



**TEXASRANGERS.COM**

**Rangers strike early, cut magic number to four  
Young reaches 200 hits as part of outburst to back Holland  
By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com | 9/21/2011 2:01 AM ET**

OAKLAND -- Michael Young has another 200-hit season and he has established a career high for RBIs. But he was happier that the Rangers' magic number is now down to four games.

"That's the most important number right now," Young said after his three-hit night helped carry the Rangers to a 7-2 victory over the Athletics at the Oakland Coliseum on Tuesday night.

The Angels also won, but the Rangers still have a five-game lead in the American League West with eight to play. They are getting closer to turning next week's three-game series against the Angels in Anaheim into a meaningless affair.

"We're trying to win every game and keep the Angels from being able to do something crazy when we get to L.A.," said third baseman Adrian Beltre, who gave the Rangers a 3-0 lead with a three-run home run in the first inning. "We hope to clinch it before then, but if not, we'll do it there."

The Rangers have two more games with the Athletics and three with the Mariners this weekend in Arlington before facing the Angels. That puts them in position to possibly clinch a second straight division title before they get on a plane to Anaheim next week.

They would love nothing more than to wrap it up at the Ballpark in Arlington this weekend.

"We'll get it done," second baseman Ian Kinsler said. "When we get it done ... we'd like to get it done as soon as possible. We'd like to do it at home; that would be awesome. But we just need to win tomorrow."

The victory, their 12th in 17 games this month, also raised the Rangers' record to 89-65, tying them with the Tigers for the second-best record in the AL. Because the Tigers won the season series between the two, the Rangers have to finish with a better record to get a least the second seed and home-field advantage in the first round of the playoffs.

"We still have to go out and play every day until they give us something that says we're in the postseason," manager Ron Washington said. "We haven't accomplished anything yet."

If the Rangers do make the playoffs, count on Derek Holland being in the rotation. He continues to be right there with C.J. Wilson as the Rangers' most reliable starter down the stretch. He held the Athletics to one run on two hits over seven innings and is now 9-1 with a 2.63 ERA in his last 14 starts.

"He's a very confident young man right now," Washington said. "Tonight he showed heart, he showed guts. He went out there and gave us seven good innings even though his command was erratic. He was still able to make pitches when he had to. That's another sign of his maturity."

Holland, 15-5 with a 3.92 ERA, did walk three batters but struck out seven. He also did not allow the Athletics even one at-bat with a runner in scoring position. Their only runs came on Michael Taylor's fifth-inning home run and Coco Crisp's ninth-inning homer against Michael Kirkman.

"I knew I was erratic, mainly with my fastball," Holland said. "I was getting the ball up, but I was able to make an adjustment and get the ball down with my offspeed stuff. The main thing was to be able to settle down and get things under control."

The game also had individual significance for Young. He was 3-for-5 with two RBIs, giving him 104 on the season. That's a new career high and the three hits left him with 201. That's the sixth time he has had at least 200 hits in his career and the first time since 2007.

Two-out singles by Josh Hamilton and Young off Oakland starter Rich Harden set up Beltre, who smashed a 1-1 fastball well above the center-field wall for his 28th home run. It was also his eighth home run in the last nine games. He is the first Rangers hitter to hit eight home runs in a nine-game stretch since Rafael Palmeiro in 1999.

"I'm seeing good pitches and I'm not missing pitches," Beltre said. "I'm making good solid contact and the ball is going out of the park. I'll take it for the rest of the way."

The Rangers ended up scoring six runs in three innings off Harden, who is 0-2 with a 10.50 ERA in three starts against his former team. The Rangers have won 11 of their last 12 games against the Athletics.

"I think the fact that they got on us early got us in a little bit of a defensive mode," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "They scored some runs early in the game, and now they have a starting pitcher that's had some success and pitched well against us, so it can get you on your heels a little bit. But I think we're all tired of getting beat by Texas."

### **Group effort has Texas offense hitting stride**

**By T.R. Sullivan / MLB.com | 09/20/11 8:55 PM ET**

OAKLAND -- The Rangers' offense has moved into high gear in September. The Rangers went into Tuesday's game against the Athletics leading the Majors with a .319 batting average, a .377 on-base percentage and a .554 slugging percentage while winning 11 of 16 games.

"I just think we have guys up and down the lineup doing it," hitting coach Scott Coolbaugh said. "It's not one guy, it has been getting collective contributions from everybody. That's what is so special about our lineup, one through nine anybody can win a game. There's not just one way of scoring runs, we can scratch out runs and we can hit for power. That's a good combination."

Coolbaugh has been preaching to his players about the need to focus on offensive fundamentals and wants them to continue that as they get ready for the possibility of the postseason beginning in less than two weeks.

"You always stay focused on fundamentals, moving runners over, getting guys in with less than two outs," Coolbaugh said. "There are a lot of individual accomplishments out there, but as long as you stay focused on winning games and doing the fundamentals right, the numbers will take care of themselves. They know that and they've done a great job of not looking at it from an individual standpoint."

"The main focus has been getting in the playoffs."

Michael Young has a chance at the biggest individual achievement. He is hitting .331 and was tied for second with Miguel Cabrera going into Tuesday's games. Adrian Gonzalez was leading the league with a .338 batting average.

### **With Cruz at DH, Moreland left out of lineup**

OAKLAND -- Nelson Cruz was back at designated hitter on Tuesday and will be on Wednesday, according to manager Ron Washington. With Michael Young having to play first base, that means Mitch Moreland is on the bench even though Oakland is pitching three right-handers in this series.

Moreland is 4-for-25 in his last seven games and hitting .155 in his last 20 games, but Washington said that's not why he is on the bench.

"He would be out there if Cruz was healthy," Washington said. "I'm not going to take Michael out of the lineup, so Mitch is the one who is getting a few days off. Mitch's swing is getting a little bit long, but he would be in there if it wasn't for Cruz."

The Rangers' biggest concern with Cruz is he's struggling at the plate. He is 1-for-9 with five strikeouts in his first two starts after missing more than two weeks with a strained left hamstring. He came out early on Wednesday to take extra batting practice off pitching coach Mike Maddux, who threw him a bunch of curveballs.

"Not good ... I'm still working on it," Cruz said. "I'm going to keep working and working. It will get there."

Washington said Cruz will be at DH for the next two games. Then he'll decide on Thursday if Cruz is ready for the outfield or if he needs to wait until they get back to Texas.

## **Washington offers praise for 'Moneyball'**

OAKLAND -- Rangers manager Ron Washington attended the premiere of "Moneyball" at the historic Paramount Theatre in Oakland on Monday night and gave it a thumbs up. The movie is based on the best-selling book by Michael Lewis about Athletics general manager Billy Beane and his attempts to put together a winning team partly through the use of advanced statistical analysis.

The book was written during the 2002 season, when Washington was the A's third-base and infield coach. He was portrayed by actor Brent Jennings in the movie and his character has a small role. Washington met Jennings at the premiere.

"I just had a few lines, but I thought the guy handled it well," Washington said. "He was decisive in his answers as I am. I thought he did well. I met him. He said he wanted to meet me because he heard so much about me. He said he wanted to do my part justice. He did."

As for the movie, Washington said, "I thought it was very good. The whole object of the movie was for the general manager to figure out how to keep the club competitive with money restraints. That was the way Billy had to go, and it worked."

The movie also showed the conflict between Beane and manager Art Howe. Washington said he didn't know about that part. But he was good friends with Howe, who was on his staff in Texas.

"Art didn't talk to us about that," Washington said. "Art was even-keeled. It's amazing the things that go on around you that you don't know about."

Washington said he has read only the first chapter of the book.

## **Rangers' pitchers chasing franchise records**

OAKLAND -- With nine games to go, Rangers pitchers have a chance to set a new club record for strikeouts. They went into Tuesday's game with 1,106 strikeouts after setting a new record with 1,181 last season. They are striking out 7.31 batters per nine innings this season as opposed to 7.30 last year.

The Rangers have allowed 11.60 baserunners per nine innings. It would be only the sixth time in club history they have allowed fewer than 12 baserunners per nine innings and the first time since 1983. The lowest was 11.39 baserunners per nine innings in 1981.

Rangers pitchers had a .308 on-base percentage in 1981, the lowest in club history. That was also a strike-shortened season that canceled 57 games. The Rangers have a .309 opponents' on-base percentage this season.

The Rangers' 2.90 walks per nine innings is also the lowest since 1983. It would be just the fifth time the Rangers have walked fewer than three batters per game. They walked 3.41 last season and the club record is 2.60 in 1978.

## **Worth noting**

- The Rangers' game with the Seattle Mariners on Saturday in Arlington has been moved from 7:05 p.m. to 3:10 p.m. CT to accommodate a FOX national telecast.
- The Rangers officially recalled pitchers Fabio Castillo, Miguel De Los Santos, Cody Eppley and Eric Hurley, catcher Taylor Teagarden and outfielders Julio Borbon and Engel Beltre from the Minors with instructions not to report. All are on the 40-man roster.
- Rangers relievers went into Tuesday's game having retired 24 straight hitters.
- C.J. Wilson and Matt Harrison have both induced 30 double plays this season, tying the club record set by Rick Honeycutt in 1983 and Kevin Brown in 1991.

**West title close, but Rangers not overlooking A's**  
**By Louie Horvath / MLB.com | 9/21/2011 1:30 AM ET**

With the Rangers' magic number shrinking to four after Tuesday's 7-2 win against the Athletics, there is a chance that Texas could clinch before its season-ending series against the Angels.

Any combination of four Rangers wins or Angels losses in the next six days would eliminate the Angels and give Texas the American League West title.

While eliminating all playoff implications of that Angels series has been foremost on Rangers fans' minds, manager Ron Washington said that's not a consideration for the team itself.

"That's something that can't be a part of your mind-set," Washington said. "The only thing that can be on your mind is winning tonight. Play to win and that will take care of itself. We're not good enough to worry about that. We just have to win tonight."

In order to "win tonight" the Rangers will have to continue their run of hitting well against former teammate Brandon McCarthy on Wednesday. In four starts against the team he played for from 2007-09, McCarthy is 0-2 with a 5.06 ERA. Along with the 12 earned runs he's surrendered, Texas has also scored eight unearned runs against him.

The A's are 1-3 in those games. In his other 19 starts, the A's are a respectable 10-9.

He's been pitching especially well of late, as he carries a 2.15 ERA and a .196 batting average against in his last five starts.

The game is the second of three against Texas, and Oakland manager Bob Melvin said it is important to finish strong at your home ballpark.

"We'd like to play well here for a number of different reasons," Melvin said. "It's the last homestand of the year against the team that's played well against us. We'd like to have a nice sendoff for the fans and take into consideration, too, that they're in first place and fighting for a playoff spot. There are several different story lines in these last few games here that normally wouldn't be here."

Rangers: Starters to rest with early clinch

- Before Tuesday's game against the A's, Washington said he would sit a few key starters to make sure they are rested for the playoffs if the Rangers clinch early. While gaining home-field advantage is important, Washington contends that having rested starters is more important.

"If we get the opportunity to clinch early, I have to give some guys days off," Washington said. "We want to win as many games as possible but the most important thing is to have these guys healthy. If you're in the playoffs, you'd like to be at home, but if we're in the playoffs, I don't care where I'm at."

Athletics: Sweeney may not return

- Ryan Sweeney is more likely to return in a pinch-hit role than as a starter this season after suffering a strained upper left quad last Wednesday, Melvin said. But it is unclear that he will return at all, with only seven games remaining in the season.

- Brandon Allen was given a second consecutive day off against the Rangers on Tuesday, but Melvin said he would be in Wednesday's lineup back at first base.

Worth noting

- Rangers shortstop Elvis Andrus comes into Wednesday's game riding a 13-game hit streak.

- The Rangers' 89-65 record is the second-best mark for the team through 154 games, trailing only 1991's 91-63 record.

- Wednesday's Rangers starter, C.J. Wilson, is tied for the club record in double plays induced with 30. His next one will set a new club record. Wilson's rotation mate Matt Harrison is also tied with Wilson, Rick Honeycutt (1983) and Kevin Brown (1991).

## **FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM**

### **Holland in command as Rangers close in on postseason**

**Posted Wednesday, Sep. 21, 2011**

**By Jeff Wilson**

OAKLAND, Calif. — With their magic number at five and Los Angeles having already won its game, the Texas Rangers got exactly what they needed Tuesday night.

Rich Harden.

And Derek Holland.

Harden, the former Rangers pitcher, has never recovered from his disastrous 2010 season, and he hasn't had a miraculous rebound at O.co Coliseum to the form that had made him so effective early in his career.

But it's possible that no opposing pitcher can fight the Rangers' offense when Holland is on the mound. The left-hander entered as baseball's leader in average run support, and still is after the Rangers teed off on Harden.

Adrian Beltre hit a three-run homer in the first, Michael Young reached 200 hits, and Holland allowed only one run and two hits in seven innings as the Rangers cruised past the A's 7-2.

The victory kept the Rangers' lead in the American League West at five games and lowered their magic number to 4. The soonest the Rangers can clinch is Thursday night.

"Each and every day we have to go out there and play until they say that we've got a spot in the playoffs," manager Ron Washington said. "Nothing has been accomplished yet. We've still got to play baseball."

The pitching story was Holland, even though some Rangers fans likely took a little delight in Harden's performance.

Harden quickly retired the first two batters of the game, and his first two pitches to Josh Hamilton were strikes. But Hamilton battled for a single, Young followed with a bloop single, and Beltre punished a 1-1 pitch to straightaway center field.

"I'm seeing good pitches," Beltre said. "The thing right now is I'm not missing those pitches, and I'm able to make good, solid contact and the ball is leaving the park. I'll take it."

Nelson Cruz started the second with a double and scored with two outs on a wild pitch from Harden. Hamilton doubled to start the third and scored on a Young single.

The hit gave Young, who would score later in the inning, the sixth 200-hit season of his career.

"For whatever reason, throughout the course of my career those last five have always been a grind," said Young, who entered only 5 for 27 in his previous seven games.

"I'm happy it's over with. When you get 200 hits, it's health and consistency. If I can get those two things, I like my chances."

Young added a third hit and a career-best 104th RBI in the eighth to make the score 7-1. Holland had just capped his night by striking out the side in the seventh, even though he didn't have his best command.

Staked to a 6-0 lead, Holland made only one regrettable pitch, allowing a two-out homer to Michael Taylor with two outs in the fifth.

Holland improved to 15-5 with his fifth consecutive quality start, and his ERA dipped from 4.02 to 3.92. That thrilled him, though the three walks he issued were bothersome.

"The big thing is it's done, and I can just worry about my next start and continue to help my team win," said Holland, who entered with 7.5 runs of support per start. "I made my pitches when I need to. That was the big thing. When I was a little erratic, I controlled myself a little bit better."

## Rangers will stick with struggling Cruz at DH

Posted Tuesday, Sep. 20, 2011

By Jeff Wilson

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Nelson Cruz will remain as the Texas Rangers' designated hitter at least through tonight as manager Ron Washington tries to give Cruz more time to find his comfort zone at the plate.

Cruz went 1 for 9 with five strikeouts in two starts over the weekend at Seattle, and was 1 for 4 Tuesday with a double. He hadn't started a game since Aug. 28, when he suffered a strained left hamstring.

A return to right field could be on hold until the Rangers return home Friday.

"I've got to get his bat going," Washington said. "When I put him out there, he's got to give me at least seven innings. I'm going to get him out there, but I'm going to get him out there when I feel it's time."

In the meantime, Josh Hamilton's move to center field is on hold, as is Mitch Moreland's return to first base.

Washington has said multiple times that David Murphy will remain in the lineup once Cruz is back in the outfield. Murphy would shift to left field, and Hamilton would take over in center.

Once the DH spot is freed up, Michael Young can move there from first base and Moreland can return to the infield.

Washington emphasized that Moreland is on the bench because of the Cruz situation, not because he has struggled at the plate. He is hitting .155 over the past 20 games.

"I'm fighting for consistency," said Moreland, who is hitting .262. "I just need to keep working. You've just go to keep playing and just do what you can."

### Martin learning

Leonys Martin is one of the first players in the clubhouse each day, and he tries to work as hard as any player on the field each day during batting practice.

But with the Rangers in a fight to win the division, Martin understands why he has only three at-bats since being called up from Triple A on Aug. 30.

The Rangers need their veterans on the field, and Martin had played only 73 minor-league games. So, he's trying to make the most of his opportunity so that maybe he can be relied on next year.

"I'm just looking and waiting for my opportunity to play," he said. "Just being around the guys, I feel like I can perform at this level. I have a lot of confidence."

Much of his pregame time is spent with outfield coach Gary Pettis. Martin's arm strength isn't a question -- Triple A manager Bobby Jones called the arm "a cannon" -- but he needs to be better with the routes he takes to fly balls.

The Rangers wanted Martin play winter ball, but his status as a Cuban defector prevents him from traveling outside of the U.S. or one of its territories for one year while he goes through the process of getting a green card.

Martin could play in Puerto Rico. The Rangers, though, believe that the talent level there is only Double A at best, and are crafting an off-season workout plan with strength and conditioning coach Jose Vasquez.

### Briefly

Mike Napoli was behind the plate Tuesday, where it appears he will remain on a regular basis. Ron Washington said that whichever catcher has the hot hand will catch most games, and Napoli is hotter now than Yorvit Torrealba.

The Rangers entered the Oakland series with an 11-5 mark in September, third best in baseball, and were leading the majors with a .318 batting average, a .377 on-base percentage, a .554 slugging percentage and 31 homers.

## **Ranger keep focused on winning the West**

**Posted Tuesday, Sep. 20, 2011**

**By Jeff Wilson**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- The American League West, at this point, would be difficult for the Texas Rangers to not win for a second consecutive season.

Even though second-place Los Angeles won its game Tuesday night at Toronto before the Rangers even took the field at O.co Coliseum, time and games are dwindling.

But because games are left to be played, the Rangers aren't getting greedy.

They would like to pass Detroit for the No. 2 playoff seed and home-field advantage for the AL Division Series, but that's not their focus.

Of more importance is wrapping up the division title before the final series of the season, three games Monday-Sept. 28 at Angel Stadium, and using the final few games to get the team ready for the ALDS.

"That's been the goal all along," first baseman Michael Young said Tuesday, before the first of three games against Oakland.

"We want to make sure we take business first, and that's making sure we get into the postseason."

The Rangers, who held a 4 1/2-game lead pending the outcome of their game against the A's, can be excused for looking ahead with the West title within reach.

They learned last year that the sooner the title is wrapped up, the sooner they can get players rest and set up the rotation for the postseason. That ranks higher on the priority list than getting past the Tigers.

"That [passing the Tigers] can't be part of your mindset," manager Ron Washington said. "If we just play and win, that'll take care of itself. I don't think we're that good to be thinking we better win 95 ballgames. We better just win today."

Should the Rangers clinch by Sunday, C.J. Wilson would pitch only three to five innings Monday against the Angels because that game would have no bearing on the West race.

A short outing would allow him to pitch Game 1 of the ALDS.

Washington also wants to get the Rangers' key contributors at least a game off before the season ends. For now, they won't rest until the West is won.

"If we clinch, I'm going to have to get some guys a day or so off," Washington said. "Yes, you want to win as many ballgames as you can. But the most important thing is that we have these guys healthy."

The Rangers entered Tuesday a game behind Detroit, but need to finish a game ahead of the AL Central champions. Should the teams finish with the same record, the Tigers would get the home field because they hold the tiebreaker by virtue of winning the season series.

While opening the playoffs at home would be the perfect scenario, the Rangers also learned last year that a lack of home-field advantage isn't a death sentence.

They won three times at Tropicana Field to knock off Tampa Bay in the 2010 ALDS.

The Rangers gave themselves a chance because they had time to get the team rested and the pitching staff ready.

"We all want to clinch as soon as possible," Young said. "Last year, it worked out extremely well. We got to get guys rest, set up our rotation, and we saw how that worked out in the first round.

"We would love to have home-field advantage, without a doubt. So would Detroit, so would every team. That goes without saying, but we don't want to put too much on our plate."

**Wash gives thumbs up to portrayal in Moneyball**  
**Posted Tuesday, Sep. 20, 2011**

The red carpet isn't for Ron Washington, who had an opportunity to stroll into the Paramount Theatre in Oakland on Monday as a celebrity attending the U.S. premiere of the movie Moneyball.

That's not Washington's style, so he slipped in the back, went straight to his seat and got down to the business of watching a story about a season he lived in 2002.

He left with a flood of memories and a favorable review of the movie, which opens Friday, and the actor who portrayed him as Oakland's third-base coach and infield instructor.

Brent Jennings played Washington, who in the movie is referred to only as "Wash." They had an opportunity to speak, and Jennings was hopeful that Washington approved of his performance.

"I thought the movie was very good," Washington said. "The few lines I had, I thought the guy handled them well. He was very decisive in his answers, which is what I am."

The movie is based on the book written by Michael Lewis, who wrote about the way A's general manager Billy Beane and his staff applied statistical analysis to build a team that won 103 games on a \$40 million payroll.

The movie reminded Washington of how Beane liked to shake things. It also portrayed a not-so-pleasant relationship between Beane and manager Art Howe, something that was news to Washington.

"Art never talked to us about it," Washington said. "It's amazing how you're around something and never know what's going on. I was too focused on my job."

-- Jeff Wilson

**Arlington honors CPR heroes**  
**Posted Monday, Sep. 19, 2011**  
**By Patrick M. Walker**

While trying to defend last year's division title, the Rangers have produced a heart-stopping moment or two for their fans this season.

When it happened to Dan Schimek on July 26, however, it wasn't thrilling or fun. Luckily, a pair of Arlington police officers were nearby and knew how to perform hands-only CPR.

Schimek, one of the team's official scorers, was working that night's game against the Minnesota Twins at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington when he fell ill.

"C.J. Wilson had just walked the bases loaded," Schimek recalls. "I was about to write down the next play, then I got lightheaded."

The next thing he remembers is being on a stretcher on the way to the hospital. Paramedics working at the ballpark quickly made their way to the press box and used an automatic external defibrillator to restart Schimek's heart.

It turns out that he had two blocked arteries. Doctors implanted stents, and now he is back on his feet.

Last week, he was at the ballpark as Mayor Robert Cluck honored Arlington police Sgts. John Marsh and Brett McDonnell for their lifesaving work. They were among five people recognized as part of the city's "no excuses" campaign to promote hands-free CPR.



## **DALLAS MORNING NEWS**

### **Grant: Derek Holland is poster boy for Rangers' homegrown pitchers**

**EVAN GRANT**

**Published: 21 September 2011 12:04 AM**

OAKLAND, Calif. — Derek Holland became a poster boy Tuesday night. He represents everything right about the Rangers' player development system.

Holland pitched seven innings in a 7-2 win over Oakland that reduced the Rangers' magic number for clinching a second consecutive AL West title to four. Any combination of Rangers wins and Los Angeles losses totaling four would give the Rangers the division.

The Rangers got off to a big start, thanks to a two-out, three-run homer by Adrian Beltre in the top of the first. Holland did the rest.

The win was Holland's 15th of the year. Fifteen wins is considered the threshold for what constitutes a reliable, above-average starting pitcher.

Holland has done it in his first full season in the starting rotation and before his 25th birthday, which is still nearly three weeks away. It made him the youngest pitcher in the 50-year history of the Washington/Texas organization to reach 15 wins in a season.

"This is what we expect," Rangers general manager Jon Daniels said of Holland's season. "Sometimes we forget he is only 24 because he's been up most of three years. But it was terrific scouting, great coaching and development and patience and growth by Derek. He's starting to really learn who he is."

Holland has done the bulk of the work. Since an oft-cited July 2 start that lasted just two outs and had some Rangers officials debating whether to go forward with Holland in the rotation, he has had a dramatic turnaround, going 9-1 with a 2.57 ERA in 14 starts.

The Holland story is not lost on Daniels. The GM joined the team Tuesday after a brief stopover in Surprise, Ariz., to deliver a keynote speech of sorts to the Rangers Instructional League players. Daniels told the youngest minor leaguers in the system that he stood in the same spot in the fall of 2007 and addressed a group about where the Rangers were heading in player development. Then he told the players that a number of those campers were big parts of the 2010 AL champs.

Holland was one of those campers.

Holland was a 25th-round draft choice in 2006 and was followed all the way through his next season at Wallace State Community College in Alabama before signing just ahead of the 2007 draft. Because the Rangers were in a hurry to develop pitching at the time, he rushed through the system, reaching the majors in 2009 with just 221 innings pitched. The usual "norm" for pitchers is about 500 innings of work in the minors before a big league call-up.

He has had to grow on the job, watching Cliff Lee for the second half of 2010 and C.J. Wilson this season and learning from his own mistakes. As the season has progressed, Holland has matured. He has grown into a starter worthy of being in the playoff rotation.

When Daniels goes back to the instructional league in 2012, he'll have another story to tell the campers. This one will be about how one of them grew into the poster boy for what the Rangers have come to expect from their homegrown pitchers.

### **With 15th win, Derek Holland finds a place in Ranger history**

**RYAN JONES**

**Published: 21 September 2011 01:59 AM**

Reaching 15 wins in one season has become something of a pedestrian achievement for Texas pitchers lately. The Rangers have had at least one 15-game winner each of the past three years, and a total of six since the 2006 season.

But when Derek Holland joined the 15-win club after a dominant performance in Oakland Tuesday night, one detail made his triumph a bit more impressive than the rest: he's the youngest Ranger ever to do it.

Holland, who turns 25 in just over two weeks, edged out lefty Claude Osteen for the distinction. Back in 1964, Osteen became the franchise's first-ever 15-game winner while pitching for the Washington Senators (the franchise would move to Texas eight years later). Osteen notched number 15 against the Baltimore Orioles in his final start of the '64 season, just a month and a half after his 25 birthday.

Over the next 46 years, the 15-win threshold would be reached 39 other times by Ranger pitchers, including the likes of Gaylord Perry, Fergie Jenkins, Nolan Ryan, and Charlie Hough, who did it a franchise-best six times between 1982-88. But nobody was younger than Osteen.

Until Tuesday night.

Holland's stifling seven-inning, two-hit outing in Oakland came as no surprise. It was a continuation of an unconscious string of five-consecutive quality starts in which he owns a 4-0 record and a 1.57 ERA, easily the best such stretch of his career.

And while Holland isn't even the youngest 15-game winner in AL this year – that distinction goes to Yankees' righty Ivan Nova – his place in Rangers history does provide a bit of perspective on a season that has quickly turned into Holland's breakout campaign.

### **Ron Washington on "Moneyball" premiere: "I never knew some of that was going on"**

**By Evan Grant / Blogger**

**6:41 PM on Tue., Sep. 20, 2011**

OAKLAND, Calif. - After attending the U.S. premiere of "Moneyball," Rangers manager Ron Washington, who is featured in the film, said he wasn't aware of the level of animosity between A's manager Art Howe and GM Billy Beane during the time that he was a coach in Oakland.

The movie, like the book, portrays Beane as essentially inventing a new way to analyze and evaluate talent, while Howe is portrayed as a stubborn, old school manager.

"Art never talked about that stuff," Washington said. "He was always even-keel Art. I never knew some of what was going on. If they never got along, we didn't see it."

Washington, portrayed in the movie by character actor Brett Jennings, said he thought his portrayal was accurate. Washington met Jennings briefly at the premiere.

"The few lines I had, he handled them very well," Washington said. "He was assertive and decisive. And that's how I am, so I was happy to see that."

In the book, Washington is also portrayed as something of having an "old-school" approach to the game, relying on situational hitting, base-running and good defense to win games, rather than putting much weight in on-base percentage and advanced statistics.

In one memorable exchange in the book, Washington complains about "all kinds of gurus telling you what to do." Since taking over as the Rangers manager, Washington has relied much more heavily on his instincts and an age-old approach the game. The Rangers won two playoff series in 2010. Oakland has won one under Beane.

"My ideas are my ideas," Washington said. "I coached third base and infield and I coached the heck out of them. When I had a chance to run the game the way I wanted to, I did that. But, in Oakland, I was an employee and did what I was asked to do."

### **Rangers-A's scouting report: Rangers try to stay undefeated against Brandon McCarthy**

**By SportsDayDFW sports**

**11:18 PM on Tue., Sep. 20, 2011**

#### **SCOUTING THE STARTERS**

Rangers starter: LHP C.J. Wilson (16-7, 2.97 ERA) will be making his sixth start of the season against the A's. After losing the first two, he's gotten progressively better, culminating in eight shutout innings and five hits on Sept. 11. In that game,

he also had 11 strikeouts and just one walk. Perhaps the biggest difference in Wilson's performance this year is lowering his walks from 4.10 per nine innings in 2010 to 2.88 per nine this season.

Matchup of note: C Kurt Suzuki is 1-for-17 (.059), just slightly worse than David DeJesus (2-for-17).

Oakland starter: RHP Brandon McCarthy (9-8, 3.35 ERA) will be making his fifth start of the season against his former club. He is still looking for his first win. McCarthy has pitched six innings three times in the matchups and was knocked out of one game in the fourth by a line drive off his leg. Oakland has done an atrocious job of fielding in the games, allowing eight unearned runs on top of 12 earned runs he's allowed.

Matchup of note : 3B Adrian Beltre is 8-for-23 (.348) with a pair of homers and eight RBIs vs. McCarthy.

Evan Grant

### **Nolan Ryan: Why the Rangers have been better without Cliff Lee**

**Published: 19 September 2011 11:24 PM**

Rangers president and CEO Nolan Ryan spoke with Galloway & Co. on KESN-FM Monday. Here are a few highlights:

On whether he's surprised that the Rangers could match his 92-win preseason prediction despite losing Cliff Lee:

When you come out of spring training and you look at your opposition and you think about the long season ahead, it is so unpredictable. But when you look at your club overall and you see possibilities there, with what our young guys gained out of the playoffs last year and the World Series, I just felt like we were a better ballclub coming out of spring training than we were the year before. I felt like we were positioned to win our division.

On whether he watches the other races in the American League:

I watch what's going in the wild card and over in the East obviously because if we win our division, we're going to be going, as it stands today, to either New York or Boston.

But Tampa Bay's making a move and Detroit has really played well down the stretch, and I'm still hopeful that we'll have a better record than they do so we can host the wild card team instead of having to go to the East Coast.

On whether he'll see the Moneyball movie:

It's not high on my priority list. I didn't read the book, and as far as the movie's concerned, I'd say it's 50-50 whether I go or not.

On whether he's become more of a "baseball geek" since Moneyball rose to prominence:

I don't think I have. I still believe the separator on the major-league level is the mental aspect of the game. What I put a lot of emphasis on is the mental makeup of the guys and their commitment to being the best they can be. I think once they get to this level, that's the separator between them.

### **ESPN DALLAS**

#### **Rapid Reaction: Rangers 7, Oakland 2**

**September, 20, 2011**

**By Richard Durrett**

OAKLAND, Calif -- Derek Holland got the job done despite not having his best command and the Rangers offense scored early and often against Rich Harden, ending up with a 7-2 win. Some quick thoughts (more to come from the clubhouse shortly):

\* The Angels won 10-6 over Toronto just as the Rangers game started, meaning the Rangers dropped the magic number by one to 4 (the lead in the AL West stays at 5). It also means they can't clinch on Oakland's field. They could, however, clinch while on a plane back to Texas on Thursday depending on what happens the next few days (Angels play after the Rangers on Thursday). It seems like Friday or Saturday in front of the home fans is more likely.

\* Also, the Tigers fell to the Royals and former Ranger Luis Mendoza, meaning the two teams are tied in the standings. Detroit has the tiebreaker thanks to winning the season series, so the Rangers would have to win that outright. The team with the better record would host the Wild Card team, which if things ended now would be Boston. The loser would have to travel to New York to open up at Yankee Stadium.

\* Once again, Holland benefited from tremendous run support. He was up 3-0 before he threw a pitch and the Rangers ended up scoring 6 for him.

\* Holland didn't have great command and the fact that he could get through his innings shows his maturity (not to mention an A's lineup that has struggled). Still, Holland's curve ball found the strike zone, allowing him to hang in despite not having his best fastball. He was able, though, to two-hit the A's through 7 innings and allowed one run on a solo shot to left by Michael Taylor.

\* That was Holland's fifth straight quality start. Holland is now 9-1 since July 7 and has a 2.63 ERA in that span.

\* The Rangers jumped out in front 3-0 thanks to some two-out hits and some missed chances by the A's and starter Rich Harden to get out of the inning. Josh Hamilton worked an 0-2 count to 3-2 and then singled to right. Michael Young got a hit to left that bounced just in front of Hideki Matsui, who did not get a good read on the ball. That allowed Adrian Beltre to hit and he belted a long home run well up the wall in center. It was a very long blast and caused plenty of players and fans to shake their heads.

\* ESPN Stats & Information through HR Tracker (thanks Will Cohen) said the homer traveled 426 feet, the fifth-longest home run in Oakland this season. Too bad they can't measure through the wall.

\* Beltre has 8 homers in last 9 games. The last Ranger to do that was Rafael Palmeiro, Aug. 18-27, 1999.

\* Nelson Cruz was at DH again on Tuesday as manager Ron Washington wants him to get his timing down and a get a few more days of not putting too much stress on the hamstring before putting him in the field. He got a double off the wall in right to lead off the second (he batted eighth) and ended up going to third with one out on a ground ball. He scored standing up on a wild pitch to make it 4-0.

\* Michael Young's 200th hit of the season came in the second inning, driving in Josh Hamilton. It was Young's 103rd RBI, a team lead. More on Young's milestone here. Young singled home another run in the 8th, giving him a career-high 104 RBIs on the season. He was 3-for-4, keeping him in the running for yet another batting title.

\* Mike Napoli's single in the third drove in Young for his 68th RBI of the season. That ties his career-high (set last year). Napoli has a seven-game hitting streak and is hitting 14-for-25 (.560). He's also hit safely in 11 of his last 12 and is 22-for-41 (.536) with four homers and 10 RBIs.

\* Rich Harden just doesn't like facing his former team. He gave up six runs (five earned) on seven hits in just three innings. In three starts this season, Harden is now 0-2 with a 10.50 ERA (15 earned runs in 12 innings pitched on 20 hits).

\* Elvis Andrus extended his hitting streak to 13 with a single in the eighth. He is 19-for-55 (.345) with a homer and 9 RBIs during the streak.

\* Mark Lowe pitched a perfect eighth.

\* Michael Kirkman gave up a solo homer to Coco Crisp on a 2-0 pitch to start the ninth. But he got through the inning.

### **Once club has clinched, priority is rest**

**September, 21, 2011**

**By Richard Durrett**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Manager Ron Washington's focus remains on clinching the AL West -- and the sooner the better. But he doesn't use the word "clinch" with his team.

"We haven't talked about clinching anything," Washington said. "The only thing I've talked to them about is bringing our best game. That's it. The rest take care of itself."

But once that happens, likely this weekend at home against Seattle, he won't put any additional pressure on catching the Tigers for homefield advantage in the first round.

It's not that Washington doesn't want his team to start at home against the wild card team in the first round. But his top priority is making sure his team is fully prepared for the postseason.

"If we get an opportunity to clinch, I'm going to get some guys a day or so off," Washington said. "You want to win as many ballgames as you possibly can. You're not taking anything for granted. But the most important thing is that we have these guys healthy if that happens. When that happens, I'm going to give my regular guys a day or so down."

Washington had that luxury last year, clinching in Oakland with eight games to play in the regular season. Then, it was clear the Rangers would start on the road, so it was about full rest of his guys and lining up the rotation. It appears that remains the plan this year, though the club is in a tighter race.

Washington said C.J. Wilson would likely still start Monday in Anaheim even if the division is clinched by then. But he might throw just three innings or so.

"We'd shorten him up and figure out what he needs to stay sharp and go from there," Washington said.

That would still make him ready to pitch in Game 1 next Friday.

### **Michael Young knows 200 hits isn't easy**

**September, 21, 2011**

**By Richard Durrett**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Michael Young doesn't like to talk about individual accomplishments, especially so close to returning to the postseason for the second consecutive season.

But he understands what an achievement it is to collect 200 hits in a season for the sixth time in his career. He was 3-for-5 on Tuesday, getting his 200th hit in the third inning and adding another in the eighth for 201. He's the 16th player in big league history with at least six 200-hit seasons and the third active player (Derek Jeter has 7 and Ichiro Suzuki has 10).

"For whatever reason over the course of my career, those last five are always a grind," Young said. "But I'm happy it's over with. When you get 200 hits, it's about health and consistency. If I do those two things, I like my chances. I'm happy to get it, but the beauty of it all is that I get to focus on what's most important, which is winning a baseball game."

Young also got two RBIs, bringing his total 104 on the season, a new career-high. He had 103 in 2006.

"That means a lot," Young said. "I want to find ways to be a run producer. It means my teammates are getting on base, first and foremost. If you're talking about knocking in runs, the guys you are playing with that get it done. I have guys that are always out there on base and I get the opportunity to knock them in."

Young is just the fifth player since 1960 with more than one season of 200 or more hits, 40 or more doubles and 100 or more RBIs.

"I've gotten to a point now where I know what it takes to get there," Young said. "I've been down this road a few times and I can kind of see the finish line. I'm glad it's over and I can focus on the last eight games of the regular season and hopefully beyond that."

"The most important number of the day is the magic number is 4. We've worked really hard and now we're at a point where we control our own destiny. If we play our kind of baseball, we can wrap this up. We know we have to worry about tomorrow. We know that. We don't have to talk about it or have a meeting about it. It's a very focused group."

## **Holland successful without great command**

**September, 21, 2011**

**By Richard Durrett**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Derek Holland knew he didn't have his fastball command. He threw a bunch early and they kept going high in the zone.

Earlier this season, or even last year, faulty command might have caused a short outing for Holland. But on Tuesday, he simply altered his game plan, throwing more curve balls for strikes and getting the A's to swing at pitches outside the zone. He had good stuff, just not good command. And he made the good stuff work for him in the Rangers' 7-2 win.

"I was a little erratic with my fastball," Holland said. "I used my off-speed to get me back down. I continued to battle. I definitely think the big pitch for me this year has been the curve ball. It's helped out with everything else off-speed wise and with direction too."

Holland managed to work around a few walks and go seven innings, allowing one run on two hits. It was his fifth straight quality start. For a guy that didn't have three straight in his career, it's a sign of the consistency he's worked so hard to find.

"When you're talking about a young guy, you're going to have bumps in the road and that's how you learn," said Michael Young, who has been one of the players Holland has confided in to help him through the ups and downs of the season. "It seems like everything that happened to him earlier in the year he's running from. He's done a great job for us. I think he's learned a lot about himself. He knows what it takes to get himself through games. Hopefully, we're seeing the tip of the iceberg."

Since July 7, Holland is 9-1 with a 2.63 ERA. His resume is impressive enough now that he's got to be considered the No. 2 pitcher on the staff. He appears to be figuring it all out just in time for the postseason.

Holland said he feels like he's improving with every start.

"I think I've been maturing a lot more this year compared to last year and making better pitches," Holland said.

Manager Ron Washington agrees.

"He showed some heart, he showed some guts and some desire," Washington said. "His command was erratic, but he was able to work and get the job done. That's a sign of maturation."

And the sign of a playoff-ready pitcher hoping to help lead his team on a postseason run.

## **Notes: Cruz still at DH, works on timing**

**September, 20, 2011**

**By Richard Durrett**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Outfielder Nelson Cruz may not play right field until the club returns home. It's possible he could play on Thursday afternoon, but manager Ron Washington wants to give him a few more days to not only keep ramping up his hamstring, but also let him fully concentrate on his timing.

"I got to get his bat going," Washington said. "And when I put him out there, he's got to at least give me seven innings. So I've got to give him more time to work."

Cruz is 1-for-10 with six strikeouts in three games -- two of those as the starting DH -- since being activated on Sept. 13. He was on the DL on Aug. 30 with a strained left hamstring.

"I ran before Sunday's game at probably 90 percent and it felt good," Cruz said about the hamstring. "It's been fine."

But he concedes that his timing remains off. He did some early work on Tuesday here at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum and said he was working on curveballs and breaking pitches.

"It's going to take some time to get comfortable," Cruz said. "I'm working on it."

Other notes:

\* Mitch Moreland has been forced to the bench with Cruz at DH.

"I'm not pulling Michael out of that lineup, so Mitch is the one that has to get a few days off," Washington said.

Moreland is hitless in his last nine at-bats and is 4-for-25 in his last seven games. He's hitting just .155 in his last 20 games.

"Mitch is at his best when he's in that line-drive mode," said Washington, who added Moreland's swing is getting a little bit big. "When he starts popping balls up, it's because he's trying to do too much. He needs to figure out how to get back to hitting line drives. When he does that, he'll be at his best."

\* Washington said he believes the way the club has handled playing Josh Hamilton in left field for so much of the season has worked. Hamilton hasn't needed any shots in his knees and the wear and tear on his body has been less. He did benefit from having six weeks of rest on much of that body, but since returning from the injury he's been healthy and hasn't had many issues.

"It's had a tremendous desired effect," Washington said. "He's not running into walls. If I have to put him out at center field the rest of the way, I think he'll be fresher. I really do."

## **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

### **Beltre's 3-run homer carries Texas to 7-2 win September 20, 2011**

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) -- Adrian Beltre and Michael Young have one number in mind, and it has nothing to do with their own impressive hit or home run totals.

The Texas Rangers dropped their magic number to clinch the AL West to four.

"That's the most important number of the day," Young said.

Beltre hit a three-run homer in the first that held up for 15-game winner Derek Holland, and the division-leading Rangers beat the Oakland Athletics 7-2 on Tuesday night.

Texas maintained its five-game division lead over Los Angeles after the Angels won 10-6 at Toronto.

"That's what we're working for. We're trying to win every day and give the Angels no chance to do something crazy," Beltre said.

Young hit an RBI single in the third that gave him 200 hits in a season for the sixth time and drove in another run in the eighth for his career-best 104th RBI, Mike Napoli also singled in a run and Texas won for the seventh time in eight games and eighth in 10.

This Texas bunch is committed to making another deep October postseason run after losing the World Series to San Francisco in five games last fall.

Rookie Michael Taylor hit his first major league home run in the fifth -- his 18th career at-bat -- for Oakland's lone run against Holland (15-5), who won his fourth straight decision.

Elvis Andrus singled in the eighth to extend his hitting streak to 13 games for Texas, which moved to 24 games over .500 for its best mark since sitting 31 over in 1999. Reigning AL champion Texas is 12-5 in September.

Young topped his 2006 RBI total of 103. The 200 hits are always special, too.

"I want to find ways to be a run producer," Young said. "It feels good. I know I've been healthy and I know I've been consistent. I've gotten to a point now where I know what it takes to get there. ... I'm happy it's over with now and I can focus on the last eight games of the regular season."

Texas is 90-65 for its second-best record in franchise history through 154 games. The '99 team was 91-63 at this stage.

"The fact that they got on us early and got us in a little bit of a defensive mode, it can get you on your heels a little bit," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "I think we're all tired of getting beat by Texas."

And the Rangers won this one by beating a familiar face.

Rich Harden (4-4) lost consecutive starts for the first time this year, done after a season-low three innings in which he was tagged for six runs -- five earned -- on seven hits, struck out three and walked one.

Harden, who pitched for Texas last season, is winless in five straight outings since beating the Blue Jays on Aug. 19.

Beltre drove a 1-1 pitch over the center-field wall with two outs in the first as Texas immediately jumped ahead on an uncharacteristically warm night in the Bay Area. First-pitch temperature was 74 degrees.

The slugger had batted just 2 for 16 against Harden before connecting for his 28th home run of 2011. It was Beltre's 20th career homer against Oakland and seventh in as many games. The last eight have come off seven different pitchers.

"Their approach up there, they don't swing at a lot of bad pitches and they work the count a lot, too," Harden said.

A wild pitch in the second allowed Nelson Cruz to score after he doubled leading off the inning.

Texas scored twice more in the third to make it 6-0 and chase Harden, whose start was his shortest since the Rangers knocked him out after only 2 1-3 innings on Aug. 7, 2010.

Holland allowed one run and two hits over seven innings. He struck out seven and walked three while earning his second win in three starts against Oakland this season.

Coco Crisp homered in the ninth for the A's against Michael Kirkman.

Texas came out swinging a night after Rangers manager Ron Washington attended the "Moneyball" premiere and reminisced about his special days as Oakland's third base coach.

Washington is eager for his team to wrap up the division.

"You talk about determination, we've been determined since February," Washington said. "Each and every day we've got to go out and play until they say we've got a spot in the playoffs. ... When we got defeated by San Francisco, we were determined to come back and try again."

Cruz remained in the designated hitter role while he nurses a strained left hamstring.

Washington said Cruz would likely DH again Wednesday night and then the manager would decide whether to use him in the outfield as soon as Thursday's series finale with the A's or wait until back home in Texas.

NOTES: A's LF Josh Willingham was named the 2011 Jim "Catfish" Hunter Award winner. The award, voted on by players, coaches and staff, honors the Oakland player whose play on the field and conduct in the clubhouse best exemplifies the courageous, competitive and inspirational spirit demonstrated by the late Hall of Fame pitcher. ... Harden is 5-4 lifetime against Texas. ...

... Texas is 12-5 vs. the A's this year, winning 11 of the last 12 matchups since May 10. The Rangers have only won more than 11 against Oakland in a season twice before -- going 13-2 in 1977 and 12-7 in 2008. ... LHP C.J. Wilson, who pitches for Texas on Wednesday night, has won his previous three starts against the A's after dropping the first two this year. Wilson (16-7) leads the Rangers and is tied for fourth in the AL in victories. ... RHP Brandon McCarthy (9-8) goes for the A's and is winless in four starts against Texas this season. ... The "Moneyball" premiere at the Paramount Theatre in downtown Oakland generated more than \$370,000 in charitable donations to benefit the Children's Hospital and Research Center Oakland and Stand Up To Cancer.