



Headlines of September 22, 2010

"White Sox eliminated from race by loss to A's" ... Eric Gilmore
"A's aim for sweep of struggling White Sox" ... Joey Nowak, MLB.com
"White Sox tip caps to Twins for winning title" ... Eric Gilmore, MLB.com
"Shoulder injury likely to end Floyd's season" ... Eric Gilmore, MLB.com
"Guillen thinks he should get a contract extension" ... Joe Cowley, Chicago Sun-Times
"Ozzie tips cap to Twins, says his team didn't quit" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Jerry and Kenny dodge Ozzie issue" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Sox recap" ... Chicago Sun-Times
"Guillen seeks assurances Sox want him" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune
"Sox eliminated from AL Central race with 7-2 loss" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune
"Guillen: Twins earned it, but Sox didn't quit" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune
"Seeds planted for Sox's off-season" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune
"Your morning Phil: Replay, Floyd, 2011 draft" ... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune
"Oakland pounds Buehrle, White Sox 7-2" ... Scot Gregor, Daily Herald
"Eighth straight loss officially eliminates White Sox" ... Brett Ballantini, CSNChicago.com
"Rickety run to finish line for a number of White Sox" ... Brett Ballantini, CSNChicago.com
"Konerko on his upcoming free agency" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"Guillen: 'It's not fun coming here'" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"Speculation continues on Guillen's future" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"Twins did a number on White Sox" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com
"Beckham not making progress" ... Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com

White Sox eliminated from race by loss to A's

Buehrle allows five runs over six innings vs. Oakland

By Eric Gilmore

MLB.com

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND -- What's been obvious for days, if not weeks, became official Tuesday night: The White Sox aren't going to the playoffs.

They suffered a 7-2 loss to the A's and were eliminated from contention in the American League Central. The White Sox fell 12 games behind the Minnesota Twins, who defeated Cleveland 6-4 earlier Tuesday night and clinched the Central crown when Chicago fell to the A's.

"It's disappointing for me, yes," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said. "You look back and you say, you worked all Spring Training through the summer and don't get what you want to get. I mean, it's another losing year, no matter what it is. I know we played hard, I know they tried hard, they did everything they could to finish where they wanted to finish. ... I'm not getting paid to have a good season. I get paid to win. ... We didn't do it this year."

The White Sox, whose Wild Card hopes died long ago, lost for the eighth straight game on Tuesday. It's the team's longest losing streak since losing eight straight in 2007, a skid that stretched from Aug. 11-19 that season.

The White Sox started this season 24-33, but they entered the All-Star break on a 25-5 run, matching the best 30-game run to end a first half in Major League history. They led the Central by a half-game over Detroit and 3 1/2 games over Minnesota at the break, fueling legitimate playoff hopes.

Then the second half began, and the Twins got unbelievably hot and started pulling away.

Even so, the White Sox trailed Minnesota by just 3 1/2 games on Sept. 6 when they were a season-high 17 games over .500 at 77-60. Since then, they've been frigid, going 2-12 as their playoff hopes vanished.

"Obviously that's why we play this game is to get in the playoffs," said a frustrated Mark Buehrle, who took the loss Tuesday night. "We put ourselves in such a deep hole at the very beginning. Then we went on a good run for a little bit.

"I think everybody kind of knew that wasn't going to continue that way the whole season long. We brought ourselves back into contention and gave ourselves a chance, but these last couple weeks we haven't played well enough to even deserve to be in there."

Buehrle fell to 4-13 lifetime against the A's and 1-7 at the Oakland Coliseum. His only win in Oakland came July 23 this season when he pitched a complete game, allowing four hits in a 5-1 White Sox victory. This time he gave up 11 hits and five runs, exiting after the sixth.

"This is kind of getting old," Guillen said of the eight-game losing streak. "Oakland has a good pitching staff. The last couple guys we faced are pretty good. We attacked them pretty good today.

"I don't care if you have 10 games left or 20 games left, losing is not fun. To me it's not fun, and I know for those guys either. I'm not saying we're not trying, but it starts getting old. Hopefully we start to settle down and have some more fun in the field. ... It's not fun losing every night."

The A's took a 1-0 lead in the first when Kurt Suzuki drove Daric Barton home with a groundout. They made it 2-0 in the third when Suzuki ripped a double off Buehrle, scoring Barton from first. Oakland added three more runs in the fifth. Cliff Pennington hit a two-run double then scored Barton's bloop single, making it 5-0.

The White Sox got to A's starter Trevor Cahill for single runs in the fifth and sixth. In the fifth, shortstop Alexei Ramirez led off with a double and eventually scored on Brent Morel's groundout to short.

Juan Pierre led off the sixth with a single, stole second, went to third on Omar Vizquel's single and scored when Manny Ramirez hit into a double play.

Pierre stole his AL-leading 59th base in the sixth inning to move into a second-place tie with Scott Podsednik on the team single-season list. It was Pierre's 518th career steal, tying him with Patsy Donovan's on baseball's all-time list.

Guillen tried to shake up his lineup and pack it with left-handed hitters to face Cahill, a right-hander with a nasty sinker.

First baseman Paul Konerko, right fielder Carlos Quentin and center fielder Alex Rios were all out of the lineup. Mark Kotsay started at first, Mark Teahen in right and Alejandro De Aza in center. De Aza made his first start since being called up from Triple-A Charlotte on Sept. 1.

Nothing seemed to work, which has been the story of the White Sox nosedive.

"We had a lot of injuries the last month of the season," Vizquel said. "Our bullpen is not the same, and I think that really hurt us at the end of the season.

"The offense hasn't been producing, either. We struggled a little bit the last month of the season. So the combination of both is not very good."

A's aim for sweep of struggling White Sox

By Joey Nowak

MLB.com

September 22, 2010

It seems like just yesterday the White Sox were experiencing one of the most profound hot streaks in baseball. Now, as they've fallen ice-cold, the team they're in pursuit of has begun heating up again.

With Minnesota's 6-4 win against the Indians and Chicago's 7-2 loss to Oakland on Tuesday night, the Sox were mathematically eliminated from the American League Central race.

"There's one thing that's not going to happen to us. We're not going to quit," said infielder Brent Lillibridge. "We're going to keep playing hard, keep on playing with enthusiasm and energy and a positive attitude, knowing that we're still a great team. It's just that we have to play now just for playing good baseball, finish off on a great note and make sure we can be the best team we can."

After going 25-5 to end the first half, they're without any momentum, having lost a season-high eight games in a row. It's the club's most consecutive losses since eight straight from Aug. 11-19, 2007.

"[Monday] night I felt the team was kind of flat" White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said when asked if he was embarrassed by his team's performance. "Besides that, we play hard. We're just not winning."

The White Sox will continue to have to battle against an A's pitching staff which is, in a sense, a walking oxymoron. Rarely in baseball do you ever see such a combination of youth and poise, as the club with the AL's youngest pitching staff also boasts the league's best ERA. But the A's, who also lead the league with 15 shutouts, have done just that.

"The consistency," said A's manager Bob Geren. "Leading [the American League] in shutouts is something that, if you look at how young our staff was coming out of Spring Training, that'd be a very difficult thing to predict. A lot of that credit goes to the bullpen, too."

One of those young hurlers, the red-hot Brett Anderson, has been excellent in four starts since hyperextending his knee in Texas. Signed to a four-year extension this season, two stints on the disabled list have prevented Anderson from working his way toward No. 1 status in the rotation.

In those last four starts, Anderson is 3-1 with four earned runs in 27 1/3 innings of work.

White Sox: Jackson looking to bounce back from no-no gone wrong In his last time out, White Sox starter Edwin Jackson -- who will face the A's on Wednesday -- flirted with his second no-hitter of the season, when he held the Tigers hitless through 5 2/3 innings.

"I could feel it," said Jackson, who was battling a right calf cramp that night. "But if I stay out there, I believe I can get the job done."

When all was said and done, the right-hander left after giving up four runs on four hits over 6 1/3 innings. He struck out five and walked four, eventually taking the loss in the 9-2 Detroit victory.

Athletics: Things looking up With 76 victories, the A's have already eclipsed their win total from the previous two seasons. Now 76-74, Oakland has an opportunity to go three games over .500 for the first time since the All-Star break. ... The Oakland staff's 15 shutouts is four short of the franchise record, set in 2002, and tied for fourth-best in the designated hitter era. ... A victory Wednesday would mark the longest winning streak (four games) in Anderson's career.

Worth noting The A's have used the disabled list 23 times this season, second-most in franchise history. The most was 25 times in 2008. ... White Sox outfielder Juan Pierre's 59th stolen base of the season Tuesday tied him with Patsy Donovan (518) for 30th on the all-time list.

White Sox tip caps to Twins for winning title

By Eric Gilmore

MLB.com

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND -- The White Sox gave credit where credit was due on Tuesday night when the Minnesota Twins clinched the American League Central crown.

"Look at my quotes in Spring Training," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said after his team lost, 7-2, to the A's and was eliminated from contention. "Look at my quotes all year long. Look at what I said about them the last seven years. Good ballclub. Now, I hope people will start believing that. It's not the same Minnesota Twins we saw 10 years ago. ... This is a good ballclub. They spent a lot of money. They have good ballplayers. They deserve to be there.

"They kicked everybody's [butt]. That's the reason they clinched before everybody else. That's the only reason they did it, because they're a good ballclub. They earned it. They deserve to be there. They play very hard. When your enemy kicks your butt, sometimes you've got to tip your hat to those guys for the way they played, at least against us. ... I think Ron Gardenhire should be proud of his ballclub."

At the All-Star break, the Twins were in third place in the AL Central, 3 1/2 games behind the White Sox and three back of Detroit. They were 46-42, just four games above .500. Since the break, the Twins have gone an incredible 45-18.

"They made the nice changes that they needed to make their team stronger," White Sox infielder Omar Vizquel. "Everybody clicked together in the second half, and that's why they're playing the way they're playing. They look solid.

"I think they have a pretty good chance. They have a solid team. They have good pitching, and they have a good bullpen. It's going to be a hard team to beat, that's for sure."

White Sox left-hander Mark Buehrle said he doesn't know if this is the best Twins team he's seen, but he knows it was a club that turned all but unbeatable down the stretch.

"They have a good team every year," Buehrle. "I guess they're talking about sitting everybody the next couple days just to rest their guys. It's like they've got that good of a team they could sit all nine starters and put another nine guys in there and still win the game.

"It just seems like every time a guy goes down with injury or they're resting a guy, somebody steps right in and does a pretty good job for them. ... It seems like every year in the second half they play pretty well. When they're playing that good, it's definitely hard to catch them."

Shoulder injury likely to end Floyd's season

Right-hander to see specialist on Thursday in California

By Eric Gilmore

September 22, 2010

MLB.com

OAKLAND -- White Sox right-hander Gavin Floyd said he will have his pitching shoulder examined Thursday in Southern California by Dr. Lewis Yocum, an orthopedic surgeon and team doctor for the Los Angeles Angels.

Floyd left his start Monday night against the A's after throwing just seven pitches because of soreness behind his right shoulder that he had been experiencing since his previous start against the Twins.

"I'll get it checked out and get a couple MRIs," Floyd said. "I think everything will be fine."

Manager Ozzie Guillen said he won't have Floyd pitch again this season unless he's absolutely certain he is "100 percent" healthy.

"In my mind we've got to go with Plan B," Guillen said. "Right now I think [Tony] Pena's going to be a starter, but I have to wait because I might need somebody in the bullpen the next two days. Maybe Pena's the guy. Maybe we've got to start [Carlos] Torres or whoever's available that day."

Pena came in for Floyd on Monday night and pitched six shutout innings. Earlier in the year he made an emergency start against Kansas City, the only start of his Major League career. He gave up four runs over seven innings.

Floyd said he "really wants to get back out there and pitch," but he also doesn't want to "hurt it any further."

"I'll probably take all precautionary measures," Floyd said. "I don't feel like it's anything serious, but it wasn't getting any better when I was throwing [Monday]. Every pitch it seemed like it was getting worse. We're just treating it and taking it day-by-day."

Garcia encouraged by bullpen session

OAKLAND -- Right-hander Freddy Garcia, who missed his past two starts with a sore lower back, pitched a bullpen session before Tuesday night's game and said he felt "better."

Before his session, Garcia said that if he felt "good" during his workout he would start Friday against the Angels in Anaheim. He played long catch then pitched a lengthy bullpen, fist-pumping pitching coach Don Cooper after he was done.

There's still no official word on when Garcia will pitch again, but he seemed encouraged. He said he definitely wants to pitch again this year as he approaches free agency.

"At least one time to make everybody know there's nothing wrong with me," Garcia said. "I've got pain in my back, but shoulder-wise I'm good."

Garcia missed most of the 2008 season recovering from surgery on his pitching shoulder. This year he is 11-6 with a 4.88 ERA and has made 26 starts covering 144 innings. Garcia said he proved he was healthy enough to pitch "every five days."

Garcia said he'd like to play next season again for the White Sox, but doesn't know if he'll be back.

"I'd like to come back here, but who knows what they want?" Garcia said.

Garcia last pitched on Sept. 7 against Detroit, leaving that game after two innings with back pain.

Beckham still experiencing pain in right hand

OAKLAND -- Second baseman Gordon Beckham tested his sore right hand by hitting in the cage before Tuesday night's game against the A's, and the results were discouraging.

"It doesn't feel good," Beckham said. "The impact of the ball hitting the bat is still really painful."

Beckham was out of the lineup for the sixth straight game Tuesday. He has been battling a sore hand since getting hit by a pitch Aug. 30 at Cleveland.

There are only 11 games left after Tuesday, and Beckham is running out of time to recover this season.

"The plan was to hit today, hit tomorrow and take batting practice on Friday," he said. "I don't think that's going to happen, just on how it feels today."

Manager Ozzie Guillen said it "was not good news on Beckham," and that he has no idea if or when he'll be able to play again this season.

"We have to still continue to have him have the treatment. ... That's a very, very sensitive spot," Guillen said.

Guillen thinks he should get a contract extension

By Joe Cowley

Chicago Sun-Times

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- With 2010 on ice, it's time to address the 175-pound "crazy Mexican" in the room.

That self-titled "crazy Mexican" is actually Venezuelan-born White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen.

What needs to be addressed? Guillen's South Side life expectancy as a result of the deteriorated relationship with general manager Ken Williams.

Guillen was confused with a story in Tuesday's USA Today that said he privately told some people two weeks ago he would be announcing his resignation at the end of the season before changing his mind.

But Guillen still wants some answers about his future. And he wants those answers quickly.

If he's in the Sox' plans, then it's time for an extension. If he's not, then it's time to say their goodbyes now instead of waiting for the final year of his deal to run out.

"I never talked to them that I don't want to come back," Guillen said. "First of all, I don't have the power to do it because right now they don't want to hear that s---. They don't want to hear me ... if I don't want to come back. I know the answer, 'All right, have a good one somewhere.' But I want to know where I stand in this organization. I don't want to come here and work day-by-day. I'm better than that. I give this organization more than that. I deserve -- I'm not going to say respect -- but [I deserve] more consideration about yes or no.

"I might hear something I don't want to hear, but I think it'll be better for the players, for my family, for me. I'll find a job somewhere. They'll find another manager. But one thing I will say, I don't care who they bring here, what coaching staff they bring here, they're not going to have more passion or love for this organization than us ... nobody. You cannot pay for that. We got Greg Walker, [Don Cooper], [Harold Baines], Joey Cora. I don't think anybody that wears this uniform will love and respect this organization more than those guys."

It's apparent that this Williams-Guillen situation hasn't improved.

Guillen said all the right things before the second game of the Oakland series, insisting, "In working, that's the most important thing about it: It's been good. We talk about the team; we talk about what we need. I wish things would go back to normal. How normal they'll be? I don't know. I've talked to [chairman] Jerry [Reinsdorf] about that, but friendship won't win ballgames. Good work ethic will win ballgames."

According to one Sox player, however, the two got into another heated confrontation in late August, and while this player admitted the team was out on the field when it happened and he didn't hear it, word leaked out: "Kenny told Ozzie, 'You're done, you're done.'"

Guillen was asked if there was a second blowup after the one the Sun-Times reported in June and said, "No, not really."

So how does this end? Not well.

It seems like Williams isn't going anywhere -- unless the Oakland Raiders call, of course -- and Reinsdorf just wants to keep the peace and have his dynamic duo intact.

The problem with a dynamic duo is, if the South Side is Gotham, Guillen is Batman. And playing Robin the last seven years doesn't seem to suit Williams any longer.

The GM has gone Hollywood, whether it's life as a restaurateur in Chicago or the company he now keeps, so playing second fiddle to Guillen seems to have gotten old for Williams.

It happens in sports all the time. If you team two large personalities, two stars at what they do, one will eventually shine brighter, and the other will just feel burnt.

Maybe time away from each other this winter, a contract extension for Guillen and actually getting back on the same page regarding personnel can heal the wounds. But there will be scars forever.

"I know what I can do as a manager, what I can do as a person," Guillen said. "I'm not worried about that. If it doesn't happen here, I know it will happen somewhere else. Where? I don't know. It depends on what doors open. Hopefully a few, but the one I want open is this one."

The problem is, it already may have closed.

Ozzie tips cap to Twins, says his team didn't quit

Chicago Sun-Times

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- The White Sox' chances of winning the American League Central basically ended last week after the Minnesota Twins came to town and swept the South Siders.

The 7-2 loss Tuesday night to the Oakland Athletics just made it official.

Minnesota clinched the Central title for a second consecutive season and fourth since 2004, **Ozzie Guillen's** first year as manager, on the heels of a complete meltdown by the Sox, who've lost eight in a row.

"It's disappointing for me, yeah," Guillen said. "You look back at all the work in spring training and through the summer, then you don't get where you want to get. I mean it's another losing year. I know we played hard, I know they tried hard, but we didn't get done what we were supposed to get done. I'm not getting paid to have a good season. I'm paid to win seasons, and we didn't do it this year."

Asked if his team quit after the sweep last week, Guillen said, "No, they didn't. If they quit, I will kick their butt. If they quit, they won't play for me. I don't think we have any quitters. We're just not playing good."

Mark Buehrle (12-12) took the loss, allowing five runs and 11 hits in six innings.

"Surprise for you guys, not for me," Guillen said of the Twins winning the division. "Look at my quotes the last several years, good ballclub. ... Even if your enemy kicks your butt, sometimes you have to tip your cap."

Likely shutdowns

Pitcher **Gavin Floyd** and second baseman **Gordon Beckham** likely will be shut down for the rest of the season. Floyd was still experiencing shoulder soreness after leaving Monday's start in the first inning, and Beckham's right hand was still giving him problems Tuesday.

Freddy to return

Pitcher **Freddy Garcia** threw a bullpen session, and the back problems that had been slowing him down seemed to have subsided.

He's expected to take the hill Friday against the Angels, then make one more start.

Jerry and Kenny dodge Ozzie issue

Chicago Sun-Times

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Neither White Sox chairman Jerry Reinsdorf nor general manager Ken Williams felt the need to discuss the idea of Ozzie Guillen's future Tuesday.

All Williams would say is, "the man [Guillen] has a contract for next season."

Through a team spokesman, Reinsdorf was asked about the broken relationship between Williams and Guillen and said he was "not going to discuss this publicly."

With regard to giving Guillen --who's signed through 2011 with an option for 2012 -- a contract extension at the end of the year, Reinsdorf said, "There have been no discussions of an extension during the season."

Guillen's hope is that will change once 2010 is over.

"I have a one-year contract back in Chicago; everyone knows exactly what I want," Guillen said. "But I keep saying this is a business, and I will be in Chicago as long as they want me here because the White Sox are part of my life. I'm 46 years old and maybe been working for the White Sox for 25 years. That's a lot of years. The rumors about I'm going somewhere, that's good because at least someone wants me in the paper.

"It's a one-year deal, and we'll see. As soon as the season is over, I will talk to Kenny and Jerry and see what my future is here, what they want, what they want to do. I hope I'm in the plans, but if not, this is a business. If they're going to go with me, I love it. If not, that's part of the game."

There has been growing speculation that Guillen would be courted by the Florida Marlins, and there is also the idea that he would be a big hit on TV if he wanted some time away from managing.

"It's important to me to know where I stand," Guillen said. "Not for me, but more for my family. To let us all see, 'OK, we're going to be in Chicago another month or we're going to be in Chicago another six years.' That's very important for me to clear my mind from what my next step is, what I should do. Of course, it's very important. That's why I'm going to go out there and take the risk, ask and maybe I don't get good news."

If the news isn't good?

"It's not the first time [Williams is] going to fire somebody," Guillen said. "I think Kenny has a very tough job, so does Jerry. If they say, 'We're not going to do this,' they're not going to hurt my feelings. They won't."

Sox recap

Chicago Sun-Times

September 22, 2010

Black cat

Something bad happens to **Mark Buehrle** when he sees the Oakland Athletics. With the latest loss, the lefty is 4-13 against them, including a 1-7 record at the Coliseum.

Action Jackson

The Sox would like to see **Edwin Jackson** have a strong finish. He was 3-0 with a 1.47 ERA in his first five starts with the Sox and is 0-2 with a 6.75 ERA in his last three.

New look

Ozzie Guillen is starting to give some of his younger players time. **Brent Morel** and **Alejandro De Aza** got the nod Tuesday, but both were hitless.

SOX TRAGIC NUMBER: 0

The Sox' loss combined with the Twins' 6-4 win over the Indians eliminated the Sox from playoff contention.

Guillen seeks assurances Sox want him

Manager hinting he would like extension beyond next season

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. — Manager **Ozzie Guillen** expressed his preference to stay with the **White Sox** once again Tuesday, provided he has the support of Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf and general manager Ken Williams.

"I will be back here next year," Guillen said before the night game against the A's. "I don't know how much money I make next year, but they're not going to pay me just to leave.

"But I want to know what my future is with the ballclub. If my future is with the ballclub till next year, then we'll see."

When asked if he could see himself elsewhere in 2011, Guillen replied, "it's up to the White Sox."

Guillen's current contract includes a team option for 2012 that becomes automatically vested if the Sox win the **American League Central** in 2011.

Williams said last week he hopes that's the case.

But Guillen seems leery of going into next year with his future depending on whether the Sox win a division title and wants to clarify his status with Reinsdorf and Williams after this season.

"I don't want to put pressure on anyone," Guillen said. "I don't want to be here every day to win the division for my contract. I don't want to do that. I wish we'd get together and talk about it. No matter, good or bad, we're grown people. I don't know exactly what they want. I know exactly what I want. It's up to them.

"I want to stay. (But) I want to stay because they want me to stay, not because I'm Ozzie."

Guillen managed the Sox to a 2005 World Series title in his second year and captured a 2008 AL Central title. But his relationship with Williams started to unravel a bit last winter and Reinsdorf said in June he told both parties in separate conversations to have, at least, a healthy working relationship.

A recent seven-game losing streak has heightened speculation about Guillen's future. A **USA Today** story Tuesday, citing three unnamed sources, reported Guillen had planned to quit after this season but changed his mind.

Guillen said he wasn't approached about his side of the story.

"It's no doubt my first option is to stay here for good," Guillen said.

Guillen said he has conveyed his feelings to Reinsdorf and Williams but apparently he wants some assurances he's wanted as he hopes to finish his career with the Sox.

He seems uncomfortable about the uncertainty after 2011.

"The last thing I want to do is win the division to talk about my contract (option) kicking in," Guillen said. "I'm getting paid to win divisions. I'm not getting paid to win divisions to guarantee contracts.

"... People ask about contracts and (whether) you are going to be back here or not. But I will ask, taking the risk (of) bad news. I'll take a risk.

"... I want this thing to work, and the work we put in with me and my coaching staff has been more positive than negative. This organization is going in the right direction and I want to be part of that."

Sox eliminated from AL Central race with 7-2 loss

Buehrle gives up 5 runs in 6 innings; he's 1 2/3 of 200 mark for 10th straight year

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. — The **White Sox** eliminated themselves from **American League Central** title contention Tuesday night in an infamous manner.

They lost their season-high eighth consecutive game — a 7-2 setback to the A's that gave the Twins their fourth division title since **Ozzie Guillen** took over as Sox manager in 2004.

This caps a miserable end to a mercurial season that saw the Sox, with the aid of a 25-5 run, move into first place to end the first half and hold a 3 1/2-game lead on July 20.

But the Sox won only two of their final 12 games against the Twins.

Sox ace **Mark Buehrle** was tagged for five runs in six innings. Buehrle needs 1 2/3 innings to reach the 200 mark for his 10th consecutive season.

The Sox have several important decisions in the off-season, starting with free agent **Paul Konerko** — who is having an AL most valuable player-caliber season.

Over for Beckham, Floyd? It appears the seasons of **Gordon Beckham** and **Gavin Floyd** are just about over.

Beckham, who hasn't played since Sept. 16, experienced recurring pain in his right hand after only six swings during early batting practice Tuesday.

"The impact of the ball hitting the bat just makes my hand go crazy every time I hit," Beckham said. "It's not good."

Beckham would like to continue to try to play but admitted "there's no point in just making it worse."

Beckham said he would attempt to swing a bat later this week.

"I don't mind him shutting it down because we have a couple of guys who can play there," manager **Ozzie Guillen** said.

Guillen said Floyd still felt soreness behind his right shoulder that caused him to be pulled after seven pitches in Monday's start at Oakland.

"My mind is, right now, do I stay away from him?" Guillen said. "But I go by ears. If this kid wants to pitch and he's

good enough to pitch, he has to show he's 100 percent ready to go.

"I don't want to take the risk for no reason other than something worse can happen. In my mind, in our mind, we have to go to Plan B."

That would be reliever **Tony Pena** to pitch Sunday against the Angels, provided he is not needed sooner in long relief.

Pena threw six innings and 97 pitches Monday, which puts him in line to start Sunday.

Ready Freddy? **Freddy Garcia** expects to start Friday against the Angels after missing his last start because of lower back tightness.

Garcia would like to show he's healthy to help his chances in free agency this winter.

"I have to prove to everybody I can pitch every five days," Garcia said. "At least I did it for (26) starts. And my shoulder is fine. That's all I need."

Garcia reiterated he would like to stay but "who knows what they want."

Guillen: Twins earned it, but Sox didn't quit

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Disappointment officially set in Tuesday night after the White Sox were eliminated from American League Central title contention.

"We put ourselves in such a deep hole at the beginning that, ... ," Mark Buehrle said after the Sox's 7-2 loss at Oakland. "We went on a good run for a little bit, and everybody kind of knew it wasn't going to continue that way all season long.

"But we brought ourselves into contention and gave ourselves a chance, but these last couple weeks we didn't play well at all to even deserve to be there."

The Sox's loss extended their losing streak to a season-high eight games.

"It's starting to get old," said manager Ozzie Guillen, who didn't believe his players gave up.

"If they quit, I will kick their (rears). ... I don't think we have any quitters."

Guillen, however, did share his empty feeling of not winning a division title for a second consecutive season.

"You work in spring training and through the summer and you don't get what you want to get, it's another losing year, no matter what it is," Guillen said.

"I know we try hard and do everything they could to finish. But in the meanwhile, we didn't get what we were supposed to get done.

"Like I said, I'm not getting paid to have a good season, I'm getting paid to win seasons, and we didn't do it this year."

As for Minnesota's 45-19 run to win the division title, Guillen replied: "It's a surprise for you guys. Not for me.

"They earned it. They deserved to be there."

Seeds planted for Sox's off-season

By Mark Gonzales

Chicago Tribune

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- General manager Ken Williams indicated last week that the White Sox might not hold their traditional organizational meetings after the end of this season.

Williams' reasoning is that he spoke and collected information from many of his professional scouts for five days in Chicago before the July 31 non-waiver trading deadline. He also plans to speak with minor league instructors at the team's Glendale, Ariz., spring training complex, where workouts for the Instructional League started Tuesday.

Also, Williams could hold meetings with manager Ozzie Guillen and his coaching staff during the final week of the regular season to assess current personnel and the team's needs entering what figures to be a busy off-season.

The planning and strategy for the off-season is important, especially because the Sox could be eliminated from American League Central title contention as early as Tuesday night.

Your morning Phil: Replay, Floyd, 2011 draft

By Phil Rogers

Chicago Tribune

September 21, 2010

Talking baseball while wondering if Notre Dame is practicing the fake field goal defense:

1. No one expected Major League Baseball to expand its use of instant replay for the upcoming playoffs, so it was no surprise to hear Commissioner **Bud Selig** confirm that Monday. But it is painful to anticipate another October where there's outrage over every missed call and even bang-bang plays generate a level of analysis once reserved for the Zapruder film.

MLB is making a mistake by not adopting an umpire-driven system of instant replay for its biggest month. The current use of replay only on home run calls is working reasonably well in the regular season, when teams can survive a missed call or two and the game thrives without the intrusion of nightly electronic replay. But playoff games are different animals, and it would be a snap to put a system in place.

Six umpires, not the usual four, are assigned to playoff games. Crews were expanded to scrutinize calls on the

outfield foul lines and along the fence lines -- the exact calls that are now replayed. It's silly to still use six and require an entirely different rotation flow than is used during the regular season. Four umpires might really be better than six when they're backed up by replay. So take two of the six and move them to a booth in the stadium, or even a nearby television truck.

Along with one of MLB's umpire supervisors, they would essentially watch the game on television. The supervisor would serve as the replay official; the only man with the authority to order a play to be reviewed. The only thing not subject to review are balls and strikes, including the question of whether a hitter checked his swing. You could be looking at those all day.

When the umpire supervisor/replay official wants a call examined, the two booth umpires (who rotate on and off the field with the other four umpires on a game by game basis) look at the play from a maximum of three (maybe four) different angles and then make decisions. If they both feel it was called wrong on the field, it is overturned; if not, the call stands, as the system is in place to correct only obvious mistakes, not the dozen. The whole process shouldn't take more than a couple of minutes.

The only problem with the system is that by solving one problem, you create another. How do you correct a play that would have continued if not for an incorrect call by an umpire -- say a fair-foul call or an out call on a ball that clearly lands in front of an outfielder? Decisions on these plays are more complicated, as the three officials upstairs would have to assess how the play would have ended with the correct call. It's a recipe for arguments, for sure, but this is nothing new. It's the same situation umpires always face when fans interfere with balls that are in play.

MLB needs to do something to help umpires in the post-season. This system would do it. It's so simple it could literally be adopted overnight. But apparently not this year, which is a shame.

2. Will the White Sox ever win again? That's a secondary question this morning to the health of pitcher **Gavin Floyd**, whose shoulder faces scrutiny after he left Monday's game in Oakland after only seven pitches. Floyd was downplaying his concern after the game, saying he hopes to stay on track for his last two starts of the season, but why would **Ozzie Guillen** take any chances? With a team going nowhere, this is the time of the year to step off the pedal and look ahead to next year.

The Sox face an array of questions about their lineup and the back of their bullpen but their strength is starting pitching. **John Danks**, **Mark Buehrle**, **Edwin Jackson** and Floyd should be sure things to return, with **Jake Peavy** hopeful of contributing before too long after his shoulder surgery. The Sox need to do everything they can to ensure those five guys are in the picture. Their sixth-most-important pitcher is rookie lefty **Chris Sale**, who should be shut down immediately after an electrifying 2010 season in which he traveled from Florida Gulf Coast University to the big leagues. The trade of young starters **Clayton Richard**, **John Ely** and **Daniel Hudson** in the last 14 months only adds to the value of Sale. There's little to be gained by continuing to pitch him, but Guillen seems to feel he needs Sale with **Bobby Jenks** out of the picture. That's being awfully short-sighted.

3. Mike Quade is no friend to the Cubs' scouting staff. The Cubs were 51-74 when he took over on Aug. 23, set to draft sixth in 2011. But their 17-7 stretch since then has dropped their pick to eighth, with the possibility of moving to ninth if they pass the Brewers for fourth place in the NL Central. The White Sox are currently set to pick 19th.

Oakland pounds Buehrle, White Sox 7-2

By Scot Gregor

Daily Herald

September 22, 2010

The White Sox finally figured out a way to stick it to the rival Twins - they made them wait.

Minnesota rallied to beat the Indians on Tuesday night and was on the verge of winning the American League Central for the sixth time in nine years under manager Ron Gardenhire.

All the Sox had to do to wrap it up for the Twins was lose at Oakland, and they did exactly that, dropping a 7-2 decision.

Considering he managed Minnesota without all-star closer Joe Nathan (elbow) for the entire season and had to play without all-star first baseman Justin Morneau (concussion) for the past three months, Gardenhire figures to make a strong run at winning AL manager of the year.

Guillen, on the other hand, is just trying to keep the reeling White Sox above .500.

Signed through next season with an option for 2012 that automatically kicks in if the Sox win the division next year, Guillen spoke to reporters about his future before Tuesday night's game against the Athletics.

"I will be back here next year," Guillen said. "I don't know how much money I make next year, but they're not going to pay me just to leave. I want to know what my future is with the ballclub. If my future is with the ballclub until next year, then we'll see."

It's been a frustrating season for Guillen, and he's had to put out several fires sparked by his son Oney's negative tweets toward the White Sox and general manager Kenny Williams.

On Aug. 25, Guillen told the Daily Herald that leaving the Sox is "something I've been thinking about. I'm thinking, 'Is this thing going to work out or not?'"

Williams' relationship with his manager has been noticeably strained this season, but the GM told the Daily Herald he wants to continue working with Guillen.

"We all have an expiration date on these jobs," Williams said, also on Aug. 25. "Everybody would have to be on the same page, but it would be my preference to try to win another one with the same crew that we have. But in listening to (Guillen's) tone, I think he's got to make that decision."

Guillen on Tuesday said he'd like an extension.

"I don't want to put pressure on anyone," Guillen said. "I don't want to be here every day to win the division for my contract. I don't want to do that. I wish we'd get together and talk about it. No matter, good or bad, we're grown people. I don't know exactly what they want. I know exactly what I want. It's up to them."

Rough stretch: Starter Mark Buehrle pitched 6 innings and allowed 5 runs on 11 hits. The left-hander has not won since Aug. 19, a span of 6 starts.

More and less: Brent Morel made another dazzling defensive play in the third inning, robbing Oakland's Kevin Kouzmanoff of extra bases with a diving stop and throw to first base. The rookie third baseman made his first major-league error in the fifth inning.

Freddy ready? Sidelined since Sept. 7 with lower back pain, Freddy Garcia reportedly feels good enough to start against the Angels on Friday night.

Eighth straight loss officially eliminates White Sox

By Brett Ballantini

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND – Before Tuesday's tilt vs. the Oakland Athletics, Chicago White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen dismissed the notion that he should be embarrassed by how his team has been playing during an abominable stretch run, remaining defiant.

"No, (Monday) night we were flat," he said. "Besides that, we've played hard."

In spite of counsel advising the skipper to reconsider his answer, he's sticking to it.

"If they quit, I will kick their (expletive). If they quit, they won't play for me," Guillen insisted postgame. "Offensively, right now, we're not getting anything going. Pitching, we're not getting anything going. I don't think we have any quitters. We just haven't played that well."

Indeed it was another flat performance by the White Sox—a 7-2 loss to the A's—that yoked Chicago with a season-high, eight-game losing streak. It was no squeaker, either, as it took the rude hosts all of four innings to jump ahead 5-0. Coupled with the offensive eruption was another lights-out game by Oakland's Trevor Cahill, who handcuffed the White Sox for eight innings, allowing two runs on six hits, striking out seven. Cahill became the first Oakland pitcher in six years to win 17 games.

Oakland pummeled Chicago starter Mark Buehrle with 11 hits and five earned runs over his six innings. The relatively short outing by the veteran lefty means he'll need one more appearance, of at least 1 2/3 innings, to stretch his streak of seasons with at least 10 wins, 200 innings and 30 starts to an MLB-best 10 straight seasons.

"I don't like losing," Buehrle said. "This was one of those games you can't catch a break. They were putting balls in play, finding holes—I felt like I was pitching pretty decent, [my fielders] were diving all over the place making good plays, but it was just one of those days."

"Oakland's got a good pitching staff, and the last couple guys we faced were pretty good. We attacked them today, but Buehrle got hit," Guillen said.

The big blow came with one out in the fourth, when ninth-place hitter Cliff Pennington crushed a double over left fielder Juan Pierre's head, doubling Oakland's lead to 4-0. A's catcher Kurt Suzuki had plated the first two A's runs of the night with RBIs in the first and third innings.

The White Sox fought back, in a manner of speaking, with run-scoring groundouts, beginning in the fifth, courtesy of Brent Morel, who drove in Alexei Ramirez. One inning later, Manny Ramirez trumped the rook's raking by plating Pierre on a double-play grounder.

The fuse of a ninth-inning rally was lit by Mark Kotsay and Alexei Ramirez, capping off 2-for-4 nights with a single and a double, respectively. A's manager Bob Geren yanked reliever Henry Rodriguez after his ineffective outing, calling on Craig Breslow to extinguish the fire. Breslow walked pinch-hitter Andruw Jones, packing the sacks with just one out, but Morel struck out and a groundout by pinch-hitter Paul Konerko ended the game. Oakland hasn't lost any of the 68 games this season it has led heading into the ninth.

This loss, coupled with another Minnesota win, clinched the A.L. Central for the Twins. The White Sox remain in A.L. wild card contention, at least for one more day.

"I know we're playing hard and trying hard, doing everything we could to finish [strong], but we didn't get it done," Guillen offered as a postmortem on both game and season.

"We brought ourselves back into contention and gave ourselves a chance," Buehrle said. "But these past couple of weeks, we haven't played well enough to deserve to be in [the race]."

It seems the 2010 White Sox earned Guillen's eternal and unyielding respect for bouncing back strong in June, when the "Gone Fishing" sign could have been hung. But if this September swoon persists, it's in the manager's best interest to investigate. His Chisox went from world beaters to world-beaten at a frightening velocity, and without digging up some answers, 2011 will be a repeat, in all the wrong ways.

If nothing else, Tuesday outlined the perils of looking the other way.

Rickety run to finish line for a number of White Sox

By Brett Ballantini

CSNChicago.com

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND – There was good news and bad news on the White Sox injury front on Tuesday. Unfortunately, the word on the injured members of the Chicago core wasn't all that good.

Gordon Beckham tried to cautiously work himself back into playing shape by taking some flips rather than live batting practice and had to cut his session short after just a few swings. His discomfort is great enough that the remainder of the road trip and the final White Sox homestand of the season (beginning next Monday) is in clear jeopardy.

"[It's] not good news about Gordon," White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen said. "It's still sore. He said he tried to swing the bat and nothing was going for him. We still have to continue [his] treatment, and when he's ready to play we'll figure it out."

While Guillen wouldn't shut the door on a return by Beckham, he was frank in hoping he would bow out of the final games of the season, saying so directly.

"I wouldn't mind him shutting it down," Guillen continued. "We have a couple of guys who can play [second]."

Gavin Floyd, who left Monday's start after just nine pitches with soreness in the back of his shoulder, was wrapped with ice before Tuesday's warm-up but had removed it in time for the team stretch.

While Floyd indicated he felt increasing pain when his arm was extended on pitches Monday night, he didn't realize his reaction right before he left the game: When Rajai Davis fouled a pitch behind the plate, Floyd threw his arm up to help catcher A.J. Pierzynski locate the popup.

"I don't remember doing that," Floyd told me after the game.

The significance here is that Floyd being able to raise his arm to point out a foul might eliminate the possibility of Floyd's injury being rotator cuff-related.

The best news with regard to White Sox injuries came from Freddy Garcia, who took time right after his side session to talk to CSNChicago.com about how it went. Even Guillen, who said that "hopefully everything went well" a half-hour later in his pregame session, wasn't immediately aware of the outcome.

"I still feel it," Garcia said of the back pain that has reduced his September to two aborted starts and six innings pitched. "But I'm better."

Garcia expressed confidence he'd be pitching again this season. "It's important to get out for one or two more

starts.”

It’s clear that while his back pain was serious enough to necessitate an epidural and throw his season into jeopardy, the pain is all relative to Garcia, who has revitalized his career with his 2009-10 stint with the White Sox (11-6, 4.88 ERA in 144 innings).

“This pain is nothing compared to going through [surgery] and rehab,” Garcia said. “You never want to think about an injury like that.”

Understandably, then, Garcia is prouder of his comeback from shoulder surgery than many of the accomplishments—runner-up AL Rookie of the Year, two All-Star Games—that came “easier” to him pre-surgery.

“You don’t ever think you’re going to lose your fastball,” Garcia said. “I’ve have to become a smarter pitcher. My head is more important than my arm now when I have success.”

Konerko on his upcoming free agency

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Paul Konerko took a rare moment to discuss his pending free-agency on Tuesday.

Konerko hasn’t talked about it much this season, but with the White Sox now out of the AL Central race, it’s about to become a hot topic.

Will Konerko stay or go? He’s prepared for both.

“First, I have been pretty good all year not talking about it and letting it infringe on what I have to do and the job I have to do,” Konerko said. “I know I’m going to have to address the whole free-agent thing and offseason thing. And I will before I leave town next week in Chicago.

“It’s pretty easy from my standpoint. You can’t really do anything for a while. It will just come up and the decisions will have to be made when they come. But the main thing is to finish up these last games. I don’t dread the future as far as I think I’m in a pretty good place to make decisions. Whatever will comes will come and I’m in a good place no matter what happens. I feel like it’s been a good run here and if it continues, it continues, and if it doesn’t, it doesn’t.”

Guillen: 'It's not fun coming here'

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

September 22, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Not that the White Sox were still clinging to hope, but if anybody had any left it was erased Tuesday.

When the White Sox lost to the Oakland A's, their eighth consecutive defeat, they were officially eliminated from the AL Central chase, leaving the Minnesota Twins to celebrate the division title.

The White Sox wasted little time flushing it all down the toilet. When the Twins rolled into Chicago last week, the Sox needed a sweep to realistically keep their chances alive. They were swept instead, and haven't won a game since.

Paul Konerko says the White Sox didn't quit on the season once they started losing to the Twins but acknowledged that it doesn't look good.

"I would say the second loss [to the Twins] probably was more crushing because we felt that if we took two out of three in that series we would have been five back and there still would have been some time to move there with the amount of games left at that point," Konerko said Tuesday. "The first game was tough because we were winning later in the game and didn't come up with it. But I thought after the second one it was more deflating or really the last dagger.

"But guys have been good, guys have been professional. But it has been a combination of teams playing pretty good against us and yeah, a little bit down just because when you go so hard for so long thinking you will win the division and find out it's not going to happen, it is a little bit of a downer. We're all human beings here and that happens."

The substitute lineup has been in for a while now, so it isn't like the White Sox didn't see this day coming soon. It was just alarming how fast it did arrive.

The White Sox have lost eight straight for the first time since August of 2007.

Making it even odder was that the White Sox had just won seven consecutive games on their last road trip. But that's the kind of season it's been.

The White Sox were terrible in the first half, overachieved in June and into July then couldn't keep a .500 pace in the second half, while still putting together winning and losing streaks.

"That has been our team: very high, very low," Konerko said. "There was a time this year where we were winning games so easy and everything was coming so easy and then we had times early where we couldn't get a win of it was the last thing on Earth we had to do. But I think the way to sum it up is that this team, maybe its downfall is that it was just a little too high, a little bit too low."

Clearly annoyed by the uninspiring brand of baseball on the field, manager Ozzie Guillen doesn't feel the need to rip the team publicly. He tried that earlier in the second half only to take it back a day later, essentially saying that he didn't have a problem with the effort just the result.

It seems as if he feels that way now.

"I don't care if you have 10 games left or 20 games left, losing is not fun," Guillen said. "It's not fun for me and I know it's not fun for those guys either. I'm not saying they're not trying but it starts getting old and hopefully we turn this thing around and we have more fun in the field. It's not fun coming here they way it is."

As for how the team is finishing the season, Guillen insists the players haven't quit.

"No, they don't," Guillen said. "If they quit I will kick their [rear end]. If they quit they won't play for me. They didn't quit. We're just facing a good pitching ballclub and right now offensively we're not getting anything going. Pitching we're not getting anything going."

Speculation is the Twins will now play their backups for a few days to give the starters a rest, but Mark Buehrle doesn't expect the victories to stop in Minnesota.

"They have that good of a team where they can sit all nine of their starters and put another nine guys in there and

still win the game," said Buehrle (12-12), who gave up five runs on 11 hits in six innings to the A's Tuesday and took the loss. "It seems like every time a guy goes down with an injury or they rest a guy it seems like somebody else steps in and does a good job for them."

By the numbers

59: Stolen bases for Juan Pierre after he swiped second in the sixth inning. That tied him with Scott Podsednik's 2005 total for second place on the team's all-time single-season list. It was also the 519th steal in Pierre's career tying him with Patsy Donovan for 30th on the all-time list.

Quote

"I made what, 25 starts or something like that. For me I had to prove I can pitch every five days. At least I did it for five starts. The shoulder is fine and that's all I need." -- Freddy Garcia, on his showing this season in a contract year. If he feels fine from a bullpen session Tuesday he will start Friday against the Angels.

Look ahead

White Sox right-hander Edwin Jackson (3-2, 3.25 ERA) will make his ninth start for his new team during Wednesday afternoon's game. A's left-hander Brett Anderson (6-6, 2.83) has won each of his last three starts and has a 1.94 ERA over that stretch.

Speculation continues on Guillen's future

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Adding to the buzz about Ozzie Guillen leaving as White Sox manager after this year is this item in a story from USA Today's Bob Nightengale:

"Chicago White Sox manager Ozzie Guillen could start the domino effect. He has a home in Florida, is close to Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria and has yet to firmly express a commitment to stay in Chicago beyond this year.

Two weeks ago, Guillen privately informed several people within the organization that he might announce his resignation effective at the season's conclusion, according to three club officials with direct knowledge of the conversation who could not comment on the situation because it is ongoing.

Later, Guillen changed his mind. "I want people that want to be here," White Sox general manager Ken Williams says. "He was hired because of his passion for the White Sox. If he wants to go, he can. If he wants to see if there is another situation better than this, I won't stop him."

Guillen says: "My goal is to be here as long as I can. But this is a business. When you're not winning, everything is your fault.

"... When you hear about all of the openings, it's a great year to get fired."

Guillen will need to make a decision about leaving at some point in the offseason, unless he is fired. He still has one year left on his deal with the White Sox plus an option year.

Twins did a number on White Sox

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- So what's up with all this losing anyway?

Ever since the Twins got a jump on the White Sox in the first game of a key series last week, it's been nothing but defeats. It begs the question: Did the White Sox quit on the season once they lost that first game to the Twins?

"I would say the second loss probably was more crushing because we felt that if we took two out of three in that series we would have been five back and there still would have been some time to move there with the amount of games left at that point," Paul Konerko said before Tuesday's game in Oakland. "The first game was tough because we were winning later in the game and didn't come up with it. But I thought after the second one it was more deflating or really the last dagger.

"But guys have been good, guys have been professional. But it has been a combination of teams playing pretty good against us and yeah, a little bit down just because when you go so hard for so long thinking you will win the division and find out it's not going to happen, it is a little bit of a downer. We're all human beings here and that happens."

So apparently, the White Sox haven't quit. Not like anybody expected Konerko would say that anyway. But at least Konerko admitted that the Twins series took a toll that continues to reverberate to this day.

Beckham not making progress

By Doug Padilla

ESPNChicago.com

September 21, 2010

OAKLAND, Calif. -- So much for that Gordon Beckham comeback, as the second-year player still felt soreness in his hand when hitting in the batting cage Tuesday.

"[It] is not good news about Gordon," manager Ozzie Guillen said. "It's still sore. He said he tried to swing the bat and nothing was going for him. We have to still continue to have treatment and when he's ready to play, we'll figure it out.

At this point, though, with just 11 games remaining after Tuesday night, Guillen wouldn't mind seeing Beckham call it a season.

"I don't mind him shutting it down because we have a couple of guys who can play there," Guillen said.
