



Headlines of July 25, 2010

"Garcia unable to find groove against A's" ... Alex Espinoza, MLB.com
"Guillen ponders September rotation" ... Alex Espinoza, MLB.com
"Hudson, Braden bring intrigue to finale" ... John Schlegel, MLB.com
"White Sox recap" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Teahen ready and willing, hopes to be able to help" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Garcia can't escape from tight corners" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Ozzie Guillen keeps eye on price" ... Joe Cowley, Chicago Sun-Times
"Rough loss for Garcia, White Sox" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune
"Contenders or pretenders? Some favorites need help" ... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune
"Chicago surgeon trying for breakthrough to help careers" ... David Haugh, Chicago Tribune
"Guillen high on Hudson" ... Lindsey Willhite, Daily Herald
"Cust hits 2 homers in A's win over Sox 10-2" ... Lindsey Willhite, Daily Herald
"Dawson and Raines share a bond so deep, they might as well be family" ... Barry Rozner, Daily Herald
"Buehrle's future career" ... Brett Ballantini, CSNChicago.com
"Athletics pummel Garcia, White Sox" ... Brett Ballantini, CSNChicago.com
"Sox's Guillen: Trade offers 'crazy'" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"White Sox's Hudson ignoring trade talk" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"Sox must shake off rare blowout" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"AL Central: White Sox GM Williams exploring limited trade options" ... Mike Castiglione, Sports Network

Garcia unable to find groove against A's

By Alex Espinoza

MLB.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND -- When comparing the first two contests of Chicago's three-game set with Oakland, the differences are night and day.

On one hand, you have Mark Buehrle's Friday night gem, a quick, 101-pitch outing that lasted just over two hours and led to a 5-1 win. Then you have Freddy Garcia's Saturday afternoon meltdown, as he struggled from the first pitch to doom the White Sox in a 10-2 loss to the A's.

"[Garcia] wasn't throwing strikes when he was around the plate and he got hit," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "But he's been pitching great for us all year long, that's one of those games where you try to erase it and move on."

The game got off to an ominous start for Garcia, as he let the first four batters reach base. When it was all said and done, Garcia lasted a career-low 1 1/3 innings after giving up five earned runs on six hits and three walks.

For perspective, consider that Buehrle needed 44 pitches to get through four innings Friday. Garcia, meanwhile, needed 44 pitches just to get through the first frame Saturday. Bugged down by poor control, Garcia was lifted after letting four of five second-inning batters reach base.

"I couldn't make the pitches I needed," Garcia said. "I threw, what, almost 50 pitches in the first inning? After that I was pretty much done. That's a lot of pitches for the first inning and I couldn't get anybody out after that."

His outing was made all the more startling given his recent track record of success. Entering Saturday, Garcia was 6-0 with a 3.38 ERA in his previous nine starts.

"This is part of the game," Garcia said. "I'm going to pitch 10 or 12 good ones in a row and then have a bad one. If you don't have the stuff, there's nothing you can do. You just got to put it in the past and do what you do."

As Garcia labored through the 13 batters he faced, he was visibly upset with the strike zone from home-plate umpire Laz Diaz. On several occasions, Garcia threw up his hands in dismay after throwing balls. Before Saturday, Diaz had been a welcome sight for Garcia, as he was 3-0 career in five starts with Diaz behind the plate.

That wasn't the case on Saturday.

"The umpire was pretty tight," Garcia said. "I'd say watch the video, I threw pretty good pitches. For me, I live on the corners. I don't throw hard so I can't throw at the middle [of the plate]. If I don't have the corner, I get [affected]. That's what happened."

After giving up a leadoff walk to Coco Crisp in the first, Garcia promptly gave up an RBI double to Daric Barton down the right-field line. Oakland made it 2-0 on Gabe Gross' slow infield grounder, as third baseman Omar Vizquel couldn't field it cleanly with his bare hand. Things could have been much worse had Juan Pierre not made a nice running grab in the left-field gap to end the inning.

Garcia then surrendered consecutive RBI singles in the second inning and was eventually pulled after walking Jack Cust. In all, Garcia threw 69 pitches, 41 for strikes.

Though Tony Pena was called on in long relief, he couldn't stop the bleeding. Pena surrendered back-to-back homers to Kurt Suzuki and Cust in the fourth, before giving up two more runs in the sixth.

All the while, Chicago's lineup was flummoxed by Oakland's arms. Backup catcher Ramon Castro supplied the White Sox with their only offense of the day, a two-run blast off A's starter Vin Mazzaro in the second inning.

"I just kept filling the zone," Mazzaro said. "You can't be scared to throw your pitches. I had my slider working after that and got a little more comfortable with it, and I went from there."

The White Sox had no answer for Mazzaro, as the 23-year-old right-hander allowed two earned runs on three hits and three walks. Mazzaro had five strikeouts on the afternoon, including three straight to close out the sixth inning.

Offensively, Cust proved to be the biggest bat for the A's, as he went 2-for-2 with three walks and a pair of solo home runs.

For Chicago, Saturday's defeat brought the team into unfamiliar territory. Since June 9, the White Sox are a Major League-best 29-10. Of those previous nine losses, none came by more than three runs.

"It happens," Pierre said. "Over the course of 162 games, you'll have games like this. The most important thing is to forget about it and come out tomorrow and try to win the series."

Guillen ponders September rotation

By Alex Espinoza

MLB.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND -- As the season hits the home stretch, White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen is thinking about how he will use his pitching staff in September.

Though it is five weeks away, Guillen said he wouldn't be averse to using a four-man rotation in the final month of the regular season.

"We'll see, it depends where we are," Guillen said. "Because in the last month of the season, we want to have anything we can have to help us in the bullpen. Why not? We did it before. We did it in '08, did it in '05. I don't see why not?"

If Guillen was to move to a four-man staff, it would likely push rookie Daniel Hudson out of the picture. Hudson, who was called up two weeks ago to fill in for Jake Peavy, has gone 1-0 with a 5.06 ERA in two starts with the White Sox this season.

He picked up his first win of the year on Tuesday, allowing an earned run on five hits and four walks while striking out six over 6 2/3 innings. Hudson, a control pitcher with a devastating slider, went 11-4 with a 3.47 ERA for Triple-A Charlotte this season.

"I want this kid to be here and be the guy," Guillen said of Hudson. "Because it costs less money, we're going to have somebody for the future and we can have someone we can count on later. I'm pulling for this kid."

Teahen has close ties to Bay Area

OAKLAND -- Though he won't be playing in the weekend series against the A's, Mark Teahen said he's enjoyed coming back to the Bay Area.

That's because he played at nearby St. Mary's college in Moraga, about 30 minutes east of Oakland, and he still has friends in the area. Teahen also has ties to the A's organization, as he was drafted in Oakland's famed Moneyball Draft class in 2002.

Moneyball, the best-selling book penned by Michael Lewis, will soon be made into a movie and will be filmed at the Oakland Coliseum starting Monday.

"I'm [upset] that my part got cut from the movie," Teahen joked. "But I guess Brad Pitt can't play two parts."

For reference, Brad Pitt will portray A's general manager Billy Beane in the film.

Among the other players selected in that Draft include former White Sox outfielder Nick Swisher and current Phillies starter Joe Blanton. Teahen said he still talks to Lewis and that the author is working on a follow-up book.

"I don't know when it will be done, but he's letting our careers progress so he has something to write about," Teahen said. "I've talked to him about the movie and everything and it's pretty cool. It'll be interesting to see how they make it a movie because I thought it was a very interesting book."

Draft pick Sale getting callup consideration

OAKLAND -- Chris Sale, whom the White Sox selected with the No. 13 overall pick in June's First-Year Player Draft, has caught the eye of manager Ozzie Guillen.

Guillen said he's asked about Sale's availability and was told by pitching coach Don Cooper there may be innings restrictions, given Sale threw 103 innings in college this season. But if Sale was to get called up before the end of the season, Guillen said he would use the 21-year-old out of the bullpen.

"Of course," Guillen said. "But the thing is, how much are we going to use him? Because if we have to take care of him like we did with [reliever Sergio] Santos, then we're not doing anything good for the ballclub."

Sale, who played at Florida Gulf Coast University, was widely considered one of the top college arms in the Draft, but fell to the middle of the first round due to anticipated signability issues.

But since signing his deal with a \$1.66 million bonus, a figure on par with MLB's recommendation for the draft slot, the 6-foot-5 lefty has carved up Minor League competition. In eight relief appearances this season (four with Class A Winston-Salem, four with Triple-A Charlotte) Sale has 11 strikeouts and three walks along with his 2.35 ERA.

"Just give me players and we'll see what happens," Guillen said.

Worth noting

After throwing two scoreless innings in Saturday's 10-2 loss to the A's, reliever Erick Threets has made six scoreless appearances (7 1/3 innings pitched) since being promoted from Triple-A Charlotte. ... Alex Rios went 1-for-2 on Saturday and is batting .364 (20-for-55) over his last 15 games. ... Omar Vizquel went 0-for-3 on Saturday to snap his nine-game hitting streak.

Hudson, Braden bring intrigue to finale

By John Schlegel

MLB.com

July 25, 2010

The A's figured out their own rotation before Saturday's game, and then finally showed that someone can figure out the White Sox rotation during it.

So with Ben Sheets going on the disabled list with elbow inflammation and Brett Anderson being given one more Minor League rehabilitation start, it will be Dallas Braden taking the ball for Oakland's rubber match against the White Sox on Sunday.

Braden will be facing off against rookie Daniel Hudson, who was called up two weeks ago to fill in for Jake Peavy, going 1-0 with a 5.06 ERA in his two starts since.

Meanwhile, the A's brought the tear of great pitching by the White Sox rotation to a screeching halt Saturday, tagging Freddy Garcia for five earned runs in just 1 1/3 innings. Prior to that outing, White Sox starters had allowed just one run in their previous 29 1/3 innings of work.

For the rubber match, the A's settled on Braden, who was activated from the DL Tuesday after a battle with elbow tendinitis. Still winless since his perfect game May 9, Braden gave up four runs (one earned) on 10 hits while walking one and fanning six in 4 2/3 innings against the Red Sox.

"The elbow is not out on the mound," Braden said after that one. "The elbow is still on the arm, so all signs are positive. It felt good. Just being a gun-watcher, the last fastballs came out clean. I feel pretty confident that it's there."

White Sox: Hudson trying to stick

Hudson picked up his first win of the season and second of his career in his previous start Tuesday, allowing an earned run on five hits and four walks while striking out six over 6 2/3 innings. At some point down the stretch, the White Sox might go to a four-man rotation, as they did in 2008 and their World Series year in '05. He'd appear to be the odd man out in that scenario, but Hudson is on Guillen's mind as an option heading into the most important games of the year. "I want this kid to be here and be the guy," Guillen said of Hudson. "Because it costs less money, we're going to have somebody for the future and we can have someone we can count on later. I'm pulling for this kid."

A's: Fallout from Sheets move

With Sheets going on the DL and another day off Monday, the A's don't really have to skip a beat in their rotation, with Braden going Sunday, followed by Gio Gonzalez, Trevor Cahill and Vin Mazzaro in the three-game series at Texas. That would make Braden or Anderson, if he's ready, available for Friday's opener in Chicago. ... With two homers Saturday, Jack Cust now has six home runs in 10 games after just two in his first 42.

Worth noting

The A's and White Sox meet one more time in Chicago next weekend before their final three-game meeting takes place when a lot could be on the line: Sept. 20-22 in Oakland.

White Sox recap

Chicago Sun-Times

July 25, 2010

Getting better

The Sox have an 8-18 record against the Athletics in Oakland under **Ozzie Guillen**, and that includes a 5-3 record over their last eight games at the Coliseum.

Lefty help

Erick Threets continued to inch his way into good graces by throwing two scoreless innings of relief. Threets has made six scoreless appearances since he was brought up.

Done streaking

Veteran **Omar Vizquel** went 0-for-3 to snap his nine-game hitting streak. He still is batting .410 in his last 10 games.

Teahen ready and willing, hopes to be able to help

Chicago Sun-Times

July 25, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Monday is a big day for **Mark Teahen**.

It not only will be the day that he believes he will get medical clearance to start full baseball activity since going on the 15-day disabled list June 1 with a fractured right middle finger, but also the day that he believes he can start contributing to the winning that has been going on in his absence.

It's that second part of the equation that might be a bit tougher.

Manager **Ozzie Guillen** has indicated that when Teahen is healthy enough to come back, he no longer has a starting job at third base. Instead, he will be used as a reserve who offers a lefty bat. Basically, he becomes **Geoff Blum**.

"Obviously, you don't want to lose a position because you're hurt, but at the same time I understand the way the team's playing," Teahen said Saturday. "And I've done the jumping-around thing plenty in my career, so saying I'll do that for a team that's in the playoff hunt is easy. I definitely want to do whatever I can to make sure I'm contributing to us winning."

Omar Vizquel has gotten most of the reps since Teahen departed, and the Sox have posted a 31-15 record since he went down.

His hope is he will get cleared Monday, work with the team several more days and then go out on his rehab assignment.

Mid-August is the latest in which Teahen would like to be back on the South Side.

"I would hope before then, but I don't know," Teahen said. "It's been a long process, but I'm doing everything I can."

"I'm definitely going to do some type of rehab, and my hope is that it will come at some point next week."

Sale job

First-round pick **Chris Sale** continued to get his work in for Class AAA Charlotte out of the bullpen. The lefty threw a scoreless inning Friday.

Sale, who is being polished to hopefully join the Sox bullpen soon, has allowed just one run in four appearances for the Knights, while fanning seven and walking just one.

Guillen said he has already asked about bringing him up now. It was explained to him that Sale is coming off a full college season and they really have to keep an eye on his innings.

"Of course I would use him," Guillen said. "The question is how much I would use him? We have to take care of him like [**Sergio**] **Santos**. [If not] then we don't do anything good for the ballclub."

TBA no longer

The Oakland Athletics finally named a pitcher for the series finale this afternoon, opting to start **Dallas Braden** (4-7, 3.74 ERA). The lefty will go against Sox rookie **Daniel Hudson**.

Garcia can't escape from tight corners

Chicago Sun-Times

July 25, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Freddy Garcia is not shy when it comes to expressing his feelings.

So when asked to explain the shortest start of his career in the White Sox' 10-2 loss to the Oakland Athletics on Saturday, it was vintage Garcia.

Sure, he shouldered the blame, saying, "I didn't really have it." But he also discussed how his pitching repertoire works at this stage of his career and how plate umpire Laz Diaz didn't help him.

"The umpire was pretty tight," Garcia said. "I watched the video and felt like I threw some pretty good pitches. I live in the corners. I don't throw hard. I can't just throw in the middle. If I don't have the corners, I get f-----, and that's what happened. It's one thing if you can throw a fastball away, but if I don't have the corners, I have to live with that."

So did the Sox (53-43).

Considering how well Garcia (9-4) has pitched for the South Siders this season, he gets the mulligan.

"He ran into trouble from the beginning," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "I couldn't leave him for another inning just because I tried to take care of the bullpen. But in the meanwhile, I thought we had a shot to hold those guys there, try to score some runs.

"Freddy has been great for us all year. You have to throw strikes, and he wasn't throwing strikes. When he was around the plate, he got hit. Just coming from Freddy, I will take that from him. He's been pitching so great for us that it's one of the games you try to erase and move on."

Forget erasing it, burn the video as well.

The Athletics jumped on the Sox 2-0 in the first, but when Ramon Castro hit a two-run homer in the second, it looked like the Sox weren't going away. Oakland answered with three more in the bottom of the second, sending Garcia to the showers with five runs and six hits in just 1 1/3 innings.

"That's part of the game," Garcia said. "I go out and pitch 10 or 12 in a row good and then have one bad one. If you don't have the stuff there's nothing you can do. Put it in the past and do what you do. I got to pitch against Seattle, and hopefully, it's better."

It likely can't be any worse.

Ozzie Guillen keeps eye on price

By Joe Cowley

Chicago Sun-Times

July 25, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Less than a week from now, the questions will all go away. The July 31 trade deadline, the rumors, the speculation and the daily inquiries will all be gone.

More than a few members of the White Sox' traveling party can't wait for that.

Manager Ozzie Guillen had his own take on it Saturday afternoon, letting it be known that general manager Ken Williams has been busy working the phones for the last month, targeting a short list of players, starting with Adam Dunn, but the asking price is not exactly to Guillen's liking.

"To be honest with you, I think all the general managers out there are crazy," Guillen said. "Wow."

In explaining what the Sox have been trying to get done, as well as the resistance they've come across, Guillen revealed details that were assumed but never confirmed by the organization. Specifically that acquiring a player such as Dunn comes at a heavy price, and it's a price Guillen doesn't want to pay.

"Like I said, it takes us a little while to put Gordon [Beckham] and the Missile [Alexei Ramirez], Carlos Quentin, [Alex] Rios, it takes us three or four years to put this team together, and all of a sudden we're going to bring one or two guys to help, to hope we get there?" Guillen said. "And all of a sudden we don't, then you lose what you have done in the last three years.

"Like I say, I can't be a general manager because I'd worry about making trades and worry about putting my butt on the line. But in the meanwhile, if we think we have a chance to win, yes. We're going to compete? Yes. The main thing is if you're going to compete this year and [be] done next year, you're going to bring somebody to this club but take someone away from this club, then I don't think we do the right thing. That's my opinion. Because what we have is good for a little while, and why should we destroy everything for one guy or two guys or three guys or exactly what it is?"

That's why Guillen thinks the Sox should stand pat and let the current roster try to finish what it started. If the asking price comes down this week, that might change Guillen's mind, but as it stood Saturday, what they're asking for -- whether it's the Nationals or Brewers -- is punishment that doesn't fit the crime.

"But in the meanwhile, I never get involved," Guillen said. "Do we talk about [trade possibilities]? Yeah, we talk with the coaching staff. 'I have this in mind. What do you guys think?' I think that was the first time I got quiet because I don't have anything to say because it's not easy. Not because they will blame me and say, 'He told me,' or 'We talked.' No, it's because I don't have a feeling for that department at all."

Guillen admitted that he thought they'd need a starting pitcher when Jake Peavy was injured and ruled out for the rest of the season, but Daniel Hudson has eased his mind.

As far as help for Matt Thornton from the left side of the bullpen? He's still torn on that front.

"If I'm going to pick someone out of the bullpen to really have to take care, it's Matt because everyone else ... we got four or five righties that are pretty good," Guillen said. "And that's the only thing I'm concerned about.

"I got to trust [lefty reliever Erick] Threets more than anyone else. I got to put him in a situation to see if we can count on him."

If it was up to Guillen, he'd like the week to fast-forward, then just see who he has on his roster next Saturday night. Hudson just hopes that he's not only on the roster but still in the organization.

Like Beckham, Hudson has come up frequently as a piece that could be moved when the Sox are mentioned in trade rumors.

"It will definitely be a little weight off my shoulders, but I still can't think about it," Hudson said of the pending trade deadline. "Once that happens, stuff can still happen after that, so you never know what will happen."

Rough loss for Garcia, White Sox

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND - Freddy Garcia suffered his shortest outing of his career, and it didn't take him long to figure out why.

"Normally, I have a good changeup, but today ... I couldn't make the pitch I needed," said Garcia, who walked Coco Crisp to start a 44-pitch first inning. "I threw like, what, 50 pitches in the first inning? After that it was pretty much ... I couldn't get anybody out after that."

Garcia actually threw 44 pitches in the first. He also wasn't happy with the apparently tight strike zone of umpire Laz Diaz.

"The umpire was pretty tight, man," Garcia said. "I watched the video and felt like I threw some pretty good pitches. For me, I live in the corners. I don't throw hard. I can't just throw in the middle.

"If I don't have the corners I get (bleeped), and that's what happened. It's one thing if you can throw a fastball away, but if I don't have the corners, I have to live with that, man."

Garcia's short outing taxed the long relievers and left Sunday's outing up to rookie Daniel Hudson to at least give the Sox six innings.

Manager Ozzie Guillen, meanwhile, was more concerned with keeping the core of the Sox's roster intact with the July 31 trade deadline approaching.

"Like I said, it takes us a little while to Gordon (Beckham) and the Missile (Alexei Ramirez), Carlos Quentin, (Alex) Rios," Guillen said. "It takes us three to four years to put this team together, and all of a sudden we're going to bring one or two guys to help, to hope we get there?"

"And all of a sudden we don't, then you lose what you have done in the past three years. Like I say, I can't be a general manager because I'd worry about making trades and worry about put my (rear) on the line. But in the meanwhile, if we think we have a chance to win, yes. We're going to compete, yes.

"The main thing is if you're going to compete this year and (be) done next year, you're going to bring somebody to this club but take someone away from this club, then I don't think we do the right thing. That's my opinion. Because what we have is good for a little while why we should destroy everything for one guy or two guys or three guys or exactly what it is?"

Contenders or pretenders? Some favorites need help

By Phil Rogers

Chicago Tribune

July 24, 2010

On crutches at the All-Star Game, **Dustin Pedroia** inspired little confidence that he was going to be the guy to help the [Red Sox](#) get back on their feet.

The odds seem even more against the 2008 MVP and his team after it dropped the first two series of the second half, losing three of four to the Rangers at [Fenway Park](#) and two of three in Oakland. He's feeling the heat.

Asked if he is headed for a rehab assignment once his broken left foot heals sufficiently, Pedroia explained that is a luxury he no longer can afford.

[Register with Chicago Tribune and receive free newsletters and alerts >>](#)

"No time for rehab assignments," he said. "When I'm ready, I play. No time for that now."

With 10 weeks left, it's time for teams that were favored to start showing why they had been expected to roll into the playoffs.

This has been a tough year for that type of team, with only the Yankees and Cardinals following the path of conventional wisdom. The Red Sox, Angels, Twins and [Phillies](#) have fallen, and it's questionable whether they can get up, with or without reinforcements at Saturday's trade deadline.

Phillies general manager **Ruben Amaro** speaks to that.

"If we continue to play the way we've been playing, I don't know if there's a trade that would make us a playoff contender," said Amaro, who has been pursuing [the Astros' Roy Oswalt](#). "I can get [Cy Young](#) and [Mariano Rivera](#) and it wouldn't matter."

Here's a prognosis on the life expectancy of troubled contenders with odds they can take a playoff race down to the wire:

- Angels, 6-1: Can **Alberto Callaspo** pitch? For all the talk about the lack of run production since **Kendry Morales** broke his left leg, the pitching staff is a bigger problem for manager [Mike Scioscia](#). Only [the Orioles](#) and Royals have given up more runs among [American League](#) teams entering the weekend.

The Rangers have been a better team all season and added **Cliff Lee**. The wild card is not in play.

- Phillies, 5-1: Injuries have been a huge problem all season, and the lineup hasn't shown any consistency since the late-May stretch in which the Phillies were shut out five times in eight games.

"We come out here about every day and we do the same thing," manager Charlie Manuel said. "We don't hit and we don't score runs. I've been giving everybody in that locker room a chance, I feel like. 'Hey, if you can hit, please do.' What the hell?"

Down 4 1/2 games at the break, the Phillies lost six of eight against [the Cubs](#) and Cardinals to fall seven back entering the weekend. They are one of six teams within five games in the wild [National League](#) wild-card race.

- Red Sox, 3-1: Decimated by injuries, the Red Sox are losing sight of the first-place Yankees and are a distant second to the Rays in the wild-card race. The list of players on the DL includes Pedroia, **Victor Martinez** and [Jacoby Ellsbury](#), yet the bigger problem has been pitching.

GM [Theo Epstein](#) is trying to fill leaks all over the roster, with the bullpen arguably the most critical issue now that

Clay Buchholz and Josh Beckett are back in action.

•Twins, 2-1: **Justin Morneau** continues to suffer from concussion syndrome. **Joe Mauer**, the reigning MVP, appears to have lost his confidence at the plate (.297, down from .365 a year ago).

There was much head-scratching when Mauer opted to bunt in the seventh inning in a recent game rather than take a crack a driving in the go-ahead run.

"I'm not feeling the greatest at the plate right now," admitted Mauer, who hasn't homered yet at Target Field.

The Twins (who are in the Oswalt rumors) did take three of four against the [White Sox](#) last weekend but then dropped a series to the Indians. If Morneau and Mauer get going, they have lots of time to recover from a deficit that hasn't been bigger than 4 1/2 games.

Final chapters: [Lou Piniella](#) wanted to save his hometown team but was fed up with the Rays by the end of three seasons. He was sure he would have a much better chance to win with the Cubs but they entered the weekend having gone 308-272 with him at the helm, compared to the Rays' 304-276 record during those four years — and you know which of those teams went to the [World Series](#).

Piniella entered the weekend with a .519 winning percentage. It jumps to .536 when you take away the Rays' 200-285 mark in his three seasons.

Piniella is 14th all-time in victories, putting him in Hall of Fame territory. Of those ahead of him, the only ones not in the Hall are **Gene Mauch** and the still-active trio of **Tony La Russa**, **Bobby Cox** and **Joe Torre**. But the .519 winning percentage and one pennant in 23 seasons hurt Piniella's case.

Carl Crawford says Piniella contributed to the success the Rays have had under **Joe Maddon**:

"He just put that in me — that 'Go-play-hard stuff all the time; every play, go all out. Don't take no time off.' And at the end of the year, you're tired as hell but you look back and you're like, 'I'm glad I played for Lou because he gets everything out of you.' You don't lollygag at all. Some things you guys see now, wouldn't happen if Lou was here. I guarantee that."

Misleading numbers: Why all the fuss about **Roy Oswalt**? The guy was 6-11 heading into his scheduled start against the Reds Saturday and 14-17 in 49 starts the last two seasons.

Consider that the Astros have scored 10 runs in his 11 losses this season, seven of which qualified as quality starts, and that the bullpen blew six saves behind him last year.

"If I win those six games, you're not asking me how old I am," Oswalt said.

He will be 33 next month, but this year is third in the NL in quality starts, fifth in WHIP, 11th in ERA, 12th in strikeouts and 18th in innings. Those are No. 1 starter type numbers, even on strong teams. He has 143 career victories since joining the Astros in 2001, and only [CC Sabathia](#) (148) and **Roy Halladay** (145) have more triumphs over that period.

Those close to Oswalt believe he wants to pitch for the Cardinals and Yankees, and will have to be persuaded to waive his no-trade clause to go anywhere else. How nasty would the Cardinals be with a rotation of **Adam Wainwright**, [Chris Carpenter](#), Oswalt and **Jaime Garcia**?

The Cardinals have an intriguing trade chip in **Shelby Miller**, a power pitcher from Texas whom the Cardinals took in the first round of the 2009 draft, two picks ahead of the Astros.

"We were crushed when he didn't fall to us," Astros owner **Drayton McLane** admitted.

The last word: "Television is a passive experience. We're not absolutely essential to the telecast. ... On radio, the fans are engaged with you because they're turning your descriptions into visual images that are strictly their own. At

the same time, you can tell a good story." — ESPN's **Jon Miller**, who will be honored in Sunday's Hall of Fame inductions, on his preference for radio over television.

Whispers: Teams can get burned hanging onto expendable veterans too long. The Royals likely lost **David DeJesus** for the season with a torn ligament in his thumb when he crashed into the wall at Yankee Stadium on Thursday night, and saw **Jose Guillen** hurt his value when he cost the Royals a run by not hustling in the same game. The Giants were scouting Guillen when he failed to get across the plate from second before **Wilson Betemit** was thrown out trying to stretch a single into a double. ... **Don Mattingly** has been considered a manager in waiting by the Dodgers. But if they go another direction after **Joe Torre** leaves (**Bobby Valentine?**), Mattingly at least should get an interview with the Cubs. ... Triple-A third baseman **Brent Morel** is likely to be in a big trade if the White Sox make one. The Sox could trade **Bobby Jenks** for prospects to help facilitate a deal if they decide they have the appetite for **Prince Fielder** or **Adam Dunn**. ... **Cito Gaston** is pushing for **Don Baylor**, now the Rockies' hitting coach, to get a shot at the upcoming managerial vacancy with the Blue Jays. ... The Blue Jays' **Scott Downs** might be the most heavily pursued pitcher in the current market. ... After a slow start, third baseman **Pedro Alvarez** is justifying the hype. ... The **Brewers'** starting pitchers gave up 10-plus runs three times in a span of four games last week, which makes it more likely they will trade away **Corey Hart**, if not Fielder. ... Big doings in Texas last week. The 280-pound **Tommy Hunter** threw to the allegedly 225-pound **Bengie Molina**. Their combined 505 pounds made them the second heaviest battery in big-league history, according to Dallas Morning News research. The biggest was **Jumbo Brown** (295) and **Ernie Lombardi** (230) of the 1937 Reds. ... Outfielder **Matt Watson**, who has gone to Japan and South Korea to play since last being in the big leagues in 2005, is getting a long look with the A's, thanks to **Ryan Sweeney's** season-ending knee injury. ... **Johnny Damon** (Tigers) and **Alex Cora** (Mets) recently showed their leadership skills by calling team meetings. ... Proposed trade for next off-season: **Carlos Zambrano** to the White Sox for **Mark Teahen** and **Scott Linebrink**. ... **Jamie Moyer** says this latest elbow injury won't sideline him for long but there are no minor injuries at age 47.

Chicago surgeon trying for breakthrough to help careers

By David Haugh

Chicago Tribune

July 24, 2010

One day Mario DiCostanzo felt a pop in his left arm after throwing a tennis ball.

Next came the feeling of pins and needles in his **shoulder** and eventually numbness. He had suffered a torn labrum, which for aspiring college pitchers such as DiCostanzo usually precedes the death of a baseball career.

But four months after a minimally invasive, relatively controversial new surgery performed by Anthony Romeo, the head of shoulder and elbow surgery at **Rush University Medical Center**, DiCostanzo was playing catch from 10 feet away. Six months after the operation in December 2007, the Hinsdale South graduate was playing long toss from 50-yard distances.

Within a year every bit of velocity on his 80 mph fastball had returned even if, by then, DiCostanzo had decided to forego baseball to concentrate on academics his senior year at Valparaiso University.

"The pain in my arm was completely gone, and I could throw the way I could before the surgery," said DiCostanzo, 22, who still pitches for the DuPage Irish in the South Side Wooden Bat League. "The recovery time was a lot faster than what everybody thought it would be."

If DiCostanzo were a name you were used to reading in a box score, his story would be one **Major League Baseball** owners, agents and managers used to inspire every pitcher who fears he never will throw another strike after tearing his labrum.

But the prognosis no longer has to be grim thanks to a guy in Chicago who could have an impact on professional baseball more with his surgical gloves than anybody wearing a leather mitt.

His name is Romeo, and he has this romantic notion that his pioneering method, called biceps tenodesis, eventually can help pitchers recover from shoulder injuries as routinely as they do from elbow ligament reconstruction commonly known as "Tommy John surgery."

That breakthrough, named for the former [White Sox](#) and Dodgers pitcher who was the first athlete to successfully undergo the surgery in 1974, secured surgeon Frank Jobe's legacy to the game. Romeo could be one willing, rehabilitated big-league pitcher away from establishing his.

"We don't have that Tommy John yet," said Romeo, who just received a \$50,000 grant from MLB to experiment with cadavers to further explore how the surgery can shorten recovery time and extend careers. "We do have a number of high school- and college-level players (such as DiCostanzo) who have had a (torn labrum), and we've done this surgery, moved the biceps out, and they've gotten back to the same level. We just haven't had an example like that at the major-league level ... yet."

Without getting too technical one day last week before he performed a surgery at Oak Park Hospital, Romeo detailed the procedure that impressed Commissioner Bud Selig during a tour of the biomechanics laboratory last month.

Selig raved in a phone interview that, "I see a lot of presentations, but Dr. Romeo's was as good as it gets."

"To get meaningful answers you have to engage in out-of-the-box thinking, and we're going to continue to encourage and fund this type of research," Selig said. "Having run (the [Brewers](#)), I know pitching injuries are so unfortunate when they happen to the shoulder, and I've always had the feeling that we need to know more about that area. I was fascinated by what I saw."

The process many in baseball like Selig find so fascinating: To relieve the pain from which a high percentage of patients never recover, Romeo removes the damaged part of the biceps tendon and moves the tendon outside the shoulder joint before attaching it to the upper arm bone. That's where Romeo inserts the tendon into a tiny hole he drilled into the bone and secures it with a screw. The pain vanishes when the strength and range of motion return within a year.

"There is an important interplay between the labrum and the structure that attaches to the upper labrum, the biceps tendon," said Romeo, who operated on Jake Peavy's latissimus tendon. "People don't want to believe that taking the biceps out of the shoulder is a good thing. Many people believe the biceps tendon does play a role in the fine motor control of your shoulder.

"But we've done the research and have the literature that it may play a role, but it's a secondary role. If it's causing the pain that prevents the shoulder from functioning we can eliminate that pain and the rest of the shoulder can make up for the fact that the biceps is not there."

It has worked for tennis players and skiers in Europe, where Romeo once demonstrated the procedure in Italy in front of an audience. It worked for [Brett Favre](#), who Romeo believes was able to play for the Vikings in 2009 only because surgeon James Andrews performed the biceps tenodesis procedure that allowed for a shortened recovery time. It also worked for former All-Star pitcher [Curt Schilling](#), who had the surgery in June 2008 against the [Red Sox's](#) wishes but decided to retire before testing his arm at the age of 42 for reasons unrelated to the surgery.

But it only will work for more athletes in the future if they are as willing as Schilling was to take the road less traveled to shoulder recovery.

"The restraint is the concern if you move the biceps and the player doesn't get back, it's the surgeon's fault because we've never really done that before at the major league level," Romeo said. "(But) we may need to say we did the best we could for the past 20 years but need to rethink this whole process, get out of the box and realize the biceps may not play an important role. Then we may be able to get more of these athletes back."

Then maybe a torn labrum won't have to shred a professional pitching career the way it so often does now.

"In 2010 it's grim news to get, but we're hoping that by 2012 to 2015 it'll be like the elbow," Romeo said. "Everybody will be disappointed, it'll be frustrating for the team, but there will be an expectation the athlete will be back to play again next season. This could save many careers."

This could link Romeo's to baseball, forever.

Guillen high on Hudson

By Lindsey Willhite

Daily Herald

July 24, 2010

The trading deadline hits at 3 p.m. on Saturday, which means rookie Daniel Hudson's start in Sunday's road-trip finale at Oakland should be a crucial audition for the White Sox's potential trading partners.

Unless, of course, manager Ozzie Guillen's input outweighs everyone else's within the organization.

"I pray, I swear to God, I want this kid to be here and be the guy," Guillen told reporters prior to the Sox' 10-2 loss at Oakland on Saturday.

"Because he's going to cost us less money, we're going to have somebody for the future, we've got somebody we can count on later. I'll do anything for this kid."

Hudson, 23, delivered the best performance of his brief career in his last time on the mound. He allowed just 1 run and struck out six over 6²/₃ innings in a win at Seattle.

Bullpen saved: Relievers Tony Pena and Erick Threets combined to throw 5²/₃ innings Saturday in the wake of Freddy Garcia's ineffective start.

Between their long-man efforts and Mark Buehrle's complete game Friday, the White Sox's big guns in the bullpen have enjoyed much-needed rest.

J.J. Putz hasn't pitched since Tuesday and Matt Thornton hasn't thrown since Monday.

Thornton hadn't received so much time off since early June, when Ozzie Guillen gave him six days' rest after an aberrant 5-run, 1-inning effort against Detroit.

Guillen doesn't want to wear out Thornton for the stretch run, which is why Guillen hopes the hard-throwing Threets proves to be solid.

The lefty threw 2 scoreless innings Saturday, which gives the long-time minor-leaguer 7¹/₃ scoreless innings since joining the club three weeks ago.

"The only thing I was worried, concerned, was about Matt Thornton," Guillen said. "Then I saw Threets throw the ball (Wednesday) in Seattle. Pitched 2 innings very well. Threw strikes.

"I will put him in situations to see if we can count on him."

Odd Sox: Saturday's 10-2 decision marked the White Sox' widest loss margin since a 10-1 defeat against Cleveland on June 4.

For the third time this year, Sox pitchers allowed a season-worst 22 baserunners (13 hits, 9 walks).

Cust hits 2 homers in A's win over Sox 10-2

By Lindsey Willhite

Daily Herald

July 24, 2010

Judging by manager Ozzie Guillen's thought processes, the White Sox won't be able to add a pennant-run piece within the next six days without surrendering an important building block.

As rumors continue to churn about the team's pursuit of left-handed sluggers Adam Dunn and Prince Fielder, Guillen has been kept abreast of the latest trade entreaties by general manager Ken Williams.

"To be honest with you, I think all of those general managers out there, they're crazy. For what they ask," Guillen said prior to his team's 10-2 loss Saturday afternoon at Oakland. "That's my opinion."

Guillen always states publicly that he prefers to stand pat.

But his take Saturday seemed to be more about other teams' overly high trade demands than Guillen's always high degree of loyalty to his players.

"It took us a little while to put Gordon (Beckham) and The Missile (Alexei Ramirez), Carlos Quentin, (Alex) Rios," Guillen said. "It took us like three or four years to put this team together. All of a sudden we're going to bring one guy or two guys to help - to hope - we get there. All of a sudden we don't, then you lose what you have done in the past."

The White Sox control Beckham through 2015. Rookie infielder Dayan Viciedo and Daniel Hudson, Sunday's starting pitcher, can be with the Sox through 2016 before hitting free agency.

"You're going to bring somebody to this ballclub (in a trade), but you're going to take somebody away from this ballclub," Guillen said. "Then I don't think we do the right thing. That's my opinion. That's my opinion because what we have, I think, is good for a little while.

"What, we should destroy everything just for one guy? Or two guys or three guys or, I don't know what exactly it is."

The Sox needed about 25 new guys based on Saturday's rare subpar effort.

Starting pitcher Freddy Garcia, who hadn't lost a game in two months, allowed 6 hits and 3 walks before getting yanked with one out in the second.

Garcia needed 45 pitches to get through the first inning as he battled with plate umpire Laz Diaz and suffered through Omar Vizquel's rare issues at third.

Garcia, who walked two of the first four batters he faced, openly questioned Diaz' tight zone after some off-speed offerings.

Meanwhile, Vizquel lost a foul popup in the sun off Gabe Gross' bat that could've ended the first inning with just 1 run scoring.

Then Gross nubbed a squibber to Vizquel that he failed to pick up with his bare hand for an RBI single.

But to blame any single Sox for Saturday's blowout would be silly.

Considering White Sox starting pitchers entered the game with 32 quality starts in their last 39 games - and a collective 2.41 ERA over that stretch - this contest felt like one big aberration.

"Coming from Freddy, we'll take that," Guillen said. "He's been pitching so great for us all year. That's one of those kind of games you just try to erase and move on."

Dawson and Raines share a bond so deep, they might as well be family

By Barry Rozner

Daily Herald

July 24, 2010

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. - As they kicked the ball around a drenched but brilliant golf course Saturday morning, battling each other much more than they did the 18 holes, Andre Dawson and Tim Lincecum couldn't have sounded more like teenage brothers if they tried.

The former Expos teammates actually consider each other siblings, and their genuine affection, born of six years laboring together in Montreal, is so obvious as to be envied.

"Man, I carried Hawk all those years up there, and now I got to carry him on a golf course. My back is killing me," said Lincecum, shrieking with laughter. "Man that big man hits a baseball 500 feet when it's thrown at him 95 miles per hour, but can't hit a ball sitting still. Ought to be ashamed."

In fairness, Dawson doesn't play golf, so he offered the foursome his putting prowess and little else in the annual Hall of Fame golf outing, while Lincecum pounded the ball off tee box after tee box into fairway after fairway, leading his group to victory - heavily aided by Dawson's 28 handicap.

"Gotta let the new guy win, huh?" Wade Boggs hollered at Hall of Fame President Jeff Idelson during the 19th hole presentation. "They must have had the eraser working overtime today."

Of course, the final score mattered not a bit, as the day was about fun and laughter for all the Hall of Famers on the Otesaga Hotel's breathtaking track, the Leatherstocking Golf Course.

For Lincecum and Dawson, it was like a family reunion.

"In Montreal, we would just beat on each other to amuse ourselves," Lincecum laughed. "I would sneak up on him and pop him in the face, and then I'd run and there was no way he could catch me.

"But when he surprised me, man, he's so strong he didn't know how bad it hurt when he punched me. Of course, I never let on I was hurting."

But Lincecum really does love Dawson like a brother, naming his second son Andre - he calls him "Little Hawk" - and he drove through tornado warnings overnight to get here from New Jersey, where Lincecum manages the Newark Bears of the Independent League.

Lincecum, who played for the White Sox for five years and later coached three years for Ozzie Guillen, currently has ex-Sox Ron Karkovice and ex-Cub Willie Banks on his staff.

"No way was I missing this," Lincecum said. "No way."

Dawson hopes Lincecum gets to join him in the Cooperstown club someday, and says he'll make that pitch on Lincecum's behalf in his speech Sunday.

Lincecum hasn't gotten very far in his first few tries on the ballot, receiving 24 percent of the vote in 2008, far short of the required 75, followed by 22 percent in 2009 and 30 percent this year.

But he is gaining support among the new generation of stats gurus, many of whom consider him the best base stealer in history.

He's fifth all time with 808 but has the best success rate ever among the leaders at 85 percent.

"He was as good at leading off and stealing bases as anyone ever," Lou Brock said of Lincecum on Saturday. "He was one heck of a baseball player."

Saturday, he was one heck of a golfer.

Buehrle's future career

By Brett Ballantini

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND – The only way for Mark Buehrle to better celebrate his first career win in Oakland—aside from the beer shower he was half-anticipating after the game to mark the accomplishment—was with a little open-mic work after the game.

The veteran lefthander 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. And afterward, he held court and had the comedy cracking.

"Everything was down in the zone, sinkers were working," Buehrle said. "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."

Don't you want opponents to swing early?

"Yeah, when they make outs."

It took a mere 101 pitches for Buehrle to finish his second straight complete game, which 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.

The accomplishment allowed Buehrle to poke some fun at his feisty catcher, A.J. Pierzynski, who was mocking his pitcher one out short of the complete game.

"A.J. was shaking his hands like I was nervous about throwing a complete game," Buehrle said. "I was like, 'It's my second one in a row!' He forgot about the last one."

As a result, Pierzynski jogged up to Buehrle after the last out, a Kevin Kouzmanoff fly out to center fielder Alex Rios, and acted like he wanted to jump in Buehrle's arms or give him a hug.

"This was one of those games that was fun," he said. "The whole starting staff is on a good roll; let's keep it going."

Buehrle was asked whether he'd petition pitching coach Don Cooper to be sure to throw on every July 23 from now on, and the southpaw pointed out that he'll just have one more July 23 to pitch [in 2011] before his contract runs out. (Recall that Buehrle has threatened to retire after that contract runs out, although he'll be just 32 years old.

But 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."

Buehrle was also the butt of some jokes early in the game, when the McAfee Coliseum radar gun was malfunctioning. Oakland starter Trevor Cahill hit 200 mph on the gun. His teammates on the bench, before Buehrle even had thrown a single pitch, estimated that with such a malfunction "you might be able to hit 88 today."

When informed that indeed he hit 88, and in fact 800, on the malfunctioning gun, Buehrle had his response ready:

"Is that some sort of record?"

Athletics pummel Garcia, White Sox

By Brett Ballantini

CSNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND – The rumor around McAfee Coliseum today was that the ballgame between the Chicago White Sox and Oakland A's began at 3:07 CST.

However, two hours into the game with just four frames down, it seems terribly unlikely that such was the case. Perhaps that curiosity is responsible for the first-place White Sox's puzzling and steep 10-2 tumble at the hands of the middling A's in front of an Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum crowd of 17,439.

Chicago starter Freddy Garcia appeared to hit the mound with no gas in his tank, pummeled for three hits and two runs in an interminable, 44-pitch first inning. (The White Sox had punctured A's starter Vin Mazzaro for 30 pitches in the top half, but could draw no blood.)

"He ran into trouble from the beginning," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said of Garcia. "I could have left him in another inning to [spare] the bullpen, but I thought we had a shot to hold those guys and score some runs. Freddy's been great for us all year long. You have to throw strikes, and he wasn't throwing strikes. He was around the plate, and he got hit."

"There's not much to say," Garcia reflected on his effort. "I started [walking] the first guy, so I started off on the front foot. When I made good pitches, I didn't really [get the call]. I had a good changeup today, a lot of foul balls, but I couldn't make the pitch when I needed it. I threw almost 50 pitches in the first inning, and that's a lot of pitches for an inning. I couldn't get anybody out."

Ramon Castro pulled Chicago back even with a two-run clout to left in the top of the second—runs that were stolen back with interest in the bottom of the second, when Oakland struck for four more hits and three more runs, applying the TKO to Garcia in the process.

"I've been feeling good at the plate," said Castro of his last 11 games, in which he's gone 13-for-34 with three homers and nine RBI. "I just wanted to help get up back into the game, and for a little bit, we were right there."

Guillen shared his backstop's optimism, saying, "Even in the first and second inning, I thought we had a shot the way we've been swinging the bat."

Alas, Kurt Suzuki (who led the hit parade for Oakland, going 3-for-4 with a home run and two RBI) knocked a homer to lead off the fourth inning. The round-tripper was originally ruled a double off the wall, and the controversy so riled the A's that Jack Cust followed Suzuki with a mighty clout deep to right field on the very next pitch from reliever Tony Pena. That pair of whoppers put the A's up, 7-2, and the game likely out of reach.

"We haven't had many games like that, even when we were struggling," Guillen said of the blowout. "[But whether] you lose 1-0 or 20-1, you lose. Hopefully, we bounce back tomorrow and pitch better. Hopefully, we can score some runs."

Cust added an eighth-inning blast to nearly the identical spot as his first—the seventh multi-homer game of his career—to extend the Oakland lead to 10-2.

On the mound, Mazzaro settled down to complete five innings of one-hit ball after his rocky first frame, earning his sixth victory in eight decisions on the year.

The White Sox now look to Sunday's rubber game, hurled by rookie starter Daniel Hudson, for a similar effort. "We need innings, at least," allowed Guillen.

"Coming from Freddy, I'll take [today's result]," Guillen continued. "He's been pitching so good all year long. That's a game you try to erase, and move on."

Sox's Guillen: Trade offers 'crazy'

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- White Sox general manager Ken Williams keeps working the phones as the trade deadline approaches, all while revealing little about the process.

Leave it to manager Ozzie Guillen to offer a little insight.

Guillen has been hinting that the price teams want back in return for proven talent like [Prince Fielder](#) and [Adam Dunn](#) has been out of balance. On Saturday, he offered his strongest words yet on the subject.

Trying to be diplomatic when asked if he would reject all trade proposals he has seen, Guillen stopped himself.

"To be honest with you, I think all the general managers out there are crazy," Guillen said. "Wow."

The latest trade proposal put in front of Guillen and the coaching staff required so much talent from the current major league roster that the talkative manager was nearly in shock.

"Do we talk about it? Yeah, we talk with the coaching staff," Guillen said. "I have this in mind. What do you guys think? I think that was the first time I got quiet because I don't have anything to say because it's not easy."

With the deadline just a week away, asking prices could drop, or teams in dire need of help could agree to overpay. Guillen continues to say his team is not in the latter category and he would be just fine with trying to get this club into the postseason.

If the season ended today, the wild card would come out of the American League East. That could leave the White Sox to face the [New York Yankees](#) in the opening round of the playoffs.

Can't get enough White Sox information? ESPNChicago.com has all the latest from the South Side. [Blog](#)

Without making a deadline deal, would this Sox team have a chance at stacking up against the Yankees?

"No," Guillen said. "[On] paper, you have [\[Derek\] Jeter](#) and [Alex \[Rodriguez\]](#) and [\[Mark\] Teixeira](#), [\[Robinson\] Cano](#). Not too many people on paper is better than New York. But on the field, we can compete because we know how to play the game. We know how to scratch out runs and I think our pitching staff is good enough to win in the playoffs, yes.

"Are we a better team? No. Well, I don't want to say a better team. Better names. Those guys, everybody knows a lot of people build a ballclub around them. But when you're in [the playoffs] you never know what's going to happen."

White Sox's Hudson ignoring trade talk

By Doug Padilla

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- All those trade rumors that carry his name? [Daniel Hudson](#) has a way of dealing with that.

The reality that he is filling the shoes of a former Cy Young Award winner in the White Sox's rotation? He has been offered a way of coping with that, too.

The thought that Sunday's start at Oakland is key in showing that he deserves to stick around? That one isn't so easy to avoid.

"It's definitely big," Hudson said about his third start since being recalled to take the spot of the injured [Jake Peavy](#). "Obviously nobody wants to take a step back. I just want to continue going in the right direction."

After a rough season debut in the final game of the first half, when he couldn't last five innings despite being handed a big lead, Hudson turned it around in his next outing at Seattle. He gave up one earned run over 6 2/3 innings against a Mariners lineup that does have some holes.

The A's should provide the ideal test. When Hudson made that first start of the season on July 11, it came against a [Kansas City Royals](#) offense with the best team batting average in the American League. His dominance over the Mariners was against the worst hitting team in the league.

Before the A's teed off against White Sox pitching on Saturday, they entered the game with the seventh-best team average (.261) in the 14-team American League.

"I think the difference is that when you are throwing strikes and challenging them and making them hit the ball, it's going to be easier," manager Ozzie Guillen said.

Hudson might be avoiding the newspapers, but Guillen hopes he saw what was written about Oakland's Friday starter, [Trevor Cahill](#). The right-hander marveled at how White Sox starter [Mark Buehrle](#) controlled the game Friday night by getting ahead in the count.

Buehrle works faster than most, but Hudson said he found a tempo he liked in the game against the Mariners and the goal Sunday is to repeat that.

"I threw well around four walks [against the Mariners], but when you give teams four free baserunners it's not going to always work out like it did in Seattle," Hudson said. "Especially with good-hitting teams, they're going to make you pay for stuff so I have to work on that."

Young talent that has success is the goal of any organization, which is why teams want the White Sox to include Hudson in trade proposals.

"Hudson, I swear to God that I want this guy to be here and be the guy, because it will cost less money, we will have somebody for the future and we have somebody we can count on later," Guillen said. "I'm rooting for this kid."

Guillen and pitching coach Don Cooper already have sat Hudson down for some words of advice on how to cope with trade-deadline madness.

"They said 'Listen, there's going to be a lot of speculation going around about all kinds of stuff and we just want you to go out there and pitch like you know you can pitch. You're not trying to be Jake Peavy, you're trying to be Dan Hudson out there and that's all you need to do,'" Hudson said.

Sox must shake off rare blowout

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

July 24, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. – The White Sox put to rest one of the hottest runs in franchise history Saturday with a humbling 10-2 defeat to the Athletics.

It isn't so much that that the stretch of blistering play comes to an end now because the White Sox have dropped five of nine games on their second-half opening, 10-game road trip, although it certainly would be a legitimate reason.

No, the team's run of stellar play now has a period at the end of it because for the first time in well over a month the White Sox played in a game that wasn't competitive. There was no strategy for a comeback and the white flag was raised when manager Ozzie Guillen started substituting liberally in the seventh inning.

Not since June 8 against the [Cleveland Indians](#) have the White Sox played a game where they didn't have a chance by the late innings. Since that date, the White Sox have lost just 10 times, including Saturday.

Only twice did they lose by more than two runs in that stretch and the only other time they did, aside from Saturday, was a 7-4 defeat July 16 at Minnesota when they had the bases loaded in the ninth inning with [Paul Konerko](#) at the plate.

"When you play baseball it's going to happen," said [Juan Pierre](#), who was 0-for-4. "Hopefully you stay hot as long as you can. But the most important thing is to try and win series. We're in position to do that [Sunday] and if we do that it will be a decent road trip. It won't be like what we hoped for but at this point you can't get too high and you can't get too low.

"It would be nice to win the rest of the games all year long but the chances of that happening are slim. You have to have amnesia when it's good and bad. That's what makes this game so tough."

The White Sox's 29-10 record since June 8 is still the best in baseball over that stretch so it isn't as if they are sliding into the abyss. It was just a rare summer day when the pitching and hitting were out to lunch at the same time.

[Freddy Garcia](#) was horrible and it isn't likely that if [Omar Vizquel](#) did get to that ball he lost in the sun in the opening inning it would have made much of a difference. The A's scored three runs in the first inning and three more in the second as Garcia recorded just four outs before he was removed.

"I started with the first guy, walk, so I started with the wrong foot," Garcia said. "I didn't really have it. Normally, I have a good changeup, but today ... I couldn't make the pitch I needed. I threw like, what, 50 pitches in the first inning? After that it was pretty much ... I couldn't get anybody out after that."

The 1 1/3-inning outing, when he gave up five runs on six hits and three walks, was the shortest of Garcia's career. It put an end to his six-game win streak, his longest since putting together a seven-game streak early in the 2006 season. It was also the end of Garcia's five-game road win streak.

Thinking he could still salvage the game, Guillen went to the bullpen early. It didn't work and now the relievers will be short-staffed with rookie [Daniel Hudson](#) on the mound in Sunday's series finale.

[Tony Pena](#) came on to give up four runs on four hits with four walks in 3 2/3 innings. Left-hander [Erick Threets](#) continues to prove himself, pitching two scoreless innings. He now has six scoreless outings since joining the team in late June.

"We haven't had many games like that," Guillen said. "Even when we struggled, we didn't have many games get away like that. One thing about it, no matter how you lose 1-0, 20-1, you still lose. Hopefully we bounce back, pitch better and score some runs."

BY THE NUMBERS

30: Number of defeats for the White Sox this season when scoring three runs or less. They have won eight such games. When allowing four runs or more, the White Sox are 16-32.

QUOTE

"The umpire was pretty tight man. I watched the video and felt like I threw some pretty good pitches. For me, I live in the corners. I don't throw hard. I can't just throw in the middle. If I don't have the corners I get [expletive], and that's what happened. It's one thing if you can throw a fastball away, but if I don't have the corners, I have to live with that, man." – Freddy Garcia, on the strike zone from home-plate umpire Laz Diaz on Saturday.

LOOK AHEAD

Hudson (1-0, 5.06 ERA) will make his third start of the season and just the fifth of his career when he faces Oakland. He has never started against the A's but does have an appearance against them, giving up two earned runs and five hits over a 2 1/3-inning relief appearance in September of last season. He is coming off a victory at Seattle when he gave up one earned run over 6 2/3 innings.

Hudson will be opposed by Oakland's [Dallas Braden](#) (4-7, 3.74) who is making his second start since coming off the disabled list because of elbow tendinitis. Braden pitched a perfect game May 9 against the [Tampa Bay Rays](#).

AL Central: White Sox GM Williams exploring limited trade options

By Mike Castiglione

Sports Network

July 23, 2010

While the Chicago White Sox continue to try and fend off Detroit and Minnesota in the American League Central standings, all eyes are on general manager Kenny Williams to make something happen before next Saturday's trade deadline.

This is the time of year when the rumor mill is churning nonstop. Already, the White Sox have been linked to Brewers first baseman Prince Fielder, Nationals first baseman Adam Dunn and Blue Jays outfielder Jose Bautista. According to multiple reports in the Chicago media, the Brewers had a scout at Monday's White Sox game against Seattle. Fielder, who is eligible for free agency after the 2011 season, would seem to satisfy Chicago's search for a left-handed power hitter. All told, the White Sox have tallied a combined 16 homers and 73 RBI from the left side.

However, Williams said there are no imminent deals on the horizon.

"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 said. "We'll see how that develops."

"But right now, I don't see anything materializing."

Manager Ozzie Guillen seems to realize as much, having recently dubbed resurgent second baseman Gordon Beckham as his key trade deadline acquisition, tongue-in-cheek of course. Beckham endured a miserable first half and was hitting just .199 a month ago, on June 23. But he has started to pick it up at the plate, and had an eight-game hit streak come to an end Tuesday night. During those eight games, Beckham was hitting .571 with four doubles, two homers and eight RBI.

"A lot of people ask for trades and we just made one," Guillen said. "We got Gordon Beckham. We didn't have him for two months. That's the big trade we make. Gordon is swinging the bat very well, and we need that in the bottom of the lineup to make that stronger."

Regarding the actual trade market, Guillen is well aware of the same few names being mentioned across the league -- specifically, Roy Oswalt, Dan Haren, and Adam Dunn.

"Kenny sees our team in a different way than I do," Guillen told the Chicago Tribune. "He sees what's missing. But from down here, I'm happy with what we have."

One guy the White Sox manager has enjoyed watching is Omar Vizquel, an 11-time Gold Glove winner at shortstop who has made a seamless switch to third base for Chicago this season. Of the 51 games Vizquel has played for his new team, 38 have come at the hot corner. Though he said playing third base hasn't exactly come naturally, he has conceded that he feels much more comfortable on the left side of the infield than at second base.

Regular third baseman Mark Teahen is recovering from a finger injury, but with Vizquel's stellar glove and offensive production -- he is hitting .301 in 34 games since Teahen went on the DL June 1 -- Teahen could find himself in a bench role upon returning. Guillen said he doesn't think Vizquel should lose his job, and would try to move Teahen all around and see how it works out.

The manager is also figuring out what to do about his closer, which he said is now an open job following Bobby Jenks' blown save in the 11th inning against Seattle Wednesday night, marking the second time Jenks has blown a lead during the current road trip. In four outings since the All-Star break, Jenks has allowed seven runs on seven hits while walking two in a span of 2 2/3 innings.

Of course, the last time Guillen opened the competition for the closer's job was May 9, after Jenks surrendered a game-winning home run to Toronto's Fred Lewis. But Jenks was able to hold onto the job, converting 15 straight save chances until Wednesday's meltdown. This time around, however, Guillen said he is seeing 'nothing' on the ball when Jenks pitches, and will do what he needs to win ballgames.

TRIBE OFF TO A HOT START IN SECOND HALF

Sometimes, the best thing for a struggling player, or team, is some time away from the game. That seems to be just what the doctor ordered for the Cleveland Indians, winners of six straight coming out of the break.

Considering the Tribe only sent Fausto Carmona to the Midsummer Classic, virtually the entire team got a nice breather after a tough first half. Cleveland completed a four-game sweep of the Detroit Tigers last weekend, then went on the road and took two straight from the Minnesota Twins, before coming back down to Earth with a 6-0 loss at Target Field Wednesday night.

Beginning Friday night, the Tampa Bay Rays are in town for a three-game set, and if history is any indication, that's more good news for the Tribe. The Rays have lost their last 17 games at Progressive Field, a stretch that dates back to 2005. You read that last sentence correctly. The Rays, owners of the second-best record in baseball (57-37), have a 17-game road losing skid to the last-place Indians (40-55).

Although the Rays have the best road record in baseball (31-17), they are catching the Indians on the heels of their longest winning streak of the season.

"We're playing good baseball," said manager Manny Acta. "We're pitching well, catching the ball, getting timely hitting. As cliché as it may sound, that's how you win ballgames."

TIGERS STUMBLE OUT OF THE GATE

While some ballclubs come back sharper after some time off, others struggle to regain the momentum they had before the break. The Detroit Tigers fall into the latter category, having lost six in a row following the All-Star break.

Although they've finally woken up by winning each of their last two games, the Tigers are holding their breath when it comes to the health of Magglio Ordonez. According to the team's website, Ordonez has been dealing with a bothersome ankle since last weekend in Cleveland.

"It's getting better," Ordonez said Thursday afternoon, a day after being removed for a defensive replacement in the eighth inning against Texas. "I'm getting treatment right now."

Manager Jim Leyland has used Ordonez as a designated hitter twice this week, hoping to spare his ankle from as much trauma as possible. Ordonez indicated he may return to right field Friday night.

BLACKBURN BUMPED FROM TWINS' ROTATION

Nick Blackburn has finally run out of chances in the Minnesota Twins rotation. On Wednesday, manager Ron Gardenhire announced that he would be sending Blackburn to the bullpen and giving Friday's start to Brian Duensing. For Duensing, it marks his first start in a year.

"You try to make a few changes -- a little bullpen, a little starting rotation -- and see what happens," Gardenhire said. "We like our pitchers. It's just not been good enough right now. So you make a change here and there and see what happens. Whether it's going to get us on the right track, I don't know."

In 18 starts this season, Blackburn was 7-7 with a team-high 6.53 ERA and 19 home runs allowed. He had surrendered four or more earned runs in each of his last six starts. Blackburn had won 11 games in each of the last two seasons, but his struggles have been snowballing as this year has progressed.

Pitching coach Rick Anderson said he thinks "it's a good move for Blackburn probably more than anyone."

The Twins entered Friday tied with Detroit, two games behind Chicago in the division.

ROYALS DEAL CALLASPO FOR PITCHING HELP

The Kansas City Royals shook up their roster on Thursday, sending switch-hitting third baseman Alberto Callaspo to the Angels for right-hander Sean O'Sullivan and Double-A lefty Will Smith. The move came just prior to Thursday's series opener against the Yankees, with Callaspo being pulled from the lineup less than an hour before game time.

Callaspo had spent the past three seasons with Kansas City, hitting a respectable .293 in 317 games. This season, the 27-year-old Callaspo was hitting .275 with eight homers and 43 RBI in 88 starts. The move clears the path for Mike Moustakas, the organization's third baseman of the future, who was just promoted to Triple-A Omaha on July 15 after hitting .347 with 21 homers and 76 RBI in 66 games at Double-A Northwest Arkansas.

"We figured we were going to have to move Alberto at some point because of the guys we've got coming," general manager Dayton Moore told the Kansas City Star. "So we thought we'd better be proactive in trying to make a move. We got a couple of young pitchers we think can be part of our future."

In addition to making room for Moustakas, the Royals get some much needed pitching help. O'Sullivan, 22, could join the rotation as soon as Sunday's series finale at Yankee Stadium. A third-round pick in 2005, O'Sullivan was 1-0 with a 2.08 ERA in five games, including one start, for the Angels.

With the July 31 trade deadline fast approaching, there is a strong possibility that Callaspo won't be the last veteran player to leave Kansas City.
