



## **Headlines of April 23, 2012**

"White Sox Daily Notebook" ... Scott Merkin, WhiteSox.com  
"Colon, Peavy look to keep hot starts going" ... Quinn Roberts, MLB.com  
"Rios leads White Sox to sweep of Mariners" ... Josh Liebeskind, MLB.com  
"Cespedes' success with A's doesn't surprise Sox's Ramirez" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune  
"Humber not keen on extra attention, but he relishes perfect game" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune  
"White Sox win their 8<sup>th</sup> straight at Safeco Field" ... Mark Gonzales, Chicago Tribune  
"Alex Rios comfortable in right field, at plate" ... Daryl van Schouwen, Chicago Sun-Times  
"White Sox overcome rough 4<sup>th</sup> to win 3<sup>rd</sup> in row vs. Mariners" ... Daryl van Schouwen, Chicago Sun-Times  
"Ask Rongey: Humber's perfect day, Morel's struggles and more" ... Chris Rongey, Chicago Daily Herald  
"White Sox' Humber still overwhelmed" ... Associated Press, Chicago Daily Herald  
"Sox sweep Mariners in Seattle" ... Associated Press, Chicago Daily Herald  
"Rapid Reaction: Sox 7, Mariners 4" ... Scott Powers, ESPNChicago.com  
"Alex Rios adds three more hits on Sunday" ... Scott Powers, ESPNChicago.com  
"On the final pitch of Humber's perfecto" ... JJ Stankevitz, CSN Chicago  
"The Sox did something improbably on this date in 1959" ... Chris Kamka, CSN Chicago  
"Perfect moments in White Sox history" ... Chris Kamka, CSN Chicago  
"Rios' 3 hits, 3 RBIs help White Sox sweep Mariners" ... Associated Press, CSN Chicago  
"White Sox morning roundup" ... JJ Stankevitz, CSN Chicago  
"Philip Humber a perfect surprise" ... Jim Caple, ESPN.com  
"Day 6: Scoop's Odyssey: A perfect day" ... Scoop Jackson, ESPN.com  
"White Sox never counted out Humber" ... Chris Kahrl, ESPN.com  
"With millions along for the ride, Phil Humber reaches the summit" ... Lisa Olson, AOL FanHouse  
"Past Forward: Humber perfect, Red Sox perfectly awful" ... Anthony Witardo, The Sporting News  
"White Sox-Athletics Preview" ... Noey Kupchan, Yahoo Sports  
"Humber Pie and Other Tasty Treats" ... Scott Cacciola, The Wall Street Journal  
"Flashback #80: Cubs, Sox In Playoffs (2008)" ... Staff Writers, CBS Chicago  
"White Sox pitcher who threw perfect game to deliver David Letterman's Top Ten List" ... Hal Boedeker, Orlando Sentinel

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## **De Aza's production a welcome sight**

By Josh Liebeskind / MLB.com

SEATTLE -- Alejandro De Aza hasn't played in more than 54 games during a single Major League season. But 14 contests into the 2012 campaign, the center fielder has shown he's ready to be a bona fide top of the order batter.

De Aza, who is batting .268 with 13 runs, three home runs and seven RBIs from the leadoff spot, received his first off day on Sunday from White Sox manager Robin Ventura. Ventura said De Aza wasn't "feeling that good" Saturday, but didn't want to scratch him from the lineup too close to game time.

The first-year White Sox manager emphasized it was just a routine day off, and that he's been very pleased with what De Aza's been giving him from the leadoff spot.

"Not only getting on, but he works counts, does everything you want your leadoff hitter to do," Ventura said. "I'm very happy with what he's done."

"I think to start to the game he's kind of like your regular leadoff hitter, where he's working counts and doing things, but once it turns over, he's just another hitter. It's not like he's a gimmick at the top, he's a quality hitter."

### **Humber still trying to process perfection**

SEATTLE -- Less than 24 hours after Philip Humber entered the record books, the player that aided in the final out by swinging at a full-count slider in the dirt still can't believe it.

"I'm thinking he's got to throw a fastball," Mariners infielder Brendan Ryan said. "There's no way he's going to want to take a chance and walk me on the last pitch. No chance. I'm staying on the fastball, 100 percent. There's no way he's throwing the slider. And he threw the slider. I cannot believe he threw the chase slider there."

On the other hand, Humber is still trying to wrap his head around the greatest individual accomplishment he's achieved in his professional career. It was just the second start of the season for the right-hander, after his spot was skipped in the rotation earlier in the year because of a rain delay.

The ever-humble Humber said Sunday morning he received a mass influx of calls and texts following the perfect game. And even though there were easily over 100 texts in his inbox, he replied to every single one.

"I didn't get to call as many people as I would've liked to, but I got to text most everybody," he said. "At least let them know I got their messages and I appreciated it.

"It's just really neat, there's a lot of people I hadn't heard from in a long time, and a lot of people I wanted to hear from, maybe didn't have their number, stuff like that. But somehow they got in touch with me and were able to be a part of it. It was just fun to be able to share it with some people that had impacted my life and my career to this point."

One of those people that reached out to Humber was Mark Buehrle, who sent the righty a text immediately following Saturday's game. The former White Sox pitcher is the owner of both a perfect game and a no-hitter, and was a mentor of sorts to Humber last season.

"Actually, I probably need to ask him, there are some things that I don't know exactly how I'm going to handle," Humber said. "He's been through it before, and so I want to definitely use him."

It'll be a relief for Humber to find out what parts of the historic game should be sent to the Hall of Fame and what he gets to keep. He presumes the game ball will be one of the items sent to Cooperstown, and to avoid the risk he'd lose it or play catch with it, he gave it to clubhouse manager Vince Fresso. But as far as other mementos, he'll take it all.

"Hopefully I get to keep as much of it as I can," Humber said. "I doubt I'll throw one again, so it would be nice to have as much to remember it by as I can."

### **Lillibridge starts in front of family, friends**

SEATTLE -- White Sox utility player Brent Lillibridge received a rare start on Sunday, replacing regular left fielder Dayan Viciedo for the series finale in Seattle. Lillibridge is a Seattle-area native.

Lillibridge had an inkling that he would start, but once he saw his name in the lineup, he sent out the mass text to family and friends.

"It will be fun, obviously, for the family to come see me play, instead of just watching," Lillibridge said. "I'm ready to go, hoping to do some damage offensively and play some good defense."

Lillibridge collected his first hit of the season on Saturday, hitting a pinch-hit single to left in the ninth inning, and singled and stole second leading off Sunday's game. He had gone hitless in his first nine at-bats of the season.

## Worth noting

- Philip Humber's perfect game on Saturday was the third a White Sox pitcher has thrown. That ties them with Yankees as the only teams with three perfect games. The White Sox and Red Sox both have 18 no-hitters, which is good for second place to the Dodgers (20).
  - Paul Konerko is just two home runs shy of 400 for his career. Konerko hit one on Saturday in his first at-bat, and barely missed another home run in his second plate appearance, as the ball bounced off the top of the left-field wall.
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## Colon, Peavy look to keep hot starts going

By Quinn Roberts / MLB.com

While Bartolo Colon may have quietly signed a one-year, \$2 million deal with the A's in the offseason, he's definitely making his presence felt throughout the A's clubhouse less than a month into the season.

Proving to be one of the team's most significant additions, the right-hander has blanked opponents for 15 1/3 straight innings, in which he's given up just seven hits and struck out 10.

He'll try and keep that going on Monday against the White Sox at Oakland Coliseum in the opening game of a three-game series.

Colon's most impressive feat came in his last start on Wednesday against the Angels, where he tossed 38 consecutive strikes and got the win by giving up only four hits in eight innings.

"I think he could throw a strike with his eyes closed if he had to, the way he's been for us," said A's manager Bob Melvin.

Meanwhile, Jake Peavy will take the mound for the White Sox, trying to get his third win of the season.

Tossing seven solid innings against the Orioles on Wednesday, the right-hander gave up one run on four hits for his second straight win. In complete command of his pitches, Peavy struck out eight and walked none.

"I don't know what I can or can't be after what I've gone through, but I can promise you my effort and preparation is going to be there," Peavy said after his last start. "When you go out there healthy, you have a better chance of executing than when you're not and worrying about everything else but that. I feel very blessed to hopefully stay this way for the majority of this year and give my team a quality effort every fifth day."

## White Sox: Lillibridge gets start in front of family, friends

White Sox utility player Brent Lillibridge received a rare start on Sunday, replacing regular left fielder Dayan Viciedo for the series finale in Seattle.

A Seattle-area native, Lillibridge sent out a mass text to family and friends once he saw his name in the lineup. He finished the day 2-for-4.

- Paul Konerko is just two home runs shy of 400 for his career. Konerko hit one on Saturday in his first at-bat, and barely missed another home run in his second plate appearance, as the ball bounced off the top of the left-field wall.

## A's: Hughes claimed from Twins

The A's claimed infielder Luke Hughes off waivers from Minnesota on Sunday, likely signaling a change at third base for the club.

With Hughes, a career .224 hitter, set to join the team Monday, it's probable that Oakland will demote Josh Donaldson, who is batting .094 through nine games.

"He's a versatile guy that can play anywhere in the infield," Melvin said. "He's got a little power, and we'll see what he has to offer."

- Coco Crisp was held out of the A's lineup for a fifth consecutive day on Sunday, as he continues to recover from a head cold that resulted in an inner-ear infection.

"He's better today," Melvin said. "For all the guys who had the flu, he's had it a little more than that. If it was just the flu, I know Coco would have been out on the field. He's a tough guy. We were dealing with a little bit more. I think we're getting past that."

### **Worth Noting**

- The A's are 2-9 this season when their opponent scores first.
  - The White Sox have allowed three runs or fewer in nine of 15 games this season.
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## **Rios leads White Sox to sweep of Mariners**

By Josh Liebeskind / MLB.com

SEATTLE -- When he arrived at Safeco Field on Friday for the series-opener against the Mariners, White Sox right fielder Alex Rios said the pitcher-friendly park could actually be to a batter's advantage. That is, if a batter hit line drives to the expansive outfield.

With one swing of the bat on Sunday, Rios gave a first-hand example of how to take advantage of the spacious field.

Rios hit a game-tying, two-run triple in the sixth, scored the go-ahead run on a sacrifice fly and the White Sox (9-6) went on to beat the Mariners (7-10), 7-4, on Sunday afternoon for a series sweep.

Rios tripled home Paul Konerko and A.J. Pierzynski with one out in the sixth to tie the score at 4-4 and chase Seattle starter Kevin Millwood. He scored a play later on a sacrifice fly by Kosuke Fukudome to center, easily beating Chone Figgins' throw home.

"He's been doing that for the past four or five days -- he's been staying in the middle of the field, looks good at the plate," White Sox manager Robin Ventura said. "Just covering a lot of different things, he's not just hitting fastballs, but offspeed pitches. He's kind of doing everything; pull the inside pitch, go the other way on something away, so it's something he's kind of been working on. He just looks very comfortable at the plate, and confident."

"That was a big one there," Mariners manager Eric Wedge said of the triple. "But that's where we've got to come right back and go get 'em. You give it up like that, you've got to come right back and answer, and we didn't do that."

The White Sox added a couple of insurance runs in the eighth on a pair of RBI singles by Rios and Fukudome. Rios ran his hitting streak to 10 games with the 3-for-4 performance that also included three RBIs. Fukudome, getting a rare start in the outfield, picked up a pair of RBIs himself.

The Chicago three-run sixth came just two frames after the Mariners took their first lead of the series. Seattle scored twice in the fourth, capitalizing on an errant pickoff attempt by White Sox pitcher John Danks.

With one out and runners on first and second, Danks threw wide of White Sox first baseman Adam Dunn, who was standing in front of the bag, not expecting the throw. Before second baseman Gordon Beckham could corral the ball along the right-field fence, Miguel Olivo had scored from second and Casper Wells had advanced to third.

The Mariners extended their lead to 4-2 when Dustin Ackley scored Wells with a fielders choice grounder to second base. But Danks was able to induce Ichiro Suzuki into a groundout and retire Jesus Montero swinging to end the threat.

"He grinds -- it's the one thing, the kind of pitcher he is," Ventura said. "Kind of battle it out with the other team; kind of keep them off balance."

"Going back and forth with his changeup and spotting his fastball, so sometimes it looks like a grind, but that's just the way he pitches. He has a lot of guts when he goes out there."

Danks (2-2) threw 94 pitches in six innings of work. He gave up seven hits, four walks and four runs, but was able to get out of jams in what seemed like every inning. In fact, he stranded at least one runner on base in each of the six innings he pitched.

More importantly, he kept Chicago in the game before handing it over to a bullpen that's been lights out recently. Addison Reed, Matt Thornton and Hector Santiago each pitched a scoreless inning Sunday to stretch the White Sox bullpen's streak to 12 2/3 innings without allowing a run.

"I've been saying this all along, this is a tough group of guys," Danks said. "Even if we're down late, we're going to give a fight, and today we proved that again. Like I said, it's a good win. Wasn't pretty, but a win's a win at the end of the day."

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### **Cespedes' success with A's doesn't surprise Sox's Ramirez**

*'I knew the talent he has and his ability,' shortstop says of his Cuban friend*

By Mark Gonzales / Chicago Tribune

SEATTLE — **Alexei Ramirez** was one of the first people to correctly predict instant success for fellow Cuban **Yoenis Cespedes**, one month before he signed with Oakland.

But Ramirez will be all business when the White Sox open a three-game series Monday night against Cespedes and the Athletics.

"Outside of baseball, we're friends," Ramirez said Sunday. "But when it comes to on the field, this is my team. And I'll definitely tell (my teammates) how to pitch to him. Then, after the game, we'll go back to being friends."

Sox left fielder **Dayan Viciedo** tried to recruit Cespedes and outfielder **Jorge Soler**, who remains unsigned, to play for the Sox. Cespedes, 26, has backed up his billing as a dominant offensive player with four home runs, 15 RBIs and four stolen bases.

"I'm not surprised at all," Ramirez said. "This is what I've been saying all along. Once he was in the Dominican Republic (to play winter ball), I knew the talent he has and his ability."

During spring training, Ramirez and Cespedes shared a few dinners and reminisced about times in Cuba. Ramirez has known Cespedes from their days when Ramirez played for Pinar del Rio and Cespedes for Granma.

"I feel he's adjusted well (to life in the United States)," Ramirez said. "He was in the Dominican Republic for at least a year. He was out of Cuba, so his adjustments are coming along."

**No extra perks:** After his teammates picked up the tab for dinner Saturday night following his perfect game, **Philip Humber** quipped, "we got a lot of rich guys on this team."

But none of them have personal services clauses or milestone bonuses in their contracts. Those perks will be banned from future player contracts, according to ESPN.com.

**Extra innings:** With two stolen bases Sunday, **Brent Lillibridge** is 5-for-5 to lead the Sox. ... **Dylan Axelrod** pitched 72/3 innings of four-hit ball to lead Triple-A Charlotte to a 2-0 victory over Gwinnett. Axelrod improved to 2-0 with a 1.08 ERA in four starts.

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## **Humber not keen on extra attention, but he relishes perfect game**

*Sox right-hander tapes segment for Letterman show*

By Mark Gonzales / Chicago Tribune

SEATTLE — White Sox right-hander Philip Humber made sure to relish every moment commemorating Saturday's perfect game with his teammates.

That included spending Saturday night at a sports bar with about a dozen teammates to watch a UFC fight (even though Humber isn't a fight fan) to taping a "Top 10" segment for Monday's showing of "The Late Show with David Letterman."

"You only get one chance to re-live it," Humber said Sunday morning.

Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and former Sox ace Mark Buehrle were among more than 100 people who sent congratulatory messages to Humber. As of late Sunday morning, he had yet to hear from the White Sox's No. 1 fan — President Barack Obama.

"I don't know if he knows I'm a registered Republican or what," Humber joked.

Humber is expected to consent to a request to the Baseball Hall of Fame to donate a game-used ball and either his cap or jersey. Humber would like to keep many of the mementos but admits he's a selective collector.

"I have a small collection of autographs of guys either in the Hall of Fame or guys I know will be in the Hall of Fame," Humber said. "I have high standards of that stuff. I played for a lot of teams, so I have a lot of different jerseys.

"So other than that, I prefer to shake hands with somebody rather than have a baseball card or something like that."

Despite his sudden fame, Humber didn't feel entirely comfortable with the attention.

"A lot of people say I deserved it," Humber said. "That was one thing I'm really not comfortable with. I don't think I deserved it. But it makes me feel good to think people are genuinely happy for me. That's probably the best part."

To prove he wasn't entirely engulfed by his achievement, Humber was one of the first Sox players to arrive Sunday at Safeco Field.

"I just want to get back to work and get ready for my next start because obviously it's a great moment and I want to enjoy it," Humber said. "But as a team, we have a lot we want to accomplish, and I want to be a part of that through the course of the whole season."

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## **White Sox win their 8th straight at Safeco Field**

*Rios extends his hitting streak to 10 games in victory over Mariners*

By Mark Gonzales / Chicago Tribune

SEATTLE — Although his White Sox teammates were far from perfect Sunday, Alex Rios recently has developed into a beacon of stability.

Rios bailed out left-hander John Danks with a two-run, game-tying triple in the sixth inning before scoring the go-ahead run, and he added an RBI single in the eighth to help put the finishing touches on a 7-4 victory that completed a three-game sweep of the Mariners.

The win extended the Sox's winning streak at Safeco Field to franchise-tying eight games.

This wasn't a victory earned on style points, but the Sox had enough resources one day after Philip Humber carried the momentum with a perfect game.

"It was a bizarre (fourth) inning," manager Robin Ventura said of the circumstances that led to Seattle taking a 4-2 lead. "A blooper that falls in. It shows a lot of (Danks) to get through it, and then for us to come back. Stuff like that will happen over the course of the year. To put it aside and come back is big for us."

This time it was Rios' turn as he extended his hitting streak to 10 games to help overcome the sloppiest game in Ventura's short tenure.

"I'm just focusing on my approach right now," Rios said. "Just focusing on swinging at good pitches and have a good approach. Besides that, nothing else."

Ventura was more expansive.

"He's been doing that for the last four or five days where he's just staying in the middle of the field, looks good at the plate and is covering a lot of different things," he said. "He's not just hitting fastballs but off-speed pitches, kind of doing everything. He's pulling the inside pitch and going the other way. It's something he's been working on and he looks comfortable at the plate.

"He looks really comfortable in right field. That's where it starts."

The Sox's biggest mishap in the fourth occurred after the Mariners put runners at first and second with no outs. Danks said he and catcher A.J. Pierzynski put on a sign for a pickoff play at first base but didn't inform first baseman Adam Dunn, and Danks' throw sailed into foul territory for a two-base error that gave Seattle a 3-2 lead.

"I feel like had we had (Dunn) in the loop, we might have got (the pickoff)," Danks said. "It was embarrassing, but it happens."

The Sox's bullpen extended their scoreless streak to 122/3 innings. Paul Konerko, who is nursing a sore foot, hit a double to start the eighth and was lifted for pinch-runner Alejandro De Aza. Kosuke Fukudome capped a two-run rally with an RBI single.

"That was a big at-bat to push across another run," Ventura said. "(Fukudome) is a smart player. He had a sacrifice fly to knock in that other run. That's why we have him."

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## **Alex Rios comfortable in right field, at plate**

By Daryl van Schouwen / Chicago Sun-Times

SEATTLE — Alex Rios drove in three runs and had a single, double and triple in the White Sox' 7-4 victory Sunday against the Mariners.

He continues to play right field at a solid level, and it goes hand in hand with what he's doing at the plate.

After his .227 disappointment of 2011, he's having an encouraging start, to say the least.

"He's been doing that for the last four or five days, staying in the middle of the field," manager

Robin Ventura said. "He looks good at the plate, and he's covering a lot of different things. He's not just hitting fastballs but offspeed pitches, kind of doing everything. He's pulling the inside pitch and going the other way."

Rios looks comfortable at the plate, and "he looks really comfortable in right field," Ventura said. "That's where it starts."

Rios is batting .333 with seven RBI. He said he's trying to keep things simple.

"I'm just focusing on swinging at good pitches and having a good approach," Rios said.

He knows the drill

Adam Dunn didn't buy into hitting coach Jeff Manto's suggestion that he place a medicine ball between his legs during a drill, but after hitting two home runs Friday, he was convinced.

"Jeff is always thinking about new drills," Dunn said. "He came up with another drill I thought was kind of crazy. We started doing it, and I felt like I was getting my balance back. He's still on the ball."

Dunn had been lunging with his front foot, but the drill helped him stay back.

Worth a try

Chris Sale said he's moving his bullpen day back a day to Monday, a minor experiment to see if it will help his command. Most starters throw 30 to 40 pitches on the side two days after their start, but some, including John Danks, throw on the third day. Sale had 11 strikeouts in 6

1/3 innings Friday, but he allowed seven hits and three walks. Sale threw one changeup for a strike. But his slider was good, and his strikeout total was the most by a Sox starter since Edwin Jackson's 13 in the 2011 home opener and the most by a lefty since Mark Buehrle's 12 against the Mariners in April 2005.

Old school

Video coordinator Bryan Johnson dug into the archives for rookie closer Hector Santiago to find video of former left-handed screwball pitchers Fernando Valenzuela, Tug McGraw and Willie Hernandez.

Santiago, who got his fourth save in five chances, threw only one screwball as he looks to rediscover the pitch he said was better for him last season. He attributes that, in part, to higher seams on minor-league baseballs, allowing for a better grip and more spin, but he wants to do everything in his power to make it an important part of his arsenal. Santiago watched the tapes to see how the ball came out of the aforementioned trio's hands.

"I'm kind of a fastball guy now," Santiago said. "Usually I'm a changeup guy trying to sneak a fastball in, but right now I'm just going after guys."

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## **White Sox overcome rough 4th to win 3rd in row vs. Mariners**

By Daryl van Schouwen / Chicago Sun-Times

SEATTLE — Philip Humber was back to being just another fifth starter in a major-league rotation Sunday, one day after becoming the 21st pitcher in major-league history to throw a perfect game.

There was a "welcome to the club" text from former White Sox left-hander Mark Buehrle and a phone call from Mayor Rahm Emanuel. A David Letterman Top Ten list taping in Oakland was in the works for Monday.

About half the team gathered at a sports bar on Saturday night to watch a UFC event and celebrate the bigger event of the day, Humber's perfecto.

"I'm not really into [UFC], but it was good to be around the rest of the team because everyone was excited," Humber said Sunday. "It wasn't just me. It wasn't like an individual thing. The whole team really was excited to be a part of it, so I definitely wanted to share that night and reminisce and talk about it because now there's another game today."



"Today I just want to get back to work and get ready for my next start. Obviously, it's a great moment, and I want to enjoy it, but as a team, we have a lot we want to accomplish, and I want to be a part of that through the course of the whole season."

The Sox got back to work with a 7-4 victory to complete a three-game sweep, but not without a fourth inning that included a comedy of errors.

Left fielder Brent Lillibridge misjudged a fly ball that fell for a single, and starter John Danks made a pickoff attempt that first baseman Adam Dunn never saw.

"We had a pick play on, and we kind of left Dunner out," said Danks, whose errant throw allowed Miguel Olivo to score from second and sent Casper Wells to third.

Wells scored on a grounder to second baseman Gordon Beckham, who made a questionable choice in trying for a force out at second. Beckham's high throw didn't cost a run, but it added to the fourth-inning folly nonetheless.

"That's the nature of this team," Danks said. "We have a lot of resilient guys. It wasn't pretty, but a win is a win."

After getting staked to a 2-0 lead on an RBI double by Alexei Ramirez and an RBI single by Dunn, Danks — who had struck out four in the first two innings — gave up five hits and two walks his second time through the Mariners' lineup and trailed 4-2 after the fourth.

But the Sox tightened things up defensively and muscled up offensively, chasing Kevin Millwood with Alex Rios' two-run triple in the sixth and going ahead on Kosuke Fukudome's sacrifice fly. Rios (single, double, triple, three RBI) and Fukudome padded the lead with RBI singles in the eighth.

The Sox were still buzzing a day after Humber's feat, recalling how they watched with sweaty palms and accelerated heart rates as Humber, 29, pitched through the last two innings. Rookie Hector Santiago, who got his fourth save Sunday, said he put his hand to his chest to check his pounding heart.

At 9-6, a team picked to finish last by some in the American League Central has more than a pulse.

"You make a few mistakes, but the guys come in and put that on the side, pushed across a few more runs and got it to the back end of the bullpen," manager Robin Ventura said. "We feel pretty confident when we get the ball to the bullpen."

Addison Reed struck out all three batters he faced, and Matt Thornton — like Reed — remained unscored on before getting the ball to Santiago.

Danks (2-2) was far from perfect, walking four and giving up four runs in six innings.

"He grinds," Ventura said. "That's the kind of pitcher he is."

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## **Ask Rongey: Humber's perfect day, Morel's struggles and more**

By Chris Rongey / Chicago Daily Herald

Before we get to your questions, I have one of my own:

Q. How about Philip Humber?

A. For a guy that had seemingly exhausted any chance that he would be a regular Major League starter, Humber has become one of the most dependable for the White Sox over the last two years.

Saturday's perfect game is the third Sox no-hitter in five years and probably the best-pitched of all of them.

It's safe to say we've been spoiled in that department and, like Mark Buehrle, it couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

A postgame caller to me made a terrific point on Saturday: there may not be any individual random sports achievement that is as dramatic as retiring all 27 batters faced on a given day. And he might be right.

Think about it: is there another personal accomplishment in sports that can occur without warning and compels you to text your entire contacts list with the suggestion, "Um, you might want to turn on this game."

If you found out it was happening before it was over, I can almost guarantee you found your way to a TV or radio.

The allure of it is that you never know when it's coming, but it can happen any afternoon you head to the park, or flip on the TV, or punch up the flagship radio station.

Home run milestones, touchdown records, consecutive games played streaks ... you see them all coming like a throw home from center field. But the perfect game? The buildup is fierce and so instantaneous that it's practically confusing.

A perfect game is a winning Mega Millions ticket. Except when one happens, you don't get to retire tomorrow. Although, you do get to take a day or two or three to enjoy it with everyone else.

Now, onto your questions:

Q. Brent Morel is off a slow start, but Robin Ventura is leaving him in the No. 2 spot and thinks he's going to turn it around. Why stick with him?

A. They're expecting Morel to show them something like what he gave them in September last year (.890 OPS, 8 HRs, 4 doubles, 19 RBI). While he may not do that on a consistent basis, if he gives them something similar, they'll continue to give him ABs in the upper part of the order.

I don't mind the manager demonstrating some confidence in him. If it becomes a slow first half, though, they'll make the change.

Q. Jake Peavy has gotten better in each of his three starts this season. Is he a different pitcher coming off the lat injury?

A. He's healthy. There isn't — and hasn't — been anything more important about Peavy than that. As long as he has good health, there isn't any reason he can't be a good pitcher in the AL. Even without a consistent mid-90s fastball, his stuff is tricky enough to win games.

Q. Adam Dunn is piling up strikeouts early, but he's also delivering big hits. Are you seeing a different Dunn?

A. It was clear to just about everyone that saw him during the spring that Dunn was different. Comfortable and confident, not to mention his swing was as in-sync as we've seen him since he arrived in Chicago. The question was whether he'd take that with him into the regular season. So far, most appears to be well, though I'd love to see him bring home with him the numbers he puts up on the road (his OPS is well over .400 points better on the road and all of his home runs have come on the road).

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## **White Sox' Humber still overwhelmed**

By Associated Press / Chicago Daily Herald

SEATTLE — His jersey soaked, his postgame interviews done, Phil Humber took a little walk at empty Safeco Field.

It was about 45 minutes after his final pitch. The White Sox rightly emerged from the dugout and strolled alone toward the left-field fence, where the totals were still showing on the hand-operated scoreboard.

All zeros.

"It's probably something you're not going to come by more than once in a lifetime," Humber said Sunday, a day after he pitched the 21st perfect game in major-league history and beat Seattle 4-0. "Just trying to take it all in and appreciate it and share it with my teammates.

"I'm overwhelmed to be a part of history in that way and never thought it would happen to me."

Humber had plenty of work left to do when he got back to the hotel, too. He returned each of the 100-plus text messages he received. He also listened to the countless phone calls of congratulations, and managed to get to sleep by 1:30 a.m.

Humber was back to work Sunday, going through his usual post-start routine and getting ready for his next outing, at home against the Boston Red Sox on Thursday.

"I've got to pitch in four days. It's not like the season is over and you can kind of just go home and think about it," Humber said.

A week ago, Humber was dealing with the heartache of losing his grandfather. He was unable to attend the funeral as his wife, Kristan, is due next month with their first child.

"Last week was kind of a downer for us," Humber said. "That was tough."

It hasn't been an easy road for Humber on the field, either. He's already on his fourth team in seven years in the majors. He had Tommy John surgery before his major-league career even got started and didn't get a chance to be a starter until he joined the White Sox last season.

"A couple of years ago I didn't even know if I'd get a major-league win," Humber said.

Now he's one of just 21 people who can say they've pitched a perfect game in the majors.

"It's been a wild ride but I wouldn't change any of it, for sure," Humber said.

Humber was dominant in stifling the Mariners' bats. He recorded 27 outs on just 96 pitches and faced three-ball counts just twice in the game, both in the ninth inning.

Manager Robin Ventura looked up at the scoreboard during the sixth inning and thought the scoreboard showing the pitch count had to be a mistake. He turned to pitching coach Don Cooper and asked how many Humber had thrown.

"He goes, 'No, that's right. It's 60,'" Ventura said. "He had control. He was jumping ahead strike one. It just seemed like everyone he was jumping ahead with that first strike."

Humber said he feels as if he's finally found a home with the White Sox. He made 26 starts for the White Sox in 2011 and finished with a 9-9 record and a 3.75 ERA in his first full season in the majors.

"I love it here," Humber said. "They've given me an opportunity when a lot of people had given up on me. It's a great place to live and hopefully we'll be here for a long time."

Humber said he hadn't yet been contacted by the Hall of Fame. He said he's not sure what they'll want him to send from his historic outing.

"Hopefully, I get to keep as much of it as I can," Humber said. "I doubt I'll throw one again, so it would be nice to have as much to remember it by as I can."

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## Sox sweep Mariners in Seattle

By Associated Press / Chicago Daily Herald

SEATTLE — Alex Rios got three hits and drove in three runs Sunday as the White Sox completed a series sweep of the Seattle Mariners with a 7-4 victory.

A day after Phil Humber pitched a perfect game for the White Sox, John Danks (2-2) went six innings for the win.

Hector Santiago pitched a scoreless ninth for his fifth save of the season, closing out Chicago's 19th victory in its last 22 games against the Mariners.

Rios hit a tying, two-run triple in the sixth and then scored on a sacrifice fly by Kosuke Fukudome to put the White Sox ahead for good.

Rios and Fukudome added RBI singles in the eighth against Tom Wilhelmson.

Seattle starter Kevin Millwood (0-1) to a 4-2 lead into the sixth. Adam Dunn drew a leadoff walk, Paul Konerko singled and after a groundout, Rios cleared the bases with a triple to the wall in right-center field.

The White Sox took a 2-0 lead in the third on a double by Alexei Ramirez that left fielder Casper Wells misplayed for an error, and an RBI single by Dunn.

Seattle tied it in the bottom half. Chone Figgins led off with a walk and Ichiro Suzuki singled, setting up an RBI single by Jesus Montero and an RBI double by Alex Liddi.

Fukudome walked in the fourth and moved up on a wild pitch, but was thrown out at the plate by Suzuki on Brent Morel's single to right field.

Miguel Olivo and Wells hit consecutive singles to lead off the fourth. With Brendan Ryan attempting to bunt, the infield was pulled up when Danks tried a pickoff throw at first that Dunn never saw coming. Danks' error allowed Olivo to score and Dustin Ackley drove in a run with a grounder for a 4-2 lead.

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## Rapid Reaction: Sox 7, Mariners 4

By Scott Powers / ESPNChicago.com

Here's a quick look at the Chicago White Sox's 7-4 win over the Seattle Mariners at Safeco Field on Sunday.

**How it happened:** Alex Rios and Paul Konerko continue to swing hot bats for the White Sox. Rios extended his hitting streak to 10 games with a single, double and triple and three RBIs on Sunday. He delivered a shot into the left-field gap for a triple in the sixth inning, scoring two runs to tie the game at 4-4. Kosuke Fukudome gave the White Sox the lead when he drove in Rios with a sacrifice fly. Konerko also singled and doubled and has reached base in 14 of 15 games this season. Konerko has a team-best 20 hits and is hitting .362. White Sox starter John Danks didn't have great stuff, but he had enough to get by and improved to 2-2. He allowed seven hits and three earned runs, struck out six and walked four in six innings. The bullpen made its fifth consecutive scoreless outing after allowing seven runs over its previous three games.

**What it means:** The White Sox completed their first three-game sweep of the season. They've bounced back nicely after dropping three of their previous four games at home. They're now three games over .500 for the second time

this season. The worst they can do on their current six-game road trip is 3-3.

**Play(s) of the game:** The Mariners threw out two White Sox runners at home plate. Mariners right fielder Ichiro Suzuki delivered a strike to catcher Miguel Olivo to get Fukudome out in the fourth inning, and shortstop Brendan Ryan threw out Adam Dunn trying to score on a grounder.

**Outside the box:** The White Sox and Danks have been dominant against the Mariners in recent years. The White Sox won their eighth consecutive game at Safeco Field, and Danks improved to 7-0 in his last eight starts against the Mariners.

**Up next:** The White Sox remain on the West Coast and open a three-game series with the Oakland Athletics on Monday. Jake Peavy (2-0, 2.75) will look to make his fourth consecutive quality start of the season for the White Sox. Athletics starter Bartolo Colon (3-1, 2.63) is in a tie with eight other pitchers with a major-league-best three wins.

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## Alex Rios adds three more hits on Sunday

By Scott Powers / ESPNChicago.com

Among the many ifs for the Chicago White Sox this season was whether Alex Rios could return to form at the plate after enduring the worst season of his career last year.

While it is still too early to get overly high or low on a player through 15 games and less than 50 at-bats, Rios has shown early signs he and his bat have turned the corner. And with Paul Konerko, Adam Dunn and A.J. Pierzynski all in a groove at the plate leading up to Rios in the lineup's six hole, Rios' emergence has given the White Sox a formidable lineup so far this season.

A year ago, Rios' average never exceeded .228. He started the season off slow and never was able to recover, finishing at .227. This season, he's gotten off to a stronger start and has steadily built on it. His average rose to .333 with a 3-for-4 performance on Sunday, which included a double, triple and three RBIs, against the Seattle Mariners.

"I'm just focusing on my approach right now," Rios said. "I just want to swing at good pitches and have a good approach. Beside that, nothing else.

"I'm not trying to do anything extraordinary. That's about it. I'm trying to keep everything simple."

Sunday was Rios' best game of the year, but he's been consistent for much of the last two weeks. He extended his hitting streak Sunday to 10 games, which has included 14 hits in his last 36 at-bats. He also has three doubles and seven RBIs on the season.

"He's been doing that the last 4-5 days," White Sox manager Robin Ventura said after Sunday's game. "He's been really steady in right field and looks good at the plate. He's been covering a lot of different things. He's not just hitting fastballs, but off-speed pitches. He's kind of doing everything -- where he can pull the inside pitch go the other way on something away. It's something he's kind of been working on.

"He just looks very comfortable at the plate, confident."

Another positive sign for Rios has been his hitting against right-handed pitchers. Last season, he had a .204 batting average against them. With three hits against the Mariners' right-handed pitchers on Sunday, Rios' average improved to .364 against righties this season.

Rios believed last week he was on the verge of becoming a more reliable hitter again. Following his first two-hit game of the season last Tuesday, Rios said he could feel his confidence growing, and he was getting to a point where he could stop thinking and just play.

That was apparent on Sunday.

## On the final pitch of Humber's perfect game

By JJ Stankevitz / CSN Chicago

Brendan Ryan swung. That's what the record books will indicate for as long as baseball is around. Brendan Ryan swung at Philip Humber's 3-2 slider, and when A.J. Pierzynski's throw hit Paul Konerko's mitt, Philip Humber had the 21st perfect game in MLB history.

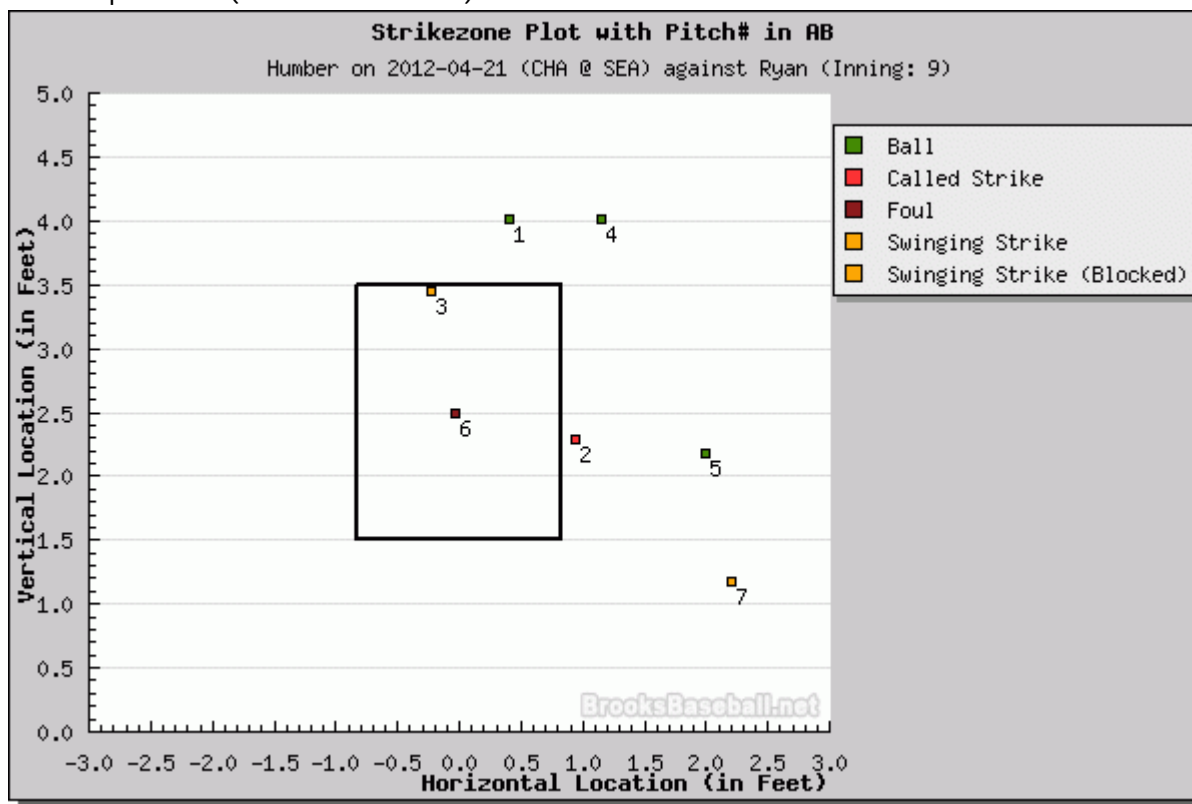
But watch the pitch again. In fact, you probably don't have to do that -- even in the madness of the final out, it was clear Ryan attempted to check his swing on a pitch well out of the strike zone.

Had Ryan ran, he probably would've reached first base, thus breaking up the perfect game. Humber very well may have still thrown a no-hitter, which still would've been a fantastic accomplishment -- but one that would've had a damper put on it by losing a perfect game after 26 outs.

Instead, Ryan snapped at home plate umpire Brian Runge, allowing Pierzynski enough time to pounce on the ball that had trickled about halfway to the backstop and throw to Konerko at first.

So that was the first thing Ryan did wrong. He runs, we're talking about a no-hitter at best. But he didn't run.

And furthermore, what was Ryan even doing attempting a swing at that pitch? Yeah, it was about as nerve-wracking of a sequence as you can have in an otherwise-meaningless regular season game. But seriously, look where the seventh pitch was (via Brooks Baseball):



It wasn't like Humber's slider started near the outside corner and broke low and away. The pitch started low and away and broke even further low and away. Ryan's plan on 3-2 was to swing at anything and 1) hope he made good contact or 2) check his swing. There was no way Ryan was taking a walk.

Ryan was in a position a miniscule percentage of major-league players have ever been in, though. Only 21 players in

baseball history have ever made the final out of a perfect game. I'm not here to question Ryan's methods, because the fact he was still able to stand is, quite frankly, impressive.

But still, Ryan offered at it. Whether he swung may be a matter of debate. But regardless, Humber is in the record books, and nothing can take him out of it.

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## **The Sox did something improbable on this date in 1959**

By Chris Kamka / CSN Chicago

Philip Humber's perfect game was certainly improbable; its finish (as JJ Stankevitz alluded to in his fantastic synopsis of the final at-bat) was equally remarkable. But on this day in 1959, something even more bizarre took place at Municipal Stadium in Kansas City.

The 1959 White Sox was a team whose identity was earned by "strength up the middle" and a great pitching staff. Despite winning the pennant, they were 5th (out of 8 teams) in runs scored. So when the box score read 20-6 in favor of the Pale Hose after an April 22, 1959 game against the Athletics, it certainly wasn't the norm.

Much less amazing than the fact that they scored 20 runs was how they did it. The lone home run was hit by Luis Aparicio, who hit only six all year; a man who etched his plaque in Cooperstown with a legendary glove and a mountainous pile of stolen bases. That's not the most interesting thing about it.

Things looked grim after starter Early Wynn was knocked out in the bottom of the second after a Roger Maris homer made the score 6-1 Kansas City. The Sox rallied and took an 8-6 lead into the 7th inning, and what took place next will never again be duplicated on a Major League diamond; and this is how it went down:

- Ray Boone reached on a throwing error by shortstop Joe DeMaestri
- Al Smith reached on an error by third baseman Hal Smith during a sac-bunt
- Johnny Callison singled; Boone scored, Smith scored
- Luis Aparicio walked, then stole second
- Bob Shaw walked
- Earl Torgeson (batting for Sammy Esposito) walked, scoring Callison
- Nellie Fox walked, scoring Aparicio
- Jim Landis grounded out 1-2, Shaw forced at home
- Sherm Lollar walked, scoring Torgeson
- Boone walked, scoring Fox
- Smith walked, scoring Landis
- Callison was hit by pitch, scoring Lollar
- Aparicio walked, scoring Boone
- Shaw struck out
- Bubba Phillips (batting for Torgeson) walked, scoring Smith
- Fox walked, scoring Lou Skizas (running for Callison)
- Landis grounded out 1-3

That's right: 11 runs on one hit, three errors, 10 walks, and a hit-by-pitch; truly one of the most surreal sequences of events the game could ever produce.

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## **Perfect moments in White Sox history**

By Chris Kamka / CSN Chicago

On Saturday, Philip Humber became the third White Sox pitcher to achieve perfection by twirling a gem in the Emerald City. So let's take the time to take a look at perfect moments in White Sox history.

In 1908, while the Cubs, Giants and Pirates were in the thick of a heated pennant race which culminated with the

"Merkle Boner" and ended with the most recent World Series win for the Northsiders, the White Sox were also fighting it out for the flag.

On September 29th, Ed Walsh, carrying the team on his back all season long, recorded his 38th *AND* 39th victories of the season, both complete games, over the Red Sox by scores of 5-1 and 2-0, while allowing only 7 hits and striking out 15 in his day's work.

Three days later, Walsh was at it again, this time in Cleveland, striking out 15 Indians. The Sox and Tribe combined for four hits on the afternoon...but all four were by the home team. It was Addie Joss, nicknamed "The Human Hairpin" for his slender physique, who emerged with a 74-pitch, 1-0 perfect game victory. It was the fourth perfect game in Major League history, and when the next one was thrown, it would be one of Comiskey's charges doing the honors.

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The year was 1922, the date was April 30th. Taking the hill at Navin Field in Detroit was Charles Culbertson Robertson, a 26-year old right-hander from Texas. It was his fourth career start, and his career mark was 1-1 with a 4.26 ERA entering the game. These Tigers, led by player-manager Ty Cobb, hit .306 as a team in 1922 (with Cobb himself hitting .401) but on this day, they would get nothing.

Cobb didn't make it easy; in the fifth inning, the belligerent Bengal had the game stopped twice; first to complain that Robertson was doctoring the baseball, second to have the glove of first baseman Earl Sheely inspected. Umpires found nothing. Throughout the game, Tyrus the Terrible continued to confiscate balls put out of play to plead his case that something was amiss. When the smoke cleared, it was 27 Tigers up, 27 Tigers down; a doubly impressive feat against a Tiger lineup featuring two Hall of Famers (Cobb and rightfielder Harry Heilmann) and eyepopping offensive numbers. Robertson, the unlikely hero, finished the day with six strikeouts while offering a total of 90 pitches.

**Home Plate umpire:** Dick Nallin

**Catcher:** Ray Schalk

**Opposing starter:** Herman Pillette

Robertson lost his next start at home against the Indians, going six innings with 4 earned runs. Unfortunately, Robertson was never able to duplicate his success. He finished 1922 14-15 with a decent enough 3.64 ERA (111 ERA+), and hung on with the Sox until being claimed off waivers New Year's Eve 1925 by the St. Louis Browns, compiling a 39-56 record with the White Sox and going 10-24 in three seasons with the Browns and Braves.

His .380 career winning percentage is just below Dallas Braden (.419) for worst by a perfect game pitcher.

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Fast forward to July 23, 2009 for the Sox next perfect game.

Mark Buehrle entered the game with a no-hitter already under his belt and a reputation as the long-time ace of the Southside staff. Buehrle's assignment was a Tampa Bay Rays team jam-packed with young, budding talent (and five 2009 All-Stars; Carlos Pena, Carl Crawford, Ben Zobrist, Evan Longoria, and Jason Bartlett).

Despite being a bit of a letdown after a 2008 World Series appearance, this Rays team was no pushover. Buehrle dispatched of the Rays in his customary quickness (2 hours, 3 minutes; eight minutes slower than Robertson...but Buehrle had TV commercials to deal with), equaling Robertson's six punch-outs while throwing 27 more pitches along the way.

Of the 21 balls in play, the Sox Southpaw coaxed 11 ground ball outs from the bats of Joe Maddon's Rays, with the remaining 10 in the air. The defining moment of the game came when Dewayne Wise made an unforgettable grab in left-center of a Gabe Kapler shot after entering the game to begin the inning as a defensive replacement (for Carlos Quentin with Scott Podsednik moving from center to left) in the ninth. That cleared the way for a Michel Hernandez strikeout and a Bartlett groundout to short (Alexei!!!!!! YES!!!) to give the immensely popular Buehrle his place in history.



**Home Plate umpire:** Eric Cooper  
**Catcher:** Ramon Castro  
**Opposing starter:** Scott Kazmir

Buehrle went on to set a Major League record with 45 straight batters retired as he sent down the first 17 batters in his next start at Minnesota, but the Twins got the best of him, and he ended up taking the loss, giving up 5 earned runs in 6.1 innings of work.

Buehrle finished his White Sox career with 161 wins, good for 6th in franchise history, and is among the finest pitchers to don the pinstripes.

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From a 38th round surprise to the third overall selection in the 2004 draft, the third White Sox masterpiece, of course was painted by Philip Humber yesterday afternoon at Safeco Field against a Mariners team suffering from historical offensive ineptitude, even if one of this generation's finest hitters; Ichiro Suzuki occupies the 3-spot.

Ironically, this was the same Humber whose first start was skipped due to a rainout in Cleveland. Humber's second start of the season featured fantastic pitch economy (according to today's standards) throwing no more than 16 pitches in any inning (16 was in the ninth), with a sequence of 8-6-6 in innings 4-5-6. Unlike Buehrle, he relied on the vast expanses of Safeco Field to produce 13 fly balls opposed to just five on the ground, while striking out nine.

That busy ninth inning included the most suspenseful at-bats, with Humber battling back from a 3-0 count to whiff Michael Saunders and the controversial 3-2 check-swing by Brendan Ryan on pitch #96 which led to a C-1B putout to end the game.

**Home Plate umpire:** Brian Runge  
**Catcher:** A.J. Pierzynski  
**Opposing starter:** Blake Beavan

What's next for Humber? We'll have to wait until likely Thursday, when he'll face a much more daunting task which is the Red Sox lineup. But that's not really important, because the perfect game puts Humber in a class of just 21, which nobody can take from him no matter where his right arm takes him.

### **Fun note**

Three-hitters in each perfecto: Ty Cobb, Evan Longoria, Ichiro

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## **Rios' 3 hits, 3 RBIs help White Sox sweep Mariners**

By Associated Press / CSN Chicago

SEATTLE -- Alex Rios has been putting in an effort to really concentrate on his approach at the plate and improve the quality of his at-bats.

That work paid off Sunday when Rios got three hits and drove in three runs to help the Chicago White Sox completed a series sweep of the Seattle Mariners with a 7-4 victory.

Rios hit a tying, two-run triple in the sixth and then scored on a sacrifice fly by Kosuke Fukudome to put the White Sox ahead for good.

Rios and Fukudome added RBI singles in the eighth against Tom Wilhelmson.

"I'm just focusing on my approach right now," Rios said. "I want to swing at good pitches, have a good approach and besides that nothing else."

Manager Robin Ventura has noticed over the attention to Rios' approach paying off the last few games.

"It's something he's kind of been working on and he just looks very comfortable at the plate and confident," Ventura said.

The win polished off a rejuvenating series sweep of the Mariners after coming to Seattle as losers of four of their last five games. The White Sox have won 19 of their last 22 games against the Mariners including their second straight sweep in Seattle.

"We played pretty good these three games," Rios said. "It's a confidence boost to us. We've been playing good. We just need to keep doing what we're doing."

A day after Phil Humber pitched a perfect game for the White Sox, John Danks (2-2) went six innings for the win. Hector Santiago pitched a scoreless ninth for his fifth save of the season.

Seattle starter Kevin Millwood (0-1) took a 4-2 lead into the sixth. Adam Dunn drew a leadoff walk, Paul Konerko singled and after a groundout, Rios cleared the bases with a triple to the wall in right-center field.

"When you give it up like that you have to come right back and answer," Mariners manager Eric Wedge said. "We didn't do that."

The White Sox took a 2-0 lead in the third on a double by Alexei Ramirez that left fielder Casper Wells misplayed for an error, and an RBI single by Dunn.

Seattle tied it in the bottom half. Chone Figgins led off with a walk and Ichiro Suzuki singled, setting up an RBI single by Jesus Montero and an RBI double by Alex Liddi.

Fukudome walked in the fourth and moved up on a wild pitch, but was thrown out at the plate by Suzuki on Brent Morel's single to right field.

Miguel Olivo and Wells hit consecutive singles to lead off the fourth. With Brendan Ryan attempting to bunt, the infield was pulled up when Danks tried a pickoff throw at first that Dunn never saw coming. Danks' error allowed Olivo to score and Dustin Ackley drove in a run with a grounder for a 4-2 lead.

"We had a pick play on and I think we left (Dunn) out. I don't know," Danks said. "... It's embarrassing but it happens."

Danks managed to settle in after the fourth inning as Seattle only managed to draw two walks off Danks in the fifth and sixth innings.

"He grinds. That's the kind of pitcher he is," Ventura said of Danks. "...That's just the way he pitches and he has a lot of guts when he goes out there."

## **NOTES**

Seattle 1B Justin Smoak got a scheduled day off and Liddi started in his place. ... Chicago manager Robin Ventura gave CF Alejandro De Aza the day off with Fukudome starting in his place. De Aza had played every inning of the first 14 games of the year in center for Chicago. De Aza pinch-ran for DH Konerko in the eighth. ... White Sox reliever Addison Reed pitched a scoreless seventh, striking out the side.

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## **White Sox morning roundup**

By JJ Stankevitz / CSN Chicago

Philip Humber was perfect.

Chuck Garfen looked at where Humber came from, while I had a year-by-year examination of Humber's rocky career to this point.

Humber's perfect game nearly wasn't -- Brendan Ryan's strikeout to end the game has caused some debate.

This photo of Humber? Awesome.

More videos from Humber's perfect: Robin Ventura on the aftermath Sunday, Ventura's postgame comments Saturday, Humber's postgame comments, A.J. Pierzynski's postgame comments and Bill Melton's analysis.

Chris Kamka looked at the other two perfect games in White Sox history -- one you will remember, the other you may not. Chris also looked at an even more improbable event that happened on April 22, 1959.

Oh, so the White Sox also played two other games this weekend. And they won both, so that's nice. Adam Dunn hit two home runs in Friday's win, while he, Gordon Beckham and Brent Morel all had good games. And Sunday saw the Sox come back from a 4-2 deficit to win 7-4, completing a sweep.

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## Philip Humber a perfect surprise

By Jim Caple / ESPN.com

When White Sox starter Philip Humber threw the 96th and final pitch of a game that would leave him among an elite club that includes Cy Young, Sandy Koufax, Randy Johnson, Catfish Hunter and Roy Halladay, he immediately thought: "Oh, that's way outside. Hopefully it won't go to the backstop."

Fortunately, Seattle pinch hitter Brendan Ryan was up there hacking, figuring that with a perfect game on the line, anything close on the 3-2 pitch might be called a strike. So he began his swing, then tried to check it because the pitch was so outside it bounced away from White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski. Home plate umpire Brian Runge instantly ruled that Ryan's bat had crossed the plate for strike three rather than ball four.

Pierzynski chased the ball down and threw to first base for the out to preserve the perfect game. The catcher said his only thought at the time was, "Get the ball and get it to first base as fast as possible because if I screw this up I'm going to be a goat forever."

He didn't screw it up, so at the age of 29 Humber achieved one of pitching's most elusive achievements despite entering the game with an 11-10 career record and a 4.06 ERA with five different franchises. Now he is the 21st pitcher in major league history to throw a perfect game (and the fourth since 2009).

"I saw that on TV when I was in the clubhouse and like I said earlier, I don't know what my name is doing on that list," Humber said. "It's just so humbling. I'm so thankful. It's an awesome feeling. People are telling me, 'You have to send this or this' to the Hall of Fame. I've been to the Hall of Fame and I've seen the stuff that's there. And now to think something of mine is going to be there is pretty awesome."

Humber is the second White Sox pitcher to throw a perfect game in the past four years -- Mark Buehrle pitched one in 2009, when center fielder DeWayne Wise saved it with a home run-robbing catch in the ninth inning. With a great slider working, Humber didn't need any such amazing defense -- he struck out nine and few Mariners hit the ball hard. He didn't throw three balls to a batter until the ninth.

"I think the only hard-hit ball was Dustin Ackley's line drive in the fourth," Pierzynski said. "Other than that it was a lot of strikeouts and popups and weak groundballs. The only luck was Brendan Ryan swung at a 3-2 slider."

Or did he? Although Runge ruled that Ryan went around with the swing, it appears in the replay Ryan successfully checked. Ryan argued with Runge -- to no avail. Runge stood by his call and the White Sox were already piling on

Humber on the mound. "I felt Jake Peavy on my back and I was like, 'Get up, I can't breathe,'" Humber said with a grin.

Facing a thick wall of reporters at his locker, Ryan said he would have no comment on the final pitch and then praised Humber for his performance, talking about his great slider and "A-plus-plus stuff." When this was met with a brief silence, Ryan said, "Everyone wants to talk about the checked swing, huh?"

Well, since you brought it up ...

"The closer they get, the more borderline things may go (the pitcher's way)," Ryan said. "Because that's just the way things go. I just wanted to be more aggressive."

When someone mentioned that Humber's reaction to the pitch looked as if he thought he had just thrown ball four, Ryan said, "It was, it was." He paused and quickly added, "Hmm, I don't want to finish that.

"When you're in that situation, you have to be a little more aggressive to anything around the plate," Ryan continued. "I mean, that's just the way it has to be. The fans want to see it. So anything that's kind of gray, you have to at least get a piece of."

Pierzynski said that despite the possibility of ball four ruining the perfect game, he didn't think about calling for a fastball. "No. I'm not going to lie because I'm really selfish and I at least wanted the no-hitter and if he walked him, he walked him," he said. "It was his best pitch and we're going down with it. ...

"I knew if we threw it close, he would swing, because in that situation, you want to get a hit, you don't want to walk."

Humber said his first phone call after the game was to his wife, who is nine months pregnant and due to deliver a son in two weeks, just to make sure she didn't go into labor from excitement. "He's ready to go. He's getting close," Humber said.

Humber had been traded once as part of the Johan Santana deal, let go once and claimed off waivers twice -- the second time when the White Sox picked him up in January 2011. He pitched well in his only previous start this season but Chicago also skipped him in the rotation due to a rainout. He is 10-9 with a 3.50 ERA since joining the Sox and says one reason he's pitching better is that his focusing is less "about me" and more about his faith.

"My identity was as a baseball player," he said. "How I evaluated myself was my stat line. If my stat line was great I felt good about myself. If it wasn't then I didn't feel so good. It took me a long time to figure it isn't about me, or us. Whatever we do, we should be doing to glorify God. I'm not saying I'll always be successful for that attitude or always have a good game, but I will be a more joyful person."

And the irony is, he wound up with a pretty good stat line Saturday.

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## **Day 6: Scoop's Odyssey: A perfect day**

By Scoop Jackson / ESPN.com

### **Saturday**

The day I decide not to go to see the Cubs is the day *they* decide to ball.

But when one has choices as one has today...

Option 1: Cubs vs. Reds

Option 2: Fire vs. FC (Toronto)

- Option 3: White Sox vs. Mariners
- Option 4: Wolves vs. Rampage
- Option 5: Rush vs. Mustangs
- Option 6: Bulls vs. Mavericks
- Option 7: Blackhawks vs. Coyotes. Game 5

I don't know if any other city in America can claim days like this on the calendar when it comes to professional sports. Seven teams all in action on one day.

Options.

So try doing this: *Wake up at 5 a.m. to take youngest son to school on a Saturday because he's in the band and the band is in a competition that starts at 7 a.m. Go back home. Take other son to driver's education at another school at 10 a.m. Turn on WGN at noon to see what Cubs team is going to show up. Leave in the middle of the first inning to pick up kids. Return home, Cubs are winning 5-1. Find the Fire/Toronto match on TV. Scream "Goal!!!!!" 25 seconds into the match when the Fire score. Turn to White Sox game. Phil Humber looks good early. Go to get oil changed in the car. Come back, Humber still looks good. Leave home, head to United Center. Word is Derrick Rose might play. Get to UC, hear two words: Perfect game! Find out Rose is playing. Watch Bulls starting lineup start a game together for only the 13th time all season. Leave at halftime. Get home just in time for Game 5 puck drop. My son screams downstairs, "The Bulls are up by 10!" Go online to see Humber highlights. Text Kenny Williams. Check CN100 for Wolves update. They won. Eat dinner. Immerse myself into overtime No. 5. Goal! Text Blackhawks media relations coordinator for possible credentials to Game 6. Begin to write blog you are currently reading. Get response from Blackhawks: "See You Monday!"*

The ability to watch, pay attention to or get locked into six professional games all in the same day? Unheard of. The chances of being a part of a day where the city you live in goes 7-0? Incredible. And, in the middle of it all, the 21st perfect game pitched in Major League history? Priceless.

We live for days like this. We live in Chicago *because* of days like this.

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## **White Sox never counted out Humber**

By Christina Kahrl / ESPN.com

Don't count anybody out, ever. But perfect? Philip Humber was never supposed to be perfect, but on the 21st day of April he was exactly that: the 21st pitcher to deliver a perfect game and the first to throw one since Roy Halladay threw the 20th on May 29, 2010. It was also the first American League perfecto since Dallas Braden on May 9, 2010.

But he was never supposed to be perfect. After all, he had proven so very imperfect since being the third overall pick of the 2004 draft. Touted as a top Mets prospect, he blew out his elbow in 2005, and it wasn't long before he was referred to as another example of a Rice pitcher who got hurt and hadn't lived up to the hype. Unimpressed with his minor league performance after coming back from Tommy John surgery, the Mets bundled him into the four-for-one swap that brought them Johan Santana before the 2008 season.

But the Twins never let him start a single game in the majors after making 48 starts over two years at Triple-A, simply letting him slip away after 2009 rather than keep him on the 40-man roster. The Royals picked him up ... and *they* left him in Triple-A. However desperate the Royals were for pitching of any flavor, they lost him on waivers after the 2010 season to the A's. They were just looking for a possible fifth starter. But the A's lost him on waivers a month later when they decided they had a better way to use to spot on their 40-man roster, signing free agent Grant Balfour.

That is where the White Sox stepped in, grabbing Humber off waivers. Their goal for him wasn't any higher than anyone else's. He looked like a good guy to stash at the back end of a rotation -- a fifth guy, a bubble guy on an organizational depth chart, a guy only as good as his last start before giving him much thought. He was somebody who sticks only as long as he earns his keep and who won't be forgiven a run of bad starts.

That was his due, because at no point did Humber dominate in Triple-A. Across four years bouncing among organizations, flitting from New Orleans to Rochester to Omaha, from the Pacific Coast League to the International League and back again, he posted a 4.67 ERA in Triple-A. His clip of 6.9 strikeouts and 2.7 unintentional walks per nine reflected a pitcher who had good command.

With heat that just bumps above 90 mph and good command of four pitches, he's a finesse righty, and those don't catch many breaks. But he promptly proved he belonged last season, getting that last slot in the White Sox's rotation and keeping it, earning job security he'd probably only heard about happening to other people. And now, having achieved history as a strike-throwing machine, those days should be behind him for some time to come.

He's not the first such find for general manager Kenny Williams, though. The White Sox have made a cottage industry out of giving second chances to other teams' tarnished top prospects. Gavin Floyd looked like a Phillies flop after being the fourth overall pick of the 2001 draft; John Danks was the ninth overall selection for the Rangers in 2003, but they dealt him for Brandon McCarthy after seeing him deliver mediocre results at Double- and Triple-A. Good pitching might be hard to find, and not everything Williams touches turns to gold, but these are the benefits of betting on upside risk.

Humber might have had the good fortune to face the Mariners, a woeful lineup, in Safeco Field, a great place to pitch. But other people get those chances, and they don't deliver perfection. It's because of these finds that the Sox have the best rotation in the American League Central, and how they do will define how far the Sox might go this season. As Humber just showed, that might be a lot better than you ever expected.

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## **With millions along for the ride, Phil Humber reaches the summit**

By Lisa Olson / AOL FanHouse

There's nothing better in all of sports than a perfect game. For three hours or so, it teeters on man's quest to be flawless, faultless—impossible goals some of us can't sustain in the space of three minutes.

You don't have to particularly like baseball or care for the team involved or know a thing about the pitcher on the mound, but when you hear there's a perfect game rolling into the eighth, you'd be a fool not to tune in. Where else in life can you observe, often in high-def and slow-mo, excellence unfold?

You can, for instance, be nine months pregnant and resting uncomfortably on a sofa in Chicago while all the way out in Seattle your husband's new slider does tricks like never before. Twice over the years Phil Humber has been struck in the head by line drives while his wife, Kristan, sat in the stands; once he needed 18 stitches. But her apprehension reached a whole new level as she watched from afar as her husband stunned the nation with a pitch that dropped like a teardrop in and out of the zone.

Humber threw just the 21st perfect game of all-time—27 straight outs, not a single man on base—on Saturday, an unlikely suspect who roped the Seattle Mariners into groundout after groundout, going to a three-ball count just twice and striking out nine in a 96-pitch beauty. On his side was a little bit of luck and a whole lot of guts.

While the thrill from his highly unpredictable outing still raged, Humber, 29, sneaked away to call Kristan, who is due to give birth to their first child, John Gregory, on May 8. Did the stress of watching him cause contractions? Was she OK? (Answers: No, and you better believe it.)

Or you can be like Humber's Chicago teammates in the Safeco Field visitor's dugout, growing more and more hypnotized as the game stretched toward history. It's nearly impossible for baseball players to swallow their thoughts, but as the innings piled up and Humber's wicked slider kept growing teeth, the White Sox inched far, far away whenever he settled onto the bench, their silence thickening the suspense.

Soon the legs of Chris Sale were marked with indents from the piercing, poking nails of Jake Peavy, the two pitchers not unlike all bystanders viewing the action with giddy anticipation.

Or you can be strolling the streets of New York City and come across a bar where even the usually boisterous patrons have suddenly felt their jaws come unhinged, their attention transfixed not on TV screens showing the Yankees in Boston but on—of course!—a former New York Met doing wondrous things.

Why, yes, it's the same pitcher who in 2007 was summoned to save the season from an epic meltdown. With exactly zero starts in the majors, Humber was nonetheless given the ball in late September for the swooning Mets as they collapsed atop what once was a seven-game lead in the division with 17 to go.

Humber, not even 25, couldn't halt the Mets' stunning freefall, and that winter he and three other prospects were traded to Minnesota for Johan Santana, a two-time Cy Young Award winner who surely would be the pitcher to turn around the fortunes in Queens.

You might join the conversation with bemused New York sports fans, some of whom thought Humber had tumbled out of the big leagues, others who were sure he was a mop-up guy somewhere. Everyone knew he was drafted No. 3 overall by the Mets in 2004, just one pick after the Detroit Tigers selected Justin Verlander, and everyone knew the star-crossed Mets were struck again when Humber soon underwent Tommy John Surgery to repair ligaments in his elbow.

Amidst this talk you and the rest of the bar might curse the brilliant minds controlling FOX's national Saturday broadcast as the network finally decided the country could bear tearing away from a game the Red Sox led 9-1 and watch instead something that has happened only 20 other times in 143 freaking years. Of course, the possibility of a perfect game, with so much inherent drama and tension, was at first granted just the small window in the split screen for viewers not in the Chicago metro area or the Pacific Northwest.

Yankee-Red Sox games are so rarely televised or hyped, so you can understand the network's dilemma.

The screens thankfully filled to the edges for the bottom of the ninth in Seattle, as the pitcher who was twice claimed off waivers in the last two years became one of the most unlikely figures in ages to rock the sports scene.

There's something about athletes who climb back from the periphery that tugs at the soul. Jeremy Lin's rocket rise with the Knicks was adored universally, until an injured knee sent him crashing back to earth. Humber didn't win a game in the majors until 2010 with Kansas City, and he didn't start flirting with the slider until last April.

Wherever you happened to be perched in the ninth when Michael Saunders took three balls but then struck out on a sharp slider, the fist probably pierced the air. You didn't have to know that Humber had never before thrown a complete game in his major league career, or that he was a mediocre 9-9 last year, his first full season as a starter. But the capricious randomness sure added weight to the moment.

When the next batter, John Jaso, flew out to right field, you might have rose along with the 22,472 lucky souls tucked inside Safeco. You might have been alone in your living room, but here was a rare and priceless few seconds that demanded full, undivided attention. It demanded you to stand, or to at least lean far forward and dig the nails into the palms.

And when Brendan Ryan, the pinch hitter who represented out No 27, fouled off a fastball on full count, you might have noticed only a few beads on Humber's forehead, and thought that this was a situation that required mighty big intestines.

When Ryan swung and missed on the next pitch, you might have wondered if he went all the way around, if Humber was blessed to be given such a gift ... and you'd look at replay after replay and think maybe of Armando Galarraga, until the only thing that mattered was catcher A.J. Pierzynski furiously scooping the low slider out of the dirt and throwing to first for the final out.

"Get the ball and get it to first as fast as possible, because if I screw this up, I'm going to be a goat forever," is how a still-shaking Pierzynski described the thoughts raging through his head as the final seconds of Chicago's 4-0 victory and this perfect game hung in the balance.



Ryan momentarily lingered outside the batter's box, arguing the call with umpire Brian Runge, but later Ryan was all class, saying: "I don't even want to talk about (the call). I will say that was a pretty outstanding game he threw. He had his slider working, obviously, and pounded the zone, kept his pitch count down. Pretty outstanding stuff from him today."

And not even a full day later, after mumbling for at least the 100th time he couldn't believe Humber had the cojones to throw that pitch, Ryan would shake his head and relive his spot in history. "I'm thinking, he's got to throw a fastball. There's no way he's going to want to take a chance and walk me on the last pitch," Ryan said Sunday. "No chance. I'm staying on the fastball, 100 percent. There's no way he's throwing the slider. And he threw the slider. Oh, my gosh."

You could be one of the curmudgeons griping that it was just the Mariners, which sounds an awful lot like the nonsense those killjoys screamed after the Yankees' David Cone twirled a perfect game against the Montreal Expos in 1999. It was still only the 16th time 27 players had come up and gone down against one pitcher in more than a century. It was still fantastic.

"I don't even know what to say. I don't know what Phil Humber is doing in this list. No idea what my name is doing there, but thankful it's there," he'd admit later, humbly, like someone who never in a thousand years thought he'd be one of only 21 men to do the incredible.

In all of sports, there really isn't anything better.

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## **Past Forward: Humber perfect, Red Sox perfectly awful**

By Anthony Vitardo / The Sporting News

The past week gave us even more Beantown drama, further evidence of who is the best all-around player on the planet, a pair of folded aces, a model of consistency and the end of the dangling carrots.

But easily the most impressive thing we learned last week was...

- Phil Humber now knows what it is like to be a perfect athlete. The Chicago White Sox righthander joined an elite club Saturday by throwing Major League Baseball's 21st perfect game.

The White Sox lost ace Mark Buehrle in the offseason, and it appeared they wouldn't have the arms to compete in the American League Central. But so far this season, the staff has held up admirably. Humber highlighted its early-season efforts by facing 27 Seattle Mariners without allowing any of them to reach base.

Humber's final line: Nine innings, no hits, no walks and nine strikeouts, including one on the final pitch of the game to Brendan Ryan.

Not bad for a guy with 29 career starts (one this season) and a 4.06 ERA going into Seattle on Saturday. It's not likely the White Sox are going to compete for one of the two wild-card berths, but if they do it will be on the backs of the pitching, even if it's not always perfect.

- On the opposite side of the country from where Humber threw his gem, the Boston Red Sox have been the perfect soap opera. It wasn't bad enough that the team lost on the day of Fenway Park's 100th anniversary bash, so the Red Sox made sure they bookended the week in a manner they have trademarked.

The week started with manager Bobby Valentine continuing to do stupid things, this time calling out Kevin Youkilis for not being emotionally or physically prepared to play. Valentine later apologized, but that didn't stop the topic from creating a circus.



On Saturday, the Red Sox turned in another brutal pitching performance, giving up 15 unanswered runs and giving up a nine-run lead to the New York Yankees for a fifth consecutive loss. That prompted a closed-door meeting for several minutes after the game between Valentine, general manager Ben Cherington, CEO Larry Lucchino and owner John Henry.

"I think we've hit bottom," Valentine said during his postgame press conference. "That's what I told (the players) after the game. You have to sometimes hit bottom. If this isn't bottom, then we'll find some new ends to the earth or something."

Cherington later backed Valentine and his performance to this point, but things aren't looking good for the manager or the Red Sox as a club. If they can't start winning consistently, pitching well consistently and staying out of the headlines for off-the-field drama, someone eventually will have to pay the price.

- Matt Kemp's chances at a 50-50 season are currently at risk because of his home-run binge. During spring training, the Los Angeles Dodgers' center fielder set what seemed like an outrageous goal for himself: hit 50 homers and steal 50 bags.

But Kemp is really putting that goal out of reach because he hasn't been on base long enough this season to realistically swipe 50 bases, mainly because he keeps hitting home runs. After his shot in Houston on Saturday, Kemp had compiled seven homers in his previous eight games.

His run through April makes the game look easy and makes others who play it and follow it shake their heads in disbelief. This run might sink his chances to steal 50, but they are certainly helping the Dodgers' postseason hopes and Kemp's second MVP charge.

- The San Francisco Giants and Philadelphia Phillies haven't been so lucky with their star players.

The Giants have locked up two of their stud starting pitchers with long-term contracts while the third has struggled to find himself. Tim Lincecum made three starts going into Sunday and he had yet to pitch beyond six innings. In none of those outings had he given up fewer than five earned runs. His ERA is 10.54.

Cliff Lee has been much better for the Phillies, compiling a 1.96 ERA, an 0.70 WHIP and an 18-to-2 strikeout-to-walk ratio in 23 innings this season, including 10 shutout innings Wednesday against the Giants.

Unfortunately, that is the last start he'll make for probably a few weeks. The Phillies put Lee on the disabled list with a left oblique strain.

Last season, this sort of thing would have dinged the Phillies but not crippled them. This season, with the offense on crutches, any damage to the rotation takes on added significance. The team is already having enough trouble keeping up with the rest of the NL East, and any added obstacles increase its chances of missing the playoffs.

- The strike zone was certainly not an obstacle for Oakland A's veteran starter Bartolo Colon on Wednesday. Colon threw 108 pitches and 82 were for strikes. What is more impressive—and unheard of even from the best of the best starters—is that at one point Colon threw 38 consecutive strikes against the Los Angeles Angels.

Colon didn't pound the strike zone. He pummeled it.

Colon hasn't been good just this past week. In four starts this season, he has gone 3-1 with a 2.63 ERA, an 0.805 WHIP and a 19-to-2 K-to-BB ratio. The A's aren't going anywhere anytime soon, so Colon is on a straight pitch-to-be-seen deal until the trade deadline hits.

- Plenty of baseball contracts, particularly the big-money ones, are laced with incentives for players to earn money for reaching milestones or benchmarks, whether they be for a season or over the life of the contract.

Unfortunately for players, the days of such deals are kaput. MLB and the players association agreed to nix those types of incentives as well as personal-service deals following a player's career.

Current contracts with such agreements, such as the recent deals for Albert Pujols and Ryan Zimmerman, are still valid, but no other contracts like those will be approved by MLB and the MLBPA.

That will affect how teams structure future deals. Part of the appeal of those incentives was that they allowed the player additional money without it counting against the luxury tax since it wasn't considered guaranteed money.

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## **White Sox-Athletics Preview**

By Noey Kupchan / Yahoo Sports

After scuffling the previous few seasons, it appeared as though both Jake Peavy's and Bartolo Colon's best years may be behind them.

The two veteran right-handers, however, have proven plenty formidable early this season.

In a matchup of former Cy Young award winners, Peavy takes the hill opposite Colon as the surging Chicago White Sox and Oakland Athletics open a three-game set Monday night.

After going a combined 14-13 with a 4.77 ERA and battling numerous injuries from 2010-11, Peavy, who won the NL Cy Young with San Diego in 2007, seems to be back on track.

Peavy (2-0, 2.75 ERA) has struck out 21 over his first three starts spanning 19 2-3 innings, surrendering two walks while holding opponents to a .200 average. He was at his best during Wednesday's 8-1 win over Baltimore, giving up a run and four hits while fanning eight over seven innings.

"I know it's been a long grind with the fans and everybody to get me to this point, but I am healthy," he told the team's official website. "I don't know what I can or can't be after what I've gone through, but I can promise you my effort and preparation is going to be there.

"I feel very blessed to hopefully stay this way for the majority of this year and give my team a quality effort every fifth day."

While Colon (3-1, 2.63) entered this season having gone 22-31 with a 4.72 ERA since winning the 2005 AL Cy Young with the Los Angeles Angels, he too has impressed. Colon has walked just two over four starts covering 27 1-3 innings.

The burly 38-year-old compiled eight innings of four-hit ball and threw 82 of his 108 pitches for strikes - including 38 in a row - in Wednesday's 6-0 road win over the Angels.

"It's a phenomenal feat, yet really not surprising out of him," Bob Melvin said of Colon's 38 consecutive strikes. "I mean, I think he could throw a strike with his eyes closed if he had to. That's the way he's been for us."

Colon was excellent in his most recent matchup against Chicago (9-6), surrendering one run and seven hits over eight innings of a New York Yankees' 3-1 victory last April 27.

Colon, though, could have his hands full this time around against a White Sox team that's won five straight on the road. Chicago is coming off a three-game sweep at Seattle, during which it went 13 for 30 (.433) with runners in scoring position.

One day after Philip Humber threw the 21st perfect game in MLB history during a 4-0 win, the White Sox collected a season-high 12 hits in Sunday's 7-4 victory.

"We played pretty good these three games," said Alex Rios, who went 3 for 4 with three RBIs on Sunday. "It's a confidence boost to us. We've been playing good. We just need to keep doing what we're doing."

Oakland (8-9), meanwhile, won 5-1 on Sunday and salvaged the finale of a three-game set with Cleveland behind a strong effort from starter Tyson Ross.

Batting a major-league worst .178 with runners in scoring position, the A's went 3 for 11 in such situations Sunday.

"We'd like to think each and every time we do come up with runners in scoring position, that the numbers are with us, and we're going to get better and better at it," Melvin told the team's official website. "For the most part you can only hit this low so long, and then you feel like you have a couple owed to you."

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## **Humber Pie and Other Tasty Treats**

By Scott Cacciola / The Wall Street Journal

In the afterglow of pitching the 21st perfect game in Major League Baseball history, Chicago White Sox right-hander Philip Humber was reminded Saturday afternoon that he had just joined the likes of Roy Halladay, Sandy Koufax and Cy Young. It didn't really make much sense, not even to Humber, who had eviscerated the Seattle Mariners in a 4-0 victory—27 up, 27 down. For the first time all afternoon, he was at a loss.

"I don't know what Philip Humber is doing on this list," he told reporters.

It had to be one of the most gracious third-person references in the history of sports, and here was one more surprise in a weekend full of them. Yes, sports has its share of problems (Metta World Peace, we're looking at you), but it still has the power to provide some of the most compelling and unpredictable theater this side of a Stan Van Gundy news conference.

Where to begin? How about at the bottom with the Boston Red Sox, who celebrated the 100th anniversary of Fenway Park by solidifying their status as one of the most dreadful teams in baseball. On Saturday, they opened up a 9-0 lead on the Yankees—then allowed 15 unanswered runs in a loss that dropped their record to 4-10. Consider: Since 1919, there have only been 14 bigger comebacks in baseball (or meltdowns, depending on your point of view). Red Sox manager Bobby Valentine, who this time last year was ensconced in comfortable roles as an analyst for ESPN and as the director of public safety for his hometown of Stamford, Conn., has officially incurred the bloodlust of Red Sox Nation, that most temperate of fan bases. "I don't want to be booed," he said.

There was ugliness of a different sort at other venues. When the Lakers' World Peace (the artist formerly known as Ron Artest) threw an elbow Sunday to the head of Oklahoma City's James Harden, fans at Staples Center must have thought they were at the NHL playoffs—which have been wildly entertaining, if marred by violent play. Brendan Shanahan, whose position as the league's director of player safety isn't to be confused with Valentine's old job, apparently had seen enough by the time the Phoenix Coyotes' Raffi Torres leveled the Chicago Blackhawks' Marian Hossa with a hit to the head in the third game of their first-round playoff series. On Saturday, Shanahan suspended Torres for 25 games—and he'll miss what's otherwise been a postseason packed with high-level play and upsets. The playoffs' two top seeds, the New York Rangers and the Vancouver Canucks, are both on the brink of elimination. So are the Boston Bruins, the defending Stanley Cup champions, who staved off elimination and forced a Game 7 by beating Washington 4-3 in overtime Sunday.

The drama was equally gripping overseas. In Saturday's La Liga showdown, Cristiano Ronaldo scored in the 73rd minute to give Real Madrid a 2-1 victory that ended Barcelona's 55-game home winning streak and all but ended its three-year hold on the Spanish league crown. (Just as surprising: Real Madrid held Barcelona's Lionel Messi without a goal.)

We'd also be remiss not to mention Rafael Nadal, who ended a seven-match losing streak to fellow tennis demigod Novak Djokovic by blasting the world's No. 1 in straight sets Sunday for the title at Monte Carlo. It was more

evidence that Rafa, a hardened veteran at age 25, won't be so quick to concede the stage. Of course, Djokovic deserves laurels of his own just for reaching the final while coping with the death of his grandfather last week.

But back in Seattle, the spotlight—for one afternoon, at least—belonged to the 29-year-old Humber, who once upon a time was a hot-shot prospect. After the former No. 3 overall pick in the 2004 draft had uneventful stints with the Mets, Twins and Royals, the White Sox claimed him off waivers before the start of last season.

Nobody could have predicted a slice of baseball history—at least not from him. It's worth noting that Justin Verlander and Stephen Strasburg made their own starts Saturday. Neither pitcher retired 27 batters in a row.

Even the way the game ended was unusual. There was Humber, unloading a 3-2 slider to pinch hitter Brendan Ryan, whose check swing was called for a third strike. Which was fine, except that the ball had skipped away from catcher A.J. Pierzynski. As Ryan argued with home plate umpire Brian Runge, Pierzynski retrieved the ball and fired it to first base for the final out. All things considered, it was perfect.

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## **Flashback #80: Cubs, Sox In Playoffs (2008)**

By Staff Writers / CBS Chicago

### **October 1, 2008 – Cubs, Sox play in playoffs**

Following the 2008 season, for the first time since 1906, both the White Sox and the Cubs were in the playoffs at the same time.

Though both teams won their division in 2008, they did so in completely different fashions.

The Cubs wrapped up their division with nine games to play after a win against the Cardinals, providing enough time to rest their key players and get their starting rotation in order. The White Sox, on the other hand, needed to play a one-game playoff against the Twins to earn a playoff berth.

Regardless of how each team got there, the mere fact that both teams were in the playoffs set the city of Chicago ablaze. Unfortunately for Chicago baseball fans, the celebrations for either team didn't last long.

The Cubs faced the Dodgers in the NLCS, and despite owning home-field advantage, the series was over almost as quickly as it started. The Dodgers swept the Cubs in three games, outscoring them 20-6 over the best-of-five series.

The story wasn't much different for the White Sox, who were eliminated by the eventual American League Champion Tampa Bay Rays, 3-games-to-1.

Since the 2008 season, neither team has reached the playoffs.

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## **White Sox pitcher who threw perfect game to deliver David Letterman's Top Ten List**

By Hal Boedecker / Orlando Sentinel

Chicago White Sox star Philip Humber is a sensational pitcher. He threw a perfect game — the 21st in Major League history — Saturday against Seattle.

How will he do on delivering David Letterman's Top Ten List?

We'll find out on tonight's edition of "Late Show With David Letterman" at 11:35 on CBS (WKMG-Channel 6 locally). Humber will do the honors via satellite from Oakland, where the White Sox play the Athletics Monday.

Letterman also welcomes "How I Met Your Mother" star Jason Segel, author Zach Wahls and musical guest Fun.