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After four-run rally in ninth, White Sox lose in 11

By Scott Merkin

MLB.com

September 20, 2010

CHICAGO -- A summary of the disappointing, gut-wrenching finish to the 2010 season for the White Sox could be found by watching Paul Konerko's final at-bat during Sunday's 9-7 loss to Detroit in 11 innings.

Konerko was hitting against reliever Eddie Bonine, with one out, Alexei Ramirez on second, Alex Rios on first and ahead in the count at 3-1. He ripped the next pitch down the left-field line for what looked like a walk-off, three-run home run, marking the White Sox second unlikely comeback in three innings.

Instead, the ball bent to the left of the foul pole by about two feet at the last second. Konerko took the next borderline pitch for a called third strike.

"That's the way we roll," said White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen of the Konerko near-miss. "That happens in July, it's a home run to win the game. But it happened right now in September, and it's a foul ball."

"I was just trying to bend with it, and I kept on bending farther and farther," Detroit catcher Gerald Laird said. "I almost put my back out again. I'm just glad it bent in front of the pole."

This 11th-inning rally was further stunted when A.J. Pierzynski hit into a fielder's choice at second and Manny Ramirez took a called third strike from Daniel Schlereth (first save) with the base loaded. Those at-bats finished off a six-game home losing streak and dropped the elimination number for the White Sox (79-70) to four in their quest for the American League Central title.

Their 10-game deficit behind the Twins (89-60) is double the White Sox lead over the Tigers (74-75) for third place. And this disastrous 2-7 homestand pretty much squelched any viable playoff hope held by Guillen's crew.

"Very, very disappointing," said Guillen of the nine-game home stretch, which included back-to-back home sweeps for the first time since 1989. "We played very hard, yes we did. We give everything we have out there. In the meanwhile, at the end of the game, it's not how hard you play, it's how many you win."

"It's plain and simple. We [stunk]," said White Sox starter John Danks, who didn't factor in Sunday's decision, after giving up seven runs on seven hits in 6 1/3 innings, with six of those runs scoring in the seventh. "That's something we have to live with, because we had an opportunity to put ourselves in a pretty good spot."

Thanks to that six-run rally put together by Detroit, the White Sox trailed by a 7-3 margin going into the ninth against Phil Coke. But there's still some fight left in this proud team.

They scored four times during a 41-pitch effort from Coke and Robbie Weinhardt (2-2), taking advantage of three walks, Alex Rios getting hit on an 0-2 Weinhardt pitch and an ensuing wild pitch to score the tying run. Pierzynski, who had three hits and two RBIs, hit a broken-bat grounder to short to strand the bases loaded and send the game to extra innings.

Runners left on base will be a phrase echoing in the White Sox minds as they take the long late-night flight to Oakland. They stranded 21 in total, a season-high and their worst sum since leaving 24 on base during a 25-inning victory over Milwaukee on May 8, 1984. White Sox hitters finished 4-for-24 with runners in scoring position against seven Tigers pitchers.

Ramirez's 11th-inning at-bat turned out to be the final nail in the coffin. He took a 2-1 pitch from Schlereth down the middle of the plate, and then took the same pitch for a called third strike.

"You won't win many games that way," said Guillen, whose team had at least two runners on base against Detroit starter Jeremy Bonderman in each of the six innings he worked, but only scored three times. "It's nice to have a lot of people on base. In the meanwhile, early in the game, we had opportunities to score a lot of runs and we don't score."

Detroit scored in the 11th when Brandon Inge reached first off of a wild pitch by Sergio Santos (2-2) on a strikeout and moved to third on Pierzynski's throwing error on the play. Inge came home with the game-winner on Laird's single to left following an intentional walk issued to Brennan Boesch.

About the only true bright spot for the White Sox came from holding AL Most Valuable Player candidate Miguel Cabrera to a 1-for-15 line in the sweep. He finished 9-for-56 against the White Sox this season.

Not much of a consolation, as the White Sox head west just four steps short of elimination.

"Everything can be going great and the tides can change in a big, drastic way," Santos said. "That's the way this game is."

Even the starting rotation, a key to the White Sox midseason 28-8 run, has been downright disastrous of late. They have an 0-8 record with a 7.09 ERA and a .345 average against over the last 14 games.

The immediate goal for the White Sox is to sleep fast once they arrive in Oakland at approximately 4 a.m. PT. The target over the last 13 games is win as many as possible and pray for a miracle.

"Our group of guys are tough-minded, for sure. It's fun to watch," Danks said. "We are going to battle until we can't win anymore. We put ourselves in a tough spot, and we are going to need a lot of help to climb out of this hole."

"One thing I know is we will try to win every game and try to keep as much pressure on the Twins as we can. But we haven't helped ourselves much on this homestand."

A's, White Sox face off with tough hills to climb

By Jesse Sanchez

MLB.com

September 20, 2010

Both the White Sox and the Athletics trail the leaders in their division by sizable distances.

Both teams appear headed for a second-place finish.

Neither team has given up on the season, however. Their respective missions will come into conflict on Monday, when the White Sox begin their final road trip of the season with a three-game set against the A's. Chicago has won five of the last eight games in this series, but both teams are playing with an essentially clean slate and a clear statement of purpose.

"We're obviously still not eliminated, so we're still shooting to avoid that," Oakland manager Bob Geren said of his team's motivation for the remaining games. "If that doesn't happen, our next goal would be second place. But we're still going out playing like [winning the division] is still a possibility. We want to win every game we can when we step on the field."

Finishing with a .500 record has also developed into a realistic goal for the A's (74-74). The club won two of three games against the Twins over the weekend and has won six of its last 10 games.

The A's will also get a chance to make waves in the division later this week when they go head-to-head against the first-place Rangers for four games at home starting Thursday. They currently trail Texas by nine games in the standings.

As for the White Sox, they have lost a season-high six consecutive games heading into Monday's opener against the A's. They were swept last week in three games by the AL Central-leading Twins and trail Minnesota by 10 games.

Chicago has lost 10 times in the last 12 games, and it was swept in back-to-back series for the first time since May 1989. All of a sudden, the team that grabbed the division -- and the baseball world -- by storm in July is receding into the distance.

"They're in the same situation as us," Geren said about his opponent for the next three days. "They're doing everything they can to hang on, and we're gonna go at it the same way every day."

The A's will send Gio Gonzalez to the hill to kick off the series. The White Sox will counter with Gavin Floyd.

Gonzalez lasted just two innings against Kansas City on Tuesday in his last outing, allowing seven hits and seven earned runs in his first loss since Aug. 13 at Minnesota. Likewise, Floyd will have to pitch better. The right-hander has lost three of his last four decisions and five of his last seven, giving up 61 hits and 29 earned runs over 43 innings during that span.

White Sox: Manny struggling to contribute

Manny Ramirez went 13-for-48 with one home run and one RBI in his first 16 games with the White Sox -- with 12 of those hits going for singles -- before coming up in a couple key spots in Sunday's game. Ramirez pinch-hit for designated hitter Mark Teahen and drew a key walk in Chicago's four-run game-tying rally.

Ramirez went on to strike out in the bottom of the 10th inning, and he came up again with two outs and the bases loaded in the 11th. Ramirez, who had the potential tying run standing on second base, struck out to end the game.

Athletics: Kouzmanoff, Crisp ailing

Kevin Kouzmanoff, who has been sidelined by a lower back ailment, was healthy enough to undergo full baseball activities for a third straight day on Sunday. The injury has kept him out of the lineup for 12 straight games and there is no timetable for his return. ... Outfielder Coco Crisp, who missed the first month of the season because of a fractured left pinkie finger, might have to sit out all of September due to the same injury. He will see a specialist Monday.

Worth noting

The A's have hit 94 home runs this season, the second fewest in the Major Leagues behind Seattle (92). The A's also have the second fewest extra-base hits in the American League with 374. ... Juan Pierre has 517 career stolen bases and needs one more steal to tie Patsy Donovan for 30th place on the all-time list. ... Chicago is 3-3 against Oakland this season. Andruw Jones and Ramon Castro have the only two home runs hit against the A's for Chicago.

Guillen says Vicedo has a ways to go

MLB.com

September 20, 2010

CHICAGO -- In just a few weeks since his September callup, third baseman Brent Morel already has earned the "very impressive" tag from White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen.

That same sort of praise was not exactly heaped upon fellow third-base candidate Dayan Vicedo when Guillen was asked about his future prior to Sunday's series finale with Detroit. In fact, Guillen doesn't seem to have the power-packed Vicedo firmly in his 2011 plans.

"I don't think Vicedo is ready. That's my opinion," said Guillen of the 21-year-old Cuban. "To play in the big leagues? You see a good couple of at-bats here and there, but to get a good 500 at-bats, I would think about it.

"He's still far away from being here, a year away or maybe two years away. I don't know how far away. Right now, I don't think he can perform every day. We have to wait and see in Spring Training how mature he is and how he comes back. It's good for him to taste a little bit of the big league level and how people do stuff here."

Vicedo came to the White Sox prior to the 2009 campaign via a four-year, \$10 million deal. The return on that investment basically has been Vicedo's .271 average with three home runs and seven RBIs over 85 at-bats this season.

Unfair expectations might have been placed on Vicedo to produce immediately upon joining the White Sox, much like shortstop Alexei Ramirez, who stands as a Silver Slugger candidate in his third year with the team. But Guillen pointed out on Sunday how Vicedo didn't play throughout the entire 2008 season as he came over from Cuba to the United States.

Morel already was known for his stellar glove work and has shown the ability to pull the baseball with authority during his September work. Mark Teahen has two more years left on his three-year extension and figures into the third-base picture, while Vicedo seems to be more of a first base/designated hitter candidate at this point.

Regardless of his position, Guillen believes Vicedo needs work as a hitter to succeed consistently at this level, especially where his one walk this season is concerned.

"Be more patient at the plate," said Guillen of the focus for Vicedo, laughing at that critique coming from a less-than-patient hitter in his own right. "But learn a little bit more about the big league level.

"You hit in Triple-A and you face two or three good pitchers. In the big leagues, you face everyone. They have a lot of scouts. They are going to see his weakness. Offensively, he has to make some adjustments."

Beckham still waiting on return

CHICAGO -- Gordon Beckham plans to test his sore right hand during a batting practice session prior to Monday's game in Oakland to see when he will be able to return, or if a return is possible.

"We'll see tomorrow how it feels," Beckham said. "If it feels like it has felt the last couple of weeks tomorrow, then I don't know. We'll make that decision at that point."

"Honestly, it's still sore. When I wake up, I feel it. I don't know if that's a good thing. It's probably not a good thing."

Beckham suffered the injury on Aug. 30 in Cleveland, when he was hit by a pitch on the right hand. He has tried to play through the pain, but has not seen action in the weekend Detroit set and came in as a pinch-runner during the final game against the Twins.

If Ozzie Guillen believes playing Beckham won't help the team in his current state, he's not against keeping the second baseman out of action.

"My job is to put the best guys out there to win," Guillen said. "In the meanwhile, you are going to go bad all year and then give up at-bats and don't help us to win, then it's easy. When Omar [Vizquel] is ready, we put him back at second and I keep playing [Brent] Morel. We are not going to push Gordon to do something he shouldn't be doing. We have to be careful."

"I don't want to sit out the last two weeks," Beckham said. "I want to be able to play and do whatever I can. It is what it is. They said that rest is the only thing that's going to give it help."

Confusion surrounds Jenks' status

CHICAGO -- With Bobby Jenks still not ready to come back from the ulnar neuritis causing pain in his right forearm and tingling in his right arm, there's a chance the closer might not make the road trip to Oakland and Anaheim. Those words came from manager Ozzie Guillen on Sunday.

"I don't know exactly when he's going to be ready," Guillen said. "But if you aren't going to pitch, why are you going to go? We don't know yet. We are going to see how we do it with him."

Jenks has not thrown since saving both ends of a doubleheader at Fenway Park on Sept. 4, and Guillen believes if he can't pitch on the upcoming six-game excursion, he won't be ready for the season's final seven games at home. As quickly as he ruled him out, though, Guillen added how Jenks could be throwing in Oakland.

Having earned \$7.5 million this past season, Jenks could be a non-tender candidate as a third-year arbitration eligible player. Those facts mean he could have thrown his last inning for the White Sox.

If that theory proves true, Guillen presented fitting kudos to one of the most important players to suit up for the organization in the last decade.

"Every time he's been on the mound, he's been great for us," said Guillen. "We gambled with this kid and it worked pretty good. We win the lottery. This kid was in Double-A and we picked him up and he pitched very well for us. Hopefully we get him back, but that's someone else's department. He was great for the White Sox organization."

White Sox understand the Twins' success

CHICAGO -- A.J. Pierzynski does not stand as the only member of the current White Sox roster who has a working knowledge of what makes the enemy tick from Minneapolis. Sergio Santos also played three months within the

Twins' organization during the 2008 season, as an infielder, and is not surprised by the team excelling even without first baseman Justin Morneau.

"It's a compliment to them, because they are a good organization," Santos said. "They do things the right way. It's scary if they did have money like the Yankees or other teams have, what they would have. They produced enough and they teach guys to play the right way.

"Since the first day I got there, they broke it down for me and said, 'Look, this is what we do. We call it Twins baseball.' They do the little things right. They emphasize unselfish baseball, not giving at-bats away. They grind you and grind you until you feel like you get tired and they are still going strong."

Worth noting

Freddy Garcia's balky back continues to feel better, and he plans to throw a bullpen session on Monday in Oakland. Garcia is in line to start the series opener in Anaheim on Friday. ... John Danks sits one inning short of his second straight year with 200 innings pitched. ... White Sox pitchers had a 7.22 ERA on the nine-game homestand, and the team was outscored, 66-41. ... Detroit relievers threw a combined 94 pitches over the final three innings during Sunday's 9-7 win over Chicago. ... The White Sox are 30-39 against the American League Central and 64-67 against the AL.

Mixing travel, travails

After brutal 2-7 homestand, Guillen's Sox head to the West Coast

By Toni Ginetti

Chicago Sun-Times

September 20, 2010

It's a strange time of year for the White Sox to be traveling west, and even stranger that the schedule has waited this long to send them to Anaheim for the first time.

But scheduling is a sore spot for most teams, and it has gotten complicated for the Sox because a commitment to ESPN made Sunday's homestand finale against Detroit a night game, meaning an all-night flight west.

For a team still barely alive mathematically in a division race, the combination is brutal, especially after a 9-7 loss in 11 innings to end a 2-7 homestand.

An RBI single by Gerald Laird and an RBI double by Austin Jackson off Sergio Santos (2-2) put the Tigers on top in the 11th. Daniel Schlereth struck out Manny Ramirez with the bases loaded to end the game. The Sox, who tied the game in the ninth with four runs, stranded 21 runners.

"This homestand was very bad," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "It's nice to have a lot of runners, but we didn't score early. We needed those runs. We got some big hits late, but in the ninth, we needed one more.

"It's a very disappointing home-stand. We played very hard, but at the same time, it's not how hard you play, it's how many games you win."

Earlier in the day, the Minnesota Twins lost to Oakland, but their magic number to clinch the American League Central dropped to four after the Sox' loss.

The Sox, who have a 30-39 record against their own division, might welcome their trip west. They're 20-11 against AL West teams.

The trip to Oakland for three games, then Anaheim to face the Angels looked like a potential derailment in the team's division hopes. As it is, things went badly at home instead with six consecutive losses, three against the Twins and three against the Tigers.

"I always say, when you don't win, I'm never satisfied to finish second or third," Guillen said.

But he repeated his praise of this year's team for overcoming a bad start, early hitting woes and injuries.

"I feel proud of these players, no doubt," Guillen said. "In the seven years I've been managing this ballclub, this is the team that I've been proud of the most because they went through a lot of bad situations. They overcame, they survived, they made this year interesting and a little disappointing in the end.

"Yes, we're disappointed -- not just me. We are all disappointed. They played hard for us. We had injuries to overcome, and late in the season, we had a couple of guys in the bullpen injured, and we never complained. Everybody stepped it up a notch, playing very hard, and that's all you can ask for. I hope in the future another ballclub makes me more proud, but that's tough."

Starter John Danks has had a season mirroring his team's ups and downs. Early on, the lefty was the rock of the rotation, winning his first three decisions. Then he dropped the next three.

He entered the game having lost two of his last three decisions and hasn't won consecutive decisions since July 26.

Danks held the Tigers without a hit once through the order before Scott Sizemore got his team's first in the fourth -- a solo homer, his second in as many games. But Danks and the Sox held a 2-1 lead. They scored both runs in the first off Jeremy Bonderman. Both were unearned after Juan Pierre reached on Sizemore's error to start the inning.

But as has happened too often on the homestand, the game imploded for Danks and the Sox in the seventh. The Tigers sent 10 to the plate, chasing Danks with a six-run outburst.

Beck for more this season? 2B could decide today

Chicago Sun-Times

September 20, 2010

Gordon Beckham has followed doctors' orders and rested his bruised right hand, but he could decide by today if he'll return this season.

"I haven't swung a bat in three days because they said the main thing to do was rest it, so if I wasn't playing, I didn't use it," he said Sunday. "The plan is to sit out [Sunday] and see how it feels [today]."

"Honestly, it's still sore. When I wake up, I feel it. It's probably not a good thing."

Beckham, who was hit by a pitch Aug. 30 in Cleveland, wants to return but doesn't know what the injury might dictate.

"I expect to come back," Beckham said. "I don't want to sit out the last two weeks. I want to be able to play and do whatever I can. We'll see how it feels [today]. If it's the same as it's been the last few weeks, then I don't know. We'll make a decision at that point."

Manager **Ozzie Guillen** won't risk playing Beckham if he's in pain.

"There's not a reason to put this kid on the spot," Guillen said. "It's a very, very tough spot when you are hitting. One swing, and you can go backward. Hopefully he can play by Tuesday."

With **Brent Morel** playing well at third, Guillen has used **Omar Vizquel** at second but played **Brent Lillibridge** there Saturday and Sunday.

"We won't push Gordon to be doing something he shouldn't," Guillen said.

Closing down Jenks?

Bobby Jenks, who hasn't pitched since Sept. 4 because of discomfort in his right forearm, might not make the West Coast trip if he's unable to throw.

"Why go if you can't throw?" Guillen said. "I don't like to shut anyone down, but the only one might have to be Bobby. If he doesn't pitch on this trip, I don't think he'll be ready for the last homestand. It's up to him. As soon as Bobby is ready, we'll put him back."

Jenks' future has been a hot topic. It's possible the Sox won't re-sign the arbitration-eligible closer, who has been with the team since midseason in 2005.

"That's someone else's department," Guillen said. "Bobby's been great for us. The last couple of years, he's had health problems, but when he's been on the mound, he's been great."

"We gambled with the kid, and it worked out pretty good. We won the lottery."

Learning curve

Dayan Viciedo is in only his second full season with the Sox organization and played in his first major-league games this summer. But the 21-year-old infielder still needs to improve before he can be considered a major-league regular, Guillen said.

"I don't think Viciedo is ready; that's my opinion," Guillen said. "You see a couple of good at-bats here and there, but to get a good 500 at-bats, I would think about it. I think he's still a year or two away."

"We have to wait and see in spring training how mature he is. But it's good for him to taste a little bit of the big leagues and see how people do things here."

"He's still learning. I think he has a chance to be a pretty good player, but I don't know when."

Viciedo has played in 31 games, hitting .271 with three home runs and seven RBI. He has committed four errors.

Sox recap

Chicago Sun-Times

September 20, 2010

Missed opportunities

The Sox stranded 21 runners in the 11-inning loss, their highest total since stranding 24 on May 8, 1984, in 25 innings against Milwaukee.

Stale starts

John Danks was off the hook for a loss, but his ERA in his last five games is 6.47 (22 earned runs in 30 2/3 innings).

Division numbers

The Sox' best division record is against the American League West at 20-11. They were 15-3 against the National League.

SOX TRAGIC NUMBER: 4

This represents the combination of Twins victories and Sox losses that will eliminate the Sox.

Sox's fade continues, but Guillen proud of his team

'They made this year interesting,' he says

By Dave van Dyck

Chicago Tribune

September 20, 2010

They dropped out of first place with six weeks left in the season and dropped out of contention with more than two weeks remaining, but Ozzie Guillen insists this White Sox team is the one "that I've been proud of the most."

"I'm never satisfied to finish second or third," he said. "I'm not getting paid for that. (But) I feel proud of these players."

He was both proud and frustrated after Sunday's 9-7, 11-inning loss to the Tigers, one that included a dramatic four-run, ninth-inning rally.

In the end — with only a handful of the announced 25,417 remaining for the 4-hour-13-minute marathon — the Sox saw their magic number for official elimination fall to four.

It was their sixth straight loss and eighth in the last nine games against the third-place Tigers, who are only four games behind the Sox in the Central Division standings.

It also ended a 2-7 homestand of which Guillen said: "We played very hard, but it's not how hard you play, it's how many games you win."

But Guillen won't be changing his assessment of this team, which is surprising given his second Sox team won the World Series. This one, however, is special to him because of the hardships that started in spring training.

"They overcome, they survive, they made this year interesting and a little disappointing in the end," he said. "Yes, we are disappointed, just not me. We are all disappointed."

"I'm very, very proud of those players. They played hard for us and we had a couple of injuries and we overcame that. Late in the season we had a couple guys in the bullpen injured and we never complained about it.

"Everybody stepped it up a notch, playing very, very hard and that's all you can ask."

On Sunday, they actually had eight hits through six innings but left two runners on base in every one of them and 21 for the game, most since May 8, 1984, when they stranded 24 in 25 innings against Milwaukee.

For the game they outhit the Tigers 14-9, but two runs off Sergios Santos in the 11th was the difference. Sox starter John Danks was charged with seven runs in 6 1/3 innings and has won only once in his last seven starts.

Even though it is late in the season, the Sox had what amounted to their regular lineup, except for new DH Manny Ramirez, who ended up batting three times and was called out on strikes for the last out. He didn't start because of a "long day (ahead Monday)," according to Guillen. That allowed Mark Teahen to DH and Carlos Quentin to play right field.

Guillen said he would continue to play a regular lineup for most of the remaining 13 games, which includes a seven-game trip to Oakland and Anaheim that starts Monday night.

"We have to win as many games as we can," he said. "I don't care how far (behind) we will be. Our job is to go out there and finish strong."

Danks roughed up, but Sox mount comeback ... only to lose in 11th

By Howard Schlossberg

Daily Herald

September 20, 2010

The White Sox and Tigers played the Olive Garden bread-and-salad game Sunday night at U.S. Cellular Field -- never ending, all 11 innings and 4 hours and 13 minutes of it.

The Tigers put what was left of 25,417 paid and an ESPN national audience out of its tedium when Gerald Laird singled home the go-ahead run and Austin Jackson doubled home an insurance tally in the top of the 11th for a 9-7 win. It discounted a Sox 4-run rally in the ninth that tied it. But leaving 21 on base was the real reason for this loss.

It didn't seem to matter when the Sox were cruising behind John Danks with a 3-1 lead into the seventh. But the pitching blew up that inning and again in the 11th just as the hitting was quieted more often than not whenever runners got into scoring position.

It culminated in the 11th, when, after the first two Sox batters reached base, they couldn't bring them home. Daniel Schlereth got a force play and then fanned Manny Ramirez on a curve with the bases loaded - looking - to end the marathon.

White Sox Manager Ozzie Guillen called this game, this homestand, "very disappointing."

"I think the guys gave everything they had," Guillen said, refusing to call it a letdown after being swept by the first-place Twins during the week. "We prepare for everything one day at a time. We lost almost every game late in the game. That's the reason this homestand was very bad."

Guillen recognized the lack of hitting with runners in scoring position hurt.

"We got big hits. We were one hit away to win. We played very hard. At the end of the day," he added, "It's how many wins you have," not how many hits.

Outside of that, it's all part of what's called playing out the string. Which means just a handful of games left (no matter how many innings they take) at a time you're all but eliminated from playoff contention. It doesn't feel good.

And while Guillen called this 2010 team the one he's most proud of in his seven seasons managing here, there were beaten soundly by Minnesota last week and played like a team that's out of contention against the patchwork Detroit Tigers.

Ozzie's looking hard at his players now during the somewhat meaningless stretch run, and not just the ones on contract years. He's been preaching since the Minnesota debacle that he wants to see hustle, focus and desire out of everyone; veteran stars, rookies and journeymen, or he doesn't want them around.

John Danks on the mound, Alexei Ramirez and Juan Pierre on the bases and Alex Rios at the plate set out Sunday night at U.S. Cellular to heed their manager's call. Danks was efficient for six innings. If he'd held on to win his 14th, it would've been just the tonic the Sox needed to propel them out to the West Coast to start a road trip tonight in Oakland.

Despite the Sox best efforts, Detroit put up a 6-spot in the seventh for a 7-3 lead before the Sox tied it 7-7 on some inefficient Detroit relief pitching and some clutch hitting in a ninth-inning rally that propelled the game into extra frames.

After tying it on two walks, a hit-batsman and a wild pitch courtesy of Detroit's injury-ravaged bullpen, the Sox had another chance to win it in the 10th when Carlos Quentin reached on an error, Detroit's third. But Juan Pierre lined out with Quentin at third to end the inning, increasing the Sox total to 18 left on in 10 innings.

Against Jeremy Bonderman in the first, however, Pierre, the American League stolen-base leader, and Alexei Ramirez, Guillen's trusty No. 2 hitter, got the Sox rolling by reaching base quickly and easily. Rios (3 hits and an RBI), the prospective AL comeback player of the year, lined a hit that plated Pierre. Ramirez neatly avoided Laird's tag on A.J. Pierzynski's foul popout, which sent Detroit third baseman Brandon Inge sprawling over the tarpaulin before making a remarkably accurate throw to the plate.

Danks didn't seem to need much else. While the Sox were battering Bonderman early, Danks was looking like the pitcher the Sox always expect him to be, keeping the Tigers off stride and the Sox ahead through six innings.

Defensively, Carlos Quentin helped him out. The rightfielder was jammed against the wall when he came down with Casper Well's long flyball with two out and two on in the fourth, after Sox-killer Scott Sizemore lead off the inning with a barely fence-clearing solo home run to left to cut the lead in half. And Brett Morel continued his stellar play at the hot corner, flashing his brilliance when he barehanded speedy Austin Jackson in the sixth.

Wells came back and tied the game in the seventh, hitting a bullet of a homer into the leftfield corner. Laird would later knock a double into the same area and put the Tigers ahead in a game which the White Sox appeared to be cruising to a win at last.

In what turned out to be a seemingly decisive seventh inning, Danks went from a no-hitter through 5.2 innings to standing to be the tattooed loser. The bullpen wasn't much help again as J.J. Putz surrendered a 2-run double to pinchhitter Will Rhymes that put the Tigers ahead and put Danks (6.1, 7 ER, 3BB, 4K) on the hook for the loss

But while the Sox played and hit better (in the same game) than they have in a week, they still squandered too many chances against the very shaky Bonderman, who came in with a 8-9 record and a 5.04 ERA and looked every bit of it. Even as they put 2 runs up in the first and 1 more in the sixth, they left two on in each of the first six

innings and one more in the seventh, the continuation of a homestand-long trend that lasted down to the final out Sunday night.

Beckham hopes to play

By Howard Schlossberg

Daily Herald

September 19, 2010

White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen is keeping his fingers crossed on the injury reports and physical progress of second baseman Gordon Beckham and closer Bobby Jenks.

Beckham did not play Sunday night in the series finale against Detroit, and both he and Guillen hope he will be ready for the beginning of the West Coast swing Monday.

"Just waking up, I feel it," Beckham said of the pain in his still swollen right hand. He was hit by a pitch on Aug. 20 at Cleveland. "I expect to come back. I definitely don't want to sit out the last two weeks."

"I don't want to shut anybody down," Guillen said of his young star, but he added that he will do whatever is right for Beckham and the organization.

As to Jenks, he's still nursing a sore elbow and may not even make the West Coast trip.

Now - and later: Manager Ozzie Guillen said he's still determined to win as many games as possible.

"We're all disappointed," he said. "I'm very, very proud of those players. We had injuries. We overcame that. This is the team I'm proud of the most."

However, Guillen emphasized, "I'm never satisfied finishing second or third."

Makeup, please: Ozzie Guillen says he'd be willing to join a local sportscast with its postseason baseball coverage.

The White Sox manager has reservations, though, because, "It's a bad, terrible feeling watching someone else play" and doing media commentary in the postseason.

But Guillen added that he's sticking around Chicago after the regular season, and if Comcast or FOX-TV call, "- make sure they have the check ready."

Guillen won't rush Beckham into lineup

By Bruce Levine

ESPNChicago.com

September 19, 2010

CHICAGO -- Gordon Beckham is hoping to get back into the White Sox lineup, but manager Ozzie Guillen says Beckham will rest his injured hand for at least one more day.

"I just need to gauge and see how it feels," Beckham said. "It just depends on whether I can swing the bat and swing it well. That's the big thing."

Guillen doesn't want to rush Beckham.

"Hopefully he plays, not tomorrow, but the next day," Guillen said. "One swing of the bat and he could go backwards. We're not going to push Gordon to do something he shouldn't be doing."

The White Sox will continue to play their regulars in hopes of finishing the season strong.

"We've got to win as many games as we can," Guillen said. Our job is to go out there, finish strong. Our goal is to win as many games as we can."

Guillen isn't sure if closer Bobby Jenks will join the team on their west coast road trip starting Monday in Oakland.

"He's one guy I don't count on," Guillen said. "Because I don't know how far along he is."

Guillen said that he doesn't think infielder Dayan Viciedo is ready to play in the major leagues on a daily basis

"I don't think he's ready yet," Guillen said. "You see a couple of good at-bats here and there, but I think he's still a year or two years away from playing every day in the big leagues. He can be a good big league player, but will it be next year? That will be up to him, to see how fast he grows up."

If the New York Mets general manager job opens up, White Sox assistant general manager Rick Hahn will be asked to interview, according to numerous major league sources. The sources say the Mets are ready to buy out the \$2.2 million remaining on current general manager Omar Minaya's contract that runs through 2012.

Texas Rangers general manager Jon Daniels is also expected to be interviewed by the Mets if and when the GM position opens up. Daniels, who is in line for Major League Baseball's Executive of the Year award, has an opt-out clause in his present contract. The Rangers are trying to sign Daniels to an extension, according to MLB sources.
