.' Carlos in our lineup makes our lineup a lot stronger."

Closing argument

Don't expect the closer-by-committee look to last long, as Guillen again stressed that while **Bobby Jenks** has struggled since the All-Star break, "we're a better team when Bobby is the closer."

"It happened in the past; it happened this year early," Guillen said. "We moved him out of closer for a couple of days."

"We just want him to get back on track. But there's no doubt we're a better team with him. It's the better idea for him to be the guy because we have everything set, and having Bobby there makes it better for everyone."

Looking for a day off

Guillen never thought at the start of the season that he'd be looking for days off for **Omar Vizquel**, but that's exactly what he was doing Friday.

"He's playing too much now," Guillen said of his new starting third baseman. "I never expected him to do that because I never expected him to play that much. I knew he would get playing time, but ... Omar's been great. I think one of the reasons we are where we are is because of Omar."

Buehrle throws complete gem

Chicago Sun-Times

July 24, 2010

SEATTLE -- The White Sox' starting rotation still is chasing those demons.

OAKLAND, Calif. -- It has been awhile since White Sox players exhibited some swagger.

Spring training, to be specific.

Whether it's their dominance over the last few months or their exorcising of demons that haunted them for years in Oakland, the Sox again sounded like a confident team after beating the Athletics 5-1 on Friday.

"I think the first two months weren't who we are, and we're playing close to who we are now," pitcher John Danks said. "With that said, there are still two months to go. Detroit and Minnesota are plenty capable of winning the division, but us in here, we think we're the team to beat. We're going to go out there and try to prove it, but, like I said, there's still plenty of baseball left."

The Sox (53-42) stretched their lead in the Central a bit more. The Tigers were rained out and fell 2½ games behind, and the Twins dropped to three back with a loss at Baltimore.

"The first two months were so tough, the good thing about that is none of us takes winning for granted right now," Gordon Beckham said. "That's important. When you lose for two months, you feel terrible about yourself, your fans, for the team. Then all of a sudden you're back in first place, you don't take that for granted."

But the Sox know that if they want to keep their grip on first place, they have to keep pitching with the same precision they've displayed since early June. If the pitching stays where it is, so will the Sox.

Case in point: Mark Buehrle threw a complete game against the A's, improving to 9-8 and winning his first game in Oakland. Buehrle had been 0-6 with a 4.66 ERA in 12 games at the Coliseum.

"Finally," Buehrle said of breaking the curse by the Bay. "I was waiting for my beer shower. It was one of those games that was just fun. They weren't finding holes. I was making pitches, getting ahead in the count. You have that five to eight times a year, and it's fun."

It also was pointed out to Buehrle that he might want to pitch every July 23. He threw his perfect game against Tampa Bay last July 23.

Asked if he would beg pitching coach Don Cooper to let him pitch every July 23, Buehrle said, "Well, there's only one left, so I don't know," referring to his contract running out after the 2011 season.

"Next year, and then we'll go from there. But if I pitch like this, I might not have to retire."

Trade talk: Deal with it

By Joe Cowley

Chicago Sun-Times

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND -- Lefty John Danks has done his best to remain oblivious to all the trade talk the last few weeks.

Then again, when you're not in the "high-risk" category to be moved, why worry?

But on Friday afternoon, Danks was watching TV with second baseman Gordon Beckham when a White Sox trade story came up and Beckham was mentioned.

"Yeah, that was different," Danks said, "but other than that, I don't really have any idea what's going on. If it involves me, I'll find out that day. Kenny [Williams], Ozzie [Guillen], Jerry [Reinsdorf] and Rick [Hahn], they're going to do what they want to do, and we'll all go from there."

Beckham has a little different perspective, especially because the supposed asking price to land Adam Dunn or Prince Fielder is Beckham.

"I'm more worried about baseball right now than trades," Beckham said. "It's been going a little bit better for me, so I'm just happy that I'm doing a little better. Trade stuff, you hear that all the time. I can't worry about it. If I get traded then I get traded; it is what it is."

Beckham admitted that he somewhat enjoys the soap opera that surrounds the trade rumors on a daily basis, however. The key is not to let it consume him.

"I wouldn't say I necessarily like it, but it's just kind of fun to see everybody kind of freak out with just this one day that's on the horizon," Beckham said. "It's kind of interesting because there's a lot of speculation, and not a lot comes from it usually."

Very little, according to Guillen.

Guillen met with Williams again Friday, and the conversation was basically the same one they've had for a few weeks.

"I don't like to talk to Kenny about it," Guillen said. "It's my job, but I get nervous. I get confused. It's a thing where I don't like to get involved. Obviously, I have to know what's going on, but if I was the general manager, I wouldn't make moves just to make people happy -- 'Oh, look at the move we made.' If we're going to make a move, it's got to be good for the ballclub. Right now, if people want to make a move, they're going to ask for people we can't [give up]. It's not easy. I told Kenny, 'You do whatever you want to do, just bring it up, and I'll manage it.' It's kind of a crazy thing how this business goes about, how both general managers from each side are thinking about the organizations."

Guillen obviously offered up no details on who those other GMs talking with Williams might be, but the Sox can be linked with Washington Nationals GM Mike Rizzo.

The Sun-Times reported last month that Williams and Rizzo already had talked specific names, and now the ball seems to be in Rizzo's court. Talk out of Washington is the team will make one more charge at re-signing Dunn to an extension, then go from there.

"I think Kenny has the freedom because he doesn't have to go through 20 people to make a move here, but in the meanwhile, it's very interesting, confusing and tough to make it happen," Guillen said. "In my opinion, I don't think we should break up this ballclub, [trade] two or three players for something for a week. If that team is going to say, 'Here, this is what we want; this is what you want,' and that's going to guarantee me to go to the World Series, then I would make it. But that doesn't guarantee anything. It guarantees hopes; it guarantees fans being happy; it guarantees to the fans, 'Well, they're trying.' But I will speak up to the fans. We're not going to make a move to satisfy people. We're going to make a move because Kenny, Jerry, Ozzie, the players, the White Sox want to win."

Sox coast past A's 5-1

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. — In manager [Ozzie Guillen's](#) estimation, two changes that would work well for the [White Sox](#) would be a rebound from closer [Bobby Jenks](#) and stellar play from an injury-free [Carlos Quentin](#).

[Mark Buehrle](#) provided his own comeback Friday night when he earned his first victory in 13 games at the Oakland Coliseum with a 5-1 complete game.

"I was waiting for my beer shower," Buehrle joked.

With the triumph, the Sox (53-42) extended their lead to 2 1/2 games over the Tigers.

Buehrle didn't walk a batter and retired 11 straight and 19 of the first 21 until Kevin Kouzmanoff and Jack Cust hit consecutive doubles for the A's only run, snapping a streak of 262/3 consecutive scoreless innings for the Sox's starting pitchers.

Buehrle (9-8), pitching on the one-year anniversary of his perfect game against the Rays, improved to 6-2 in his last eight starts. This marked the third time in Buehrle's career he went the distance in consecutive starts.

"You got to play the game the right way, just like the way we did," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "We executed very well offensively, and Mark pitched another heck of a game."

The Sox added two runs in the ninth, as [Mark Kotsay](#) snapped an 0-for-19 slump and [A.J. Pierzynski](#) ended his 0-for-13 rut.

With the non-waiver trading deadline eight days away, Guillen admitted before the game he was nervous about discussing potential trades with general manager Ken Williams.

A Sox source intimated their main thrust involves adding a hitter, with possible targets — the Nationals' Adam Dunn and the Brewers' Prince Fielder — playing against each other this weekend.

But Guillen admitted later his team at full strength might be better as is, adding there were no assurances the Sox would win a World Series if they added a player.

Guillen said Quentin, making only his 11th start this month because of knee and hand injuries, would be the designated hitter either Saturday or Sunday with some reservations.

"When he's DHing, he looks like a bull going to the ring," Guillen said. "He's just so anxious. It takes more out of his at-bat."

Quentin hit a sacrifice fly in the fourth to give the Sox a 1-0 lead.

Buehrle's outing didn't require the services of Jenks, whom Guillen said he would use in a non-save situation in an effort to work his way back gradually to the closer role he has lost on a full-time basis.

Guillen, however, is looking for more assurances from Jenks, who is 0-2 with seven earned runs in 22/3 innings on this trip.

Guillen added that pitching coach Don Cooper spoke with Jenks about their plans to use him before the ninth inning in a non-pressure situation.

"We just want him to get back on track," Guillen said. "But there is no doubt we're a better team with him. It's better for him to be the guy because we have everything set, and having Bobby there makes it better for everyone."

Teahen accepts likely utility role

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND — **Mark Teahen** said he will accept a utility role when he returns because of the chance to be a part of a playoff-bound team.

"I'd prefer to play third, but Omar is playing great," Teahen said Friday, two days after manager [Ozzie Guillen](#) said [Omar Vizquel](#) will stay at third base once Teahen, the [White Sox's](#) Opening Day third baseman, comes off the disabled list after fracturing his right middle finger nearly eight weeks ago.

"I'll do whatever the team needs me to do. I'm going to do the team thing. This could be my first shot at going to the playoffs."

Teahen continues to work exclusively at third base in early drills without using his right hand. He will be re-examined Monday to determine the next course of action.

Vizquel not secure: Despite a plethora of endorsements from Guillen, Vizquel isn't taking his anointment at third for granted.

"Managers change their mind all the time," said Vizquel, who is batting .438 during an eight-game hitting streak and has made several run-saving plays recently. "I'm glad he acknowledged I've been playing good and is very satisfied by the job I've been doing. But you never know. Things can turn around."

Guillen said of Vizquel: "I think one of the reasons we are where we are is because of Omar. He has been playing an unbelievable third baseman."

Extra innings: Cubs manager [Lou Piniella](#) laughed when asked if Guillen would be managing 20 years from now.

"Ozzie said he wasn't going to be living five years from now," Piniella told reporters. "Let's hope he is, and let's hope he's managing 20 years from now. He's a character. He's a good guy. I would think that 20 years is a long, long time. If he can get 10-15 years in, that's a lot of real estate to cover."

At least Peavy surgery was smooth

By David Haugh

Chicago Tribune

July 23, 2010

This will come as little consolation to [White Sox](#) fans. But if Jake Peavy was going to detach a [muscle](#) in the back of his throwing shoulder, he did it in the best possible way.

That's according to Anthony Romeo, the surgeon who operated on Peavy at [Rush University Medical Center](#) to repair a detached latissimus dorsi muscle in the right posterior shoulder.

Romeo is an international expert in the field of shoulder and elbow injuries whose groundbreaking surgical methods earned him a \$50,000 grant from [Major League Baseball](#).

Romeo was tabbed to perform Peavy's surgery because of his experience with the latissimus tendon, which he often uses as a replacement tendon in shoulder surgeries.

"Sometimes these tendons tear and they look like the end of a mop, all frayed pieces, but with Peavy it was a clean, straight tear, right off of the bone and it was easy to prepare the bone and insert it right back to the same place it came from in a safe way without being close to any [nerves](#) or blood vessels and secure that down with techniques

we use with a lot of other tendons," said Romeo, a member of the Sox's medical staff.

He reiterated Peavy didn't suffer any muscle damage but wouldn't discuss a timetable beyond his statement issued the day of Peavy's surgery that the right-hander is expected back before [spring training](#). As rare as the injury was, Romeo stressed the tricky surgery was a success.

"The tendon was torn on (Peavy's) side and although the initial studies showed it was only pulled down a few centimeters, when the muscle tears they retract a long ways so it was pulled a long ways down his side," Romeo said.

"What was done was to find the tendon, similar to what we do in the other surgery, and bring it back where it belongs and fix the tendon in a way that's similar to what we do with other tendons such as the rotator cuff."

"It's rare that surgeons have the chance to operate in this area and there are some very important nerves and blood vessels that can be injured if you aren't comfortable.

"One of the things in my experience with shoulder surgeries is we have younger patients who lose the function of the back part of their rotator cuff, the latissimus tendon is the one we used to substitute. Because of that surgery, I've been around the latissimus tendon a lot."

Just not many attached to shoulders worth \$16 million a year.

A royal idea for the Sox bullpen

By Steve Rosenbloom

Chicago Tribune

July 23, 2010

I recall someone writing that the White Sox ought to be looking for a closer, not a left-handed bat, after Bobby Jenks choked away Sunday's game against the Twins.

I recall some people saying it was just one game, chill out, you idiot, you. But I recall the writer pointing out that Jenks career path consisted of fewer saves every major-league season and some rotten numbers outside of the Sox's turnaround month this year.

Yes, I recall someone writing that sort of prescient, insightful blog as the trade deadline approached, and I wish I could remember who it – [oh, wait, that was me](#).

Sorry, I'm old, and sometimes the memory goes. Glad I remembered it, though. Glad to be able to feed the haters, too.

Tangent: My smug, arrogant, smarmy attitude has prompted me to start a social networking medium called Hater. The idea is to provide more people with more ways to register their utter, complete and searing loathing for everything me. Most people you follow on that other social networking thingy are not that interesting, and it's disappointing and frustrating when you have to pay attention to some dope who writes, "hi world am up lif iz gud." Iz stooped, actually. But imagine how satisfying it would be to be able to randomly curse at me as the moment strikes. I can't provide examples here because we're a family blog, but given the experience I have with my loving audience, I really don't think the crowd needs a primer. Hater has possibilities, I'm telling you, and not just with the idea of venting at me. Link your account to Lovie Smith, Tommie Harris, Bobby Jenks --- OK, end of tangent. Back to the Sox.

On Wednesday night in Seattle, [Jenks blew his second save](#) in a second straight save situation in a second way

on this 10-game trip.

To review, on Sunday in Minnesota, he choked away a three-run lead that would've given the Sox a split in the four-game series. He had nothing, and the Sox paid for it.

On Wednesday night against the Mariners, Jenks was beaten by a smarter plan at the plate and his own stupidity from the stretch. Jack Wilson bunted his way on, then went to third on a single by Chone Figgins, who immediately stole second before Franklin Gutierrez ended the 11-inning affair with a two-run single. Quick, someone tell Jenks those people in the baselines are not his imaginary friends.

Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said Jenks had nothing on his fastball. Did so, said Jenks, claiming his perceived dip in velocity was a result of throwing all those sinkers, which leads to the conclusion that he doesn't have a fastball anymore. I know closers are supposed to have short memories, but how about a grasp of reality?

To recap the last two outings, Jenks couldn't get the hitters, couldn't pay attention to the runner, couldn't get the saves. What else you got?

Whatever, that was enough for Guillen. The job's open, he said. All options will be explored. J.J. Putz has done it before, and what's more, he hasn't allowed an earned run since, jeez, I don't know, since Bobby Thigpen closed. Something good like that. Matt Thornton has the stuff, as well.

But if I'm Kenny Williams, I'm looking for a closer and calling around, and the place I'm calling is Kansas City.

Royals' All-Star closer Joakim Soria had been rumored to the Yankees before Andy Pettitte went down and **now there's speculation involving the Angels**. The cost reportedly is at least one Major League-ready player and several prospects. The cost likely would be higher for a division rival such as the Sox, and you'd have to wonder how many prospects Williams has left, but Soria is where I'd start.

And probably end, too, because the names I've heard --- David Aardsma, Kevin Gregg, Octavio Dotel, Trevor Hoffman --- make me want to go deaf.

But again, I'd do the closer before I'd do a left-handed bat, and another thing: What's the panic and breathlessness over **getting an Adam Dunn or Prince Fielder?** If the Sox thought they needed a left-handed power bat so badly, they would've kept Jim Thome. But Guillen didn't want that kind of team. He wanted a roster where he could play toy soldiers. He wanted to stress pitching and defense and timely hitting.

Which is exactly what rocketed the Sox to a 25-5 record and sole possession of first place before the All-Star break, a lead they have extended to 2½ games even after Jenks' handiwork. Guillen's plan is working. Why screw it up by changing the approach so dramatically? Fix the ninth inning, or the 11th or whatever. Don't fix what's working. Connect the dots, people.

And until I get that Hater thing working, you'll have to settle for posting comments here.

Quentin rejoins lineup

By Scot Gregor

Daily Herald

July 24, 2010

After missing all three games in Seattle with a sore right hand, Carlos Quentin was back in the White Sox' starting lineup at Oakland Friday night.

Quentin suffered the injury in the Sox' first game after the all-star break when he was hit by a pitch from Twins starter Kevin Slowey.

"We need Carlos," manager Ozzie Guillen told reporters before the Sox opened a three-game series against the Athletics. "Carlos has to stay healthy. He plays hard. He only knows one way. But Carlos makes our lineup a lot stronger. He makes the people around him a lot better."

A sore left knee was bothering Quentin before the break, and he appeared to be in some pain after stealing second base against Oakland in the second inning. But he stayed in the game and his sacrifice fly in the fourth inning put the White Sox in front.

Using Quentin at designated hitter would likely prevent some of the injury woes, but he was back in right field Friday.

Guillen said Quentin should serve as DH Saturday and/or Sunday, but it's not an ideal spot.

"DH is not easy, and when he DHs, he's like a bull before he goes into the ring," Guillen said. "He's so anxious. When you play in the outfield, you make an out and you go back out and think about playing defense. When you DH, you come back and swing, swing, swing. And (Quentin) never stops swinging."

Beer here: When the White Sox return home to play Seattle on Monday, a new beer game will open at Gate 5 of U.S. Cellular Field.

"TBD's" will be open on game days to all fans 21 years and older, and a game ticket is not necessary for admission.

The outdoor beer garden opens two hours before the start of each home game and remains open one hour after the final out.

The Sox are considering further development and expansion at the Gate 5 area.

Armed and dangerous: The Athletics have one of the lowest payrolls in baseball, they never seem to draw at the Coliseum and they rank near the bottom of the American League in home runs (63) and runs scored (401).

But Oakland is contending in the AL West thanks to a pitching staff with the second lowest ERA (3.78) in the league.

"I don't know how they do it," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "But every time you come here, you're always going to face a good pitching staff."

Buehrle on the mark in Sox 5-1 win over A's

By Scot Gregor

Daily Herald

July 24, 2010

The White Sox didn't have a closer controversy on Friday night. You can thank Mark Buehrle for that.

Pitching on the one-year anniversary of his perfect game against the Tampa Bay Rays, Buehrle was brilliant against the A's in the Sox' 5-1 win at the Coliseum.

Buehrle, who entered the game with a 5-2 record and 2.42 ERA in his last 7 starts while lowering his ERA from 5.40 to 4.18, pitched his second complete game of the season and allowed just 4 hits.

The White Sox led 3-1 heading into the ninth inning, with Carlos Quentin driving in a pair in his return to the starting lineup.

A.J. Pierzynski's 2-run single in the final inning provided the insurance as the Sox won the series opener.

Before the game, manager Ozzie Guillen told reporters Bobby Jenks was not going to close games until he "gets back in track."

Jenks couldn't protect a 1-0 lead in the 11th inning at Seattle Wednesday night, and he also blew a 6-3 lead in the ninth at Minnesota on Sunday.

"Like I've said in the past, we're a better ballclub when Bobby is the guy to close," Guillen said. "We're not going to make this decision because he blew the last two games. The decision is going to be made because I don't see strikes, and even the outs he's getting are pretty hard.

"It will be one day, two days, to see if he can regroup. This doesn't mean he's lost his job. We just want him to get back on track and move back to where he belongs."

Jenks wasn't happy to hear he has to win his job back.

"I've been the closer for this team, this is my sixth year closing," Jenks said told whitesox.com. "I shouldn't have to go out there and prove myself over and over again. I think I've done that, and it looks like I'm going to have to do it again."

Guillen has three in-house options to close - J.J. Putz, who has pitched a franchise record 25 straight scoreless innings, Matt Thornton and rookie Sergio Santos.

"I don't want to really overstep my boundaries as far as manager-player goes," Jenks said. "Even Mariano (Rivera) had a couple bad games in a row. In my case, I just go out there and when I get the ball, I go out there and do my job. That's all I can do."

Guillen also said he's still not expecting general manager Kenny Williams to make any moves before Friday's nonwaiver trade deadline.

"There are a lot of factors out there," Guillen said. "To destroy this ballclub just for one guy, two guys, I don't think it's necessary. I'm happy with what we have."

A year later, Buehrle still amazes

By Brett Ballantini

CSNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND – Just a year ago, the self-confessed “most unlikely guy to throw a perfect game” did just that.

Of course, Mark Buehrle wants to revisit and celebrate last year’s monumental achievement in the heat of this year’s pennant race so much, he runs from the room when a notebooked reporter approaches.

“Not much has changed [looking back a year later],” Buehrle said. “I couldn’t believe I did it then, and I can’t now.”

Just four of the eight position players—four of nine if you count defensive replacement DeWayne Wise, and given the ninth inning, how can’t you—remain on the White Sox, which adds a bittersweet wrinkle to the anniversary.

Two of the ex-Sox, outfielder Scott Podsednik and infielder Josh Fields, are now members of the Kansas City Royals. It was Fields who provided all the offense Buehrle would need, with a first-pitch grand slam off Tampa Bay Rays hurler Scott Kazmir.

“It’s amazing to be associated with that game,” Fields reflected. “It’s something that never can be taken from me; I’ll always be a part of a perfect game.”

Podsednik doubled and scored in the fifth, providing Buehrle his only other run of support on the afternoon, but is best remembered for what he didn’t do, or where he wasn’t, in the game.

Prior to the ninth inning, Chicago White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen pulled left fielder Carlos Quentin, shifted Podsednik over to left, and inserted DeWayne Wise in center field. It wasn’t an unprecedented move by any stretch,

but one that had never clicked so perfectly.

"Yeah, I was the guy who wasn't in center field in the ninth," Podsednik laughed. "I don't know where [White Sox manager] Ozzie [Guillen] got his hunch, but he was perfect with it. I don't have to tell you that's a catch I wasn't going to make."

The ninth inning of Buehrle's perfect game was as thrilling as anything the South Side had seen in years, including the nail-biting Blackout tiebreaker win that ended 2008 and the tense finish to the first game of the World Series in 2005, when Bad Bobby Jenks stormed onto the national scene.

It began with a catch by Wise that truly defies description, particularly given the fact that Gape Kapler's round-trip bid was the very first at-bat and just the sixth pitch Wise saw in center.

Wise, now roaming the outfield north of the border for the Toronto Blue Jays, looks back on the catch—and his contribution not just to Buehrle's perfect game and White Sox lore, but baseball history—with greater pride than ever.

"Like a lot of guys on the team, I can say I was part of perfection," Wise said. "But in the big picture, almost no one who's ever played the game has been in a perfect game. Mark said he can't believe he pitched a perfect game, but I still can't believe I pulled that ball in."

Kapler's launch deep into left-center took a full, 100-foot, instantaneous sprint by Wise to even be in the neighborhood of the ball. The leap, compression against the wall, ice-cream cone catch, bobble as Wise landed and tumble-grasp at the ball to preserve perfection is more than likely the best fly-ball putout in White Sox history.

"I look at it now, and it's hard to imagine," Wise said. "Time slowed. It's a product of hard work, repetition, instinct. To be associated for the rest of my career with that play makes me proud."

Many fans don't recall it, but an at-bat one run through the order earlier in the game nearly jeopardized Buehrle's perfect game as much as Kapler's clout in the ninth. While Tampa hitters worked Buehrle to three-ball counts four different times in the game, only once did the southpaw fall behind a batter 3-0, two outs into the sixth inning facing Jason Bartlett.

A dilemma was dropped into catcher Ramon Castro's lap.

"I didn't mind losing the perfect game," Castro said. "But I wanted to keep the no-hitter."

That meant Castro would implore Buehrle to attack the pesky Rays shortstop. To do so, Castro called for Buehrle's best pitch—a changeup. Not once, not twice, but three straight times. Bartlett looked at the first two for called strikes, fouled the third off, then tapped gently to Alexei Ramirez to end the sixth.

"Tripling him up, that shows you how great that changeup is," Buehrle's lefthanded rotation compadre, John Danks, said. "I can't fathom having the courage to do something like that, with those stakes."

With two out in the ninth, the perfect game came down to Bartlett once more, and again the shortstop tapped softly to his White Sox counterpart, Ramirez.

"I wasn't nervous," Ramirez said of the final assist to seal Buehrle's perfection. "I tried to put [the pressure] out of my head and treat it like any other play."

Ramirez had two of the White Sox's six hits in the game and contributed five assists and one putout in the field. He's honored to have played an important role in the game, but the young infielder, perhaps with an eye to subsequent low-hit efforts from Buehrle, Danks and Gavin Floyd, isn't setting his sights low. The third-year man merely has had his appetite whetted.

"I'm looking forward to playing in more," the Missile said. "That was fun."

"He shouldn't hold his breath," said the ever-humble Buehrle with a smile. "Bug Danks or Gavin or Freddy about it. I'm done with the drama."

On perfect anniversary, Buehrle throws complete gem

By Brett Ballantini

CSNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

It's a stretch of the schedule Chicago needs to fatten up on, and with wins in three of the first four, the White Sox are starting to look a little chubby in the win column.

Mark Buehrle celebrated the one-year anniversary of his perfect game with another masterful effort, defeating the A's 5-1 in front of a sparse Friday night crowd in Oakland.

"Everything was down in the zone, sinkers were working," Buehrle said. "When things are working like that. You get ahead in the count. They were swinging early, and I don't know if that was their game plan, but when they were [swinging early], the ball was down and they were hitting ground balls."

"Mark pitched good," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said. "He made those guys swing the bat, and we played good defense behind him."

Buehrle took just 101 pitches to compose a complete game that was scarred by just four hits and one earned run. It was the third time in Buehrle's career he's thrown back-to-back complete games, also having achieved the feat in 2001 and 2004, as well as his first career win in Oakland.

"I expected a beer shower when the game was over," Buehrle said of his first Oakland win in his 11 seasons.

The first three White Sox runs were driven in without the courtesy of a hit, as in the third Carlos Quentin drove a deep sacrifice fly to bring home Alex Rios, and in the sixth Juan Pierre scored on an Rios grounder played into an error by A's shortstop Cliff Pennington and Omar Vizquel came home when Quentin tapped out to A's pitcher Trevor Cahill.

A.J. Pierzynski provided more traditional run support in the top of the ninth, tapping out a two-run single to extend the White Sox lead to 5-1.

As the top of the ninth was an extended frame, it worried Guillen. But because his thinking was that the skipper could steal a complete game and gift his pen with another day's rest, "I talked to Mark after the long [ninth] inning, and he was fine to come back."

In the end, the White Sox extended their first-place lead to 2.5 games over the rained-out Detroit Tigers and three over the Minnesota Twins, who lost to the Baltimore Orioles. Little of that matters to the Sox jefe, however.

"Don't worry about what you did yesterday," Guillen said of his team's second strong bounce-back this week. "It's a new game. We don't take anything for granted. If you have a good game or a bad game today, it doesn't mean anything tomorrow. We're very good about [believing in] that."

Buehrle, as he usually does, succeeded in not just delivering a win, but restoring some cheer to the team.

"This was one of those games that was fun," he said. "Balls weren't finding holes and I was making pitches and getting ahead in the count. As a starter you're going to have a certain amount of good ones and bad ones throughout the year, and I had all my bad ones at the start of the year. I'm due to go on a little streak of good ones."

The whole starting staff is on a good roll; let's keep it going."

And then, in a nod to how much fun it is to pitch when the team performs as well as it has for nearly two months now, Buehrle offered up a tantalizer sure to fire up Sox fans of all ilks.

"If I keep pitching like this, I might not be able to retire."

Guillen tells Williams he likes his team

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Make a trade if you have to, Ozzie Guillen said Friday. Just know that the manager isn't clamoring for general manager Ken Williams to make a move.

"I told him, 'Hey man, we got [\[Carlos\] Quentin](#) back in the lineup [Friday], we haven't had many bad games," Guillen said. "A couple nights ago [against Seattle] we were facing [Felix \[Hernandez\]](#), and anyone can look bad against him. In my personal opinion, I don't think we should break up this ballclub and [trade] two or three players for something for a week."

By "a week," Guillen of course means a two-plus month rental until the end of the season.

The prospect of trading [John Danks](#), or [Gavin Floyd](#) and [Gordon Beckham](#) for [Prince Fielder](#) apparently makes him nervous. Guillen has a first-place team. He's leery of giving away guys who helped the club get to the top spot for somebody who hasn't been fighting for the White Sox's cause all season.

"If that team is going to say, 'Here, this is what we want, this is what you want,' and that's going to guarantee me to go to the World Series then I would make it," Guillen said. "But that doesn't guarantee anything. It guarantees hopes, it guarantees fans being happy, it guarantees to the fans, 'Well, they're trying.'

"But I will speak up to the fans. We're not going to make a move to satisfy people. We're going to make a move because Kenny, Jerry [Reinsdorf], Ozzie, the players, the White Sox want to win."

It's a clear sign that the White Sox's trade options -- or worthwhile ones anyway -- all involve players on the major league roster and none seems to make the club significantly better. At least that's how it looks to the manager.

"Right now, if people want to make a move they're going to ask for people we can't [give up]," Guillen said. "It's not easy. I told Kenny, 'You do whatever you want to do, just bring it up and I'll manage it.'"

It doesn't mean he will be happy about it.

"Every day [Williams] asks me, 'You OK?'" Guillen said. "I say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah.' Like I said a few days ago, it's not fair for me to say 'no' because those guys are in first, and in first place for a reason. What do we need? Continue to play well, pitch well, that's all we need."

Primetime at the trade deadline

By Jon Greenberg

ESPNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

Like a lot of Don Draper wannabes, I'm more than a little excited for the "Mad Men" season premiere this Sunday night.

Unfortunately for me, the rare man without a DVR, I'll be at a live taping of the critically panned Chicago show "Mad Fans," starring the 39,000 or so Cubs fans who pay big bucks to watch a bad team.

I'll also be missing the second episode of the reality show featuring those other "mad men," Ozzie Guillen and Kenny Williams. "The Club" will be airing its second episode this Sunday as a lead-in to a great night of television

The MLB Network's reality-based show about the inner workings of the White Sox airs before the AMC hit, not to mention America's favorite show about nothing, "Entourage."

Maybe if I'm nice, Cardinals manager Tony La Russa will let me watch Draper and the gang in his spartan office. Sure, and maybe he won't wear sunglasses for the ESPN night game.

Will White Sox general manager Ken Williams make a splash before the trading deadline?

I suppose I'll have to catch "The Club" another time; it's not as if I'm missing anything current. (My wife calls the show, "Remember What Happened Six Months Ago?")

I liked the first episode, and I enjoy the participants, but surely, the biggest problem with the show, besides the hilariously staged scenes (Bud and Jerry kibitzing in the Phoenix deli slayed me), is the timing. Unlike HBO's "Hard Knocks," which airs very close to real time, the show's lag time hurts its value. Of course, as the Sox GM would say, "That's not a Kenny Williams problem." It's just a fact.

After all, wouldn't you like to have cameras focused on "Ready-For-My-Close-Up" Williams this week, and get to watch it after the July 31 no-waiver trade deadline passes?

I know I would.

For both the White Sox and the Cubs, the next week of prospective wheeling-and-dealing could have major impacts on the future of their franchises. While the first-place Sox are trying to win now without mortgaging the future, the fourth-place Cubs need to prepare for tomorrow.

The spotlight is once again on Williams, a situation he surely doesn't mind.

Williams is so famous for bluffing about his interests that he's almost like an actor in his own TV show. (Oh wait, that's kind of true now ...)

Williams was at his all-time B.S.-ing best last year, trying to lull fans into thinking he wasn't going to make a blockbuster move.

In early July 2009, with the Sox within striking distance of Detroit for the AL Central lead, Williams proffered this warning about the team's inability to enter the trade market:

"Well, if I'm being completely honest, money is more of the issue now. We expected a little more support than we've gotten," he said back then. "I think it's a reflection upon the economy of what's kind of happened with regards to attendance and I don't know if we've played consistent enough, or been exciting enough for people to get behind us. We're still hopeful."

At the time, the Sox were averaging a little more than 26,000 fans a game and a weekday series against the Dodgers barely cracked the 20K mark.

And what did Williams do? Oh, not much, except pick up [Jake Peavy](#) and [Alex Rios](#), who are making a combined \$24.7 million in salary this year. Peavy, of course, is out for the season, with a rare muscle tear in his posterior shoulder. Rios has been one of the best all-around players in baseball.

This year, with the Sox drawing around the same, Williams is up to his old tricks, telling beat writers in Seattle that he "doesn't see anything materializing." Though, this time he's not crying poverty.

"If I'm being honest and completely transparent right now of the price that is being asked for some of the players that we've inquired about, for us, it's more detrimental to our present and our future than we'd like," Williams told reporters a few days ago. "We'll see how that develops."

You know what that means: If you were [Daniel Hudson](#), you wouldn't start looking at Chicago real estate just yet. Young homegrown pitchers are valuable bargaining chips for Trader Kenny, with [Brandon McCarthy](#), [Gio Gonzalez](#) (twice), [Clayton Richard](#) and [Aaron Poreda](#) all exiles from the South Side.

Hudson might be a future star, or he could be another pitcher the Sox promoted as a way to raise his value. Williams hasn't been burned too badly by the young arms he's given up, has he?

The big question is, can the Sox add to this year's team without giving up an important player like [Gordon Beckham](#), who has all-but-erased his miserable start with a solid approach at the plate that has him looking like the doubles machine of last year.

If the Sox are adamant about getting a big left-handed hitter like [Prince Fielder](#) or [Adam Dunn](#), who are big in the literal and figurative sense, would Williams bite on moving [Carlos Quentin](#), or be able to sell Quentin as a viable alternative to Beckham? I would, but I'm not Trader Jon.

For a team that has at times struggled on offense, Quentin has been a beast at producing runs. After starting slow, like his team, at the plate, he's heated up as well, and currently has 64 RBIs in 271 at-bats. He's improved his batting average 15 points this month, from .229 at the end of June to .244 currently, and he's hitting .375 with runners in scoring position. Quentin is unquestionably a major talent.

The problem, of course, is he's consistently nagged by injuries, which is how the Sox got him in the first place. He crowds the plate and pays the price, recently missing the Seattle series with a bruised hand. But he has managed to appear in 79 of 94 games, and he could be a bargaining chip for teams like Milwaukee or Washington, or at the very least a player who could be traded again to another contender for more prospects.

I'm in favor of moving Quentin simply because of the unpredictability of his career. One day he's bashing home runs (19 this year) and the next he's taking himself out of the lineup in a fit of pique (2008's infamous bat-smacking episode). Is his potential worth the headaches?

Conversely, for what he can do on the field, Quentin is still pretty cheap. He's coming into his second year of being arbitration eligible, having signed for \$3.2 million last year. If he finishes with comparable numbers, he's due for a raise, but he's still under the club's control for two more years. Given his up-and-down history, you wonder if he'd be willing to reconsider signing a multiyear deal for security, like [Gavin Floyd](#) did before last season.

Would you trade Quentin for Dunn? It's a question that has been brought up in the press box, if not in the stands. Dunn is a little older, a liability in the outfield and likely a short-term rental, but at 30, he's a known commodity. He would also fit right into the Sox's loose clubhouse culture. All indications are that the Sox wouldn't part with either Beckham or Quentin, both cheap for their production. But then again, Williams has been known to bluff.

Maybe Williams is right this year. Maybe the only market that's open is his bar. I doubt it.

I've made it nearly 1,000 words without talking about the Cubs' trade possibilities. Can Jim Hendry get some prospects for [Ted Lilly](#) or [Derrek Lee](#)? Is he skittish on letting go of Lee, the mainstay of the post-2003 club? Could he cut a little more salary for next year by dealing [Ryan Theriot](#) and/or [Xavier Nady](#)? Will he help out a friendly GM now in order to grease the wheels for a [Carlos Zambrano](#) deal this winter?

Hendry is accustomed to adding difference-makers, not dealing them, so it's hard to judge his track record in these situations. If he's sentimental about keeping his veterans to play out the stretch, I'd point him to a line from the leading character of "Mad Men," Draper: "There is no American history, there is only a frontier."

As in, let's move away from the past and start building for the future.

Now that he has job security, after Tom Ricketts' assurance that Hendry isn't getting fired in the wake of Lou Piniella's impending retirement, Hendry should be concerned with cutting salary so he can have the flexibility to add this offseason.

While Williams readies for another reality show episode espousing his philosophies, I'm sure Hendry is glad the cameras are somewhere else.

Post slump, Beckham has different feel

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- It wasn't like [Gordon Beckham](#) had his head down and refused to look people in the eye earlier this year; it's just that now it's a lot easier to do.

Beckham admitted, now that he has emerged from the worst stretch of baseball he ever experienced, that he moves a little quicker down the sidewalk these days, feels more confident at things not necessarily involved with baseball and generally has a brighter outlook.

"It's a totally different feel," Beckham said. "When you have a week like I've had, it gives you a jolt of energy almost because you feel like you're back. I feel like this is what I can do. I knew I could do this. It's not always going to be this good, but hopefully it won't be as bad as it was."

After holding a .205 batting average that got him benched for three games before the All-Star break, Beckham batted .500 (18-for-36) with two home runs and eight RBIs in the 10 games before Friday's contest against the A's.

One more reason to feel good is that general managers trying to work out a deadline deal with the White Sox seem to be asking for Beckham in a return package. General manager Ken Williams doesn't appear too fond of that idea.

Asked how things were for him mentally during his struggles, Beckham chuckled. So did [Paul Konerko](#) sitting immediately to his right.

"It was not a good spot for me and it was tough to get out of it," Beckham said. "Now that I'm through I can almost look back and say that will help me figure out, I guess, how much I can go through before I crack. It's just nice to be on the other end of it."

It also let him know that no matter how bleak things look, there is an answer out there somewhere. Hitting coach Greg Walker said Beckham dropped his hands slightly to get his swing started earlier. Beckham said that helped a little, but it was just a feel that he got back when Guillen had him on the bench in early July.

The next slump could always be right around the corner, but Beckham doubts that.

"I don't feel like it's going to be as hard to maintain it as it was to get it," he said. "It took me 2½ months and that's no fun. But I feel I have a pretty good feel for it and I can keep it up and I just have to keep it going."

Buehrle notches first career win in Oakland

By Doug Padilla

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OAKLAND, Calif. -- On the one-year anniversary of his perfect game, [Mark Buehrle](#) did something even harder for him to accomplish.

Buehrle won in Oakland for the first time in his career, pitching a complete-game 5-1 victory against the team that has given him fits over 10 previous starts. It improved the left-hander's overall record to 4-12 against the A's.

Mark Buehrle is happy after going the distance on Friday night for his first-ever win in Oakland.

It was such a momentous occasion that when Buehrle and catcher [A.J. Pierzynski](#) met in front of the mound after the last out, Buehrle reached out to shake hands while Pierzynski went in for a hug. Buehrle would have none of it.

"With two outs he was shaking his hands [from behind home plate]," Buehrle said of his catcher, with the implication being that Buehrle was getting nervous on the cusp of a complete game. "I said 'It's my second one in a row.' He forgot about the last one [in Minnesota]. That's why he was being a smart [aleck]."

Wednesday's defeat might not have looked good, but the players were as loose as ever two days later.

Best of all for the White Sox, there was no need for a closer, or any reliever for that matter, when Buehrle was so efficient and the offense was tacking on some late-inning insurance runs. Buehrle needed 101 pitches to shut down the A's.

With closer [Bobby Jenks](#) struggling and manager Ozzie Guillen saying he would go to somebody else the next time the game is on the line, a backup plan wasn't needed.

What Friday's victory showed was that the White Sox haven't been affected by their recent heartbreaking defeats. The latest of those came Wednesday in a 2-1 loss to the [Seattle Mariners](#) when Jenks failed to hold a 1-0 lead in the 11th inning.

Thursday's off day could have left the White Sox replaying the defeat over and over again in their heads. But where the Bay Area has meant bad things for White Sox teams in the past, it was the perfect venue for the day off as some members of the traveling party went fishing on the Pacific Ocean, while another group that included Buehrle went to wine country in Napa.

"I think our thing is not worry about what you did yesterday," Guillen said. "Today is a new game. We don't take anything for granted. Most of the time when you lose a game like that you have a tendency to say, 'What's going on?' This team is great."

“When you lose a game like that, then have a day off and Buehrle’s pitching, you feel pretty good.”

On Sunday at Minnesota, Jenks was charged with four runs in the ninth inning as the Twins rallied for a victory. In that case, the White Sox came right back and beat the Mariners in consecutive games.

Assuming the White Sox get through the A’s in fine fashion this weekend, they will have to do something about this perception that it’s a weak strength of schedule that is propping up the team in the standings.

The White Sox are a major-league best 29-9 since June 9 and, sure, some of those victories came against the weaklings of both leagues, but there are also triumphs over the [Texas Rangers](#), the crosstown Cubs and a sweep over the [Atlanta Braves](#), who opened play Friday with the best record in the National League.

After the two games at Oakland this weekend, the White Sox get Seattle and Oakland again at home. Then it’s five against the Tigers at Detroit and six against the Twins in a nine-day stretch in the middle of August when the White Sox can show what kind of team they truly have.

BY THE NUMBERS

3: Times Buehrle has pitched back-to-back complete games after accomplishing the feat Friday. He went the distance in his previous start last Saturday at Minnesota. He also did it in August of 2001 and in September of 2004. It was the 26th complete game of his career.

QUOTE

“We used Bobby Jenks three out of four games [before Friday]. I forgot about that. I think that’s the reason we try to keep the guys fresh. I talked to Buehrle after the long [seventh] inning and he said he felt fine to come back and do what he did,” Guillen, on Buehrle’s complete game giving the bullpen another day off.

LOOK AHEAD

[Freddy Garcia](#) (9-3, 4.37) will face off against the A’s on Saturday looking once again for that 10th victory that eluded him in Minnesota over the weekend. He allowed three runs over six innings to the Twins and was in line to get the victory before Bobby Jenks and [Sergio Santos](#) failed to protect a three-run lead in the ninth inning. Garcia is 6-0 over his last nine starts with a 3.37 ERA.

Garcia will face off against Oakland’s Vin Mazarro (5-2, 3.50), who has allowed one run in three of his last four starts and has a 3-0 record with a 1.93 ERA over that stretch.
