



**New York Yankees Clips**  
**Friday, July 20, 2012**



**MLB.com**

## **Rookie deals Yankees a rare loss in Oakland**

By Evan Drellich / MLB.com | 7/20/2012 2:26 AM ET

OAKLAND -- Normalcy was at a premium Thursday night at Oakland Coliseum. The Yankees lost to the A's here for the first time in two years, 4-3, and New York was nearly held to fewer than three runs for the first time since May. This in front of hundreds of barking dogs.

The Yankees couldn't solve A's rookie right-hander A.J. Griffin, who was making just his fifth career start in the first game of four in the series. New York (57-35) and Oakland (48-44) both came in with wins in five of their past six games.

Griffin, 24, held the Yanks scoreless through five innings, and escaped a four-hit Yankees rally in the sixth inning with just two runs scored. Before Thursday, the Yanks had done quite well against pitchers they had never seen before: 26-11 dating to the start of last season. Of course, they had also won nine straight games in this ballpark stretching back to 2010, and 21 of 30 series openers this season.

Freddy Garcia gave up nine hits in 5 2/3 innings, and considering how poor he felt his stuff was, he did well to hold the A's to just four.

"They're playing better," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said of Oakland. "They've won 10 out of their last 12, they had a big win yesterday, they're swinging the bats better, their starting pitching has been good and their bullpen has been good. This is a team over .500, so they're playing pretty good."

The Yanks did manage to hold on to their streak of scoring at least three runs in a game, bringing it to 43 games with a solo homer from Nick Swisher in the ninth off A's closer Ryan Cook. Swisher was the only Yanks hitter to reach in the final three innings against Oakland's bullpen.

With the news before the game that Brett Gardner is likely lost for the season, Swisher is one of many who will be asked to step up. He drove in two of the Yankees' runs Thursday and is hitting .321 in his last 10 games.

"For us, we've just got to pull it all together," said Swisher, who went 2-for-4. "Keep doing what we're doing, keep fighting and just throw our thoughts and prayers out there that it'll be OK."

The Yankees had a chance in the first inning, with singles from leadoff man Derek Jeter and No. 3 hitter Alex Rodriguez. After escaping the jam unscathed, Griffin retired 11 in a row from the second through the fifth.

Oakland outfielder Yoenis Cespedes, whom like Griffin the Yankees had never seen, cracked a two-run homer to left in the first inning. Seth Smith plated two more on a third-inning single off Garcia.

Garcia said the pitch to Cespedes, a curveball down, was where he wanted it. He struck out six and walked two.

"I couldn't find my stuff today," Garcia said. "I was in trouble the whole game, but I was able to keep the game close."

The Yankees broke through in the sixth with four singles and two runs. One of the knocks came from Robinson Cano, extending his career-long hit streak to 22 games. Mark Teixeira plated one run on a deep sac fly to center, and Swisher drove in another with a single.

Griffin had some anxiousness about facing the Bombers, but that had subsided by the sixth.

"First inning, I had some nerves a little bit, but I just had to overcome those," Griffin said. "I felt like I was trying to do too much maybe. Around the third inning I just told myself don't try to throw hard, just spot it up and stay within yourself, do what you do that makes you good. I felt like I turned a page right there for sure."

**ESPN.com**

## **Athletics continue run by finally beating Yankees at home**

*Associated Press*

OAKLAND, Calif. -- [A.J. Griffin](#) glanced into the visiting dugout and saw [Derek Jeter](#), [Alex Rodriguez](#) and [Mark Teixeira](#) among others. Oakland's rookie right-hander felt some nerves all right.

Then, [Yoenis Cespedes](#) hit a two-run homer in the first inning to give him a quick lead and Griffin shut down one of baseball's best lineups for five innings as the Athletics beat the Yankees 4-3 Thursday night to snap a nine-game skid at home to New York.

Griffin already has shown poise in some high-profile moments -- meeting the Bay Area rival Giants in his big league debut last month, hanging tough at two-time AL champion Texas his next time out, facing Boston on July 4 and beating the Twins for his first victory last Friday.

"It's fun. I didn't have a choice of who I pitched against," he said. "We're having a lot of fun right now. I like to hear the music after games."

Through the noise, he turned to [Sean Doolittle](#) and said, "Hey, we just beat the Yankees!"

[Seth Smith](#) added a two-run single in the third for the A's, who won for the 11th time in 13 games to move a season-best four games over .500 at 48-44 -- the first time the club has been there since it was 28-24 on May 31, 2010.

It was a rare dog day of summer for the Yankees, who still owned the best record in baseball (57-35) after a night in which 718 dogs attended the game as the A's attempted to set a Guinness World Record for most canines at a sporting event. They will submit their total to Guinness.

Cespedes' drive was Oakland's 13th homer in the past six games. The A's snapped New York's three-game winning streak and handed the Yankees just their third defeat in 12 games.

Jeter, Rodriguez and [Nick Swisher](#) each had a pair of hits for New York, which swept a three-game series here May 25-27 and owns a 24-10 record at Oakland since 2004.

A's All-Star closer [Ryan Cook](#) surrendered Swisher's one-out homer in the ninth before recovering for his 10th save in 13 chances.

Swisher's 14th homer, against his first team, helped New York extend its franchise-record run of 43 straight games with at least three runs as it opened the four-game series that kicks off a seven-game road trip in the team's final West Coast trek.

The red-hot A's handed [Freddy Garcia](#) (4-3) his first loss since April 28 against Detroit.

"I was fighting every pitch. I was in trouble the whole game," Garcia said. "When I threw the fastball they hit and drove in runs."

Garcia's nine hits allowed in 5 2/3 innings matched his most of the season. He struck out six and walked two.

The right-hander received a call from Mariners ace [Felix Hernandez](#) earlier Thursday in anticipation of their matchup Tuesday at Safeco Field.

"He said, 'I'm going to pitch against my idol,'" Garcia said.

[Coco Crisp](#) had three hits for an Oakland club that improved to 11-2 in July and opened a stretch of 17 straight games against AL East opponents.

Griffin (2-0) allowed two runs on four hits in six innings, struck out four and didn't walk a batter for the first time in his fifth career start.

After allowing [Raul Ibanez](#)'s one-out single in the second, Griffin retired the next 11 Yankees in order before Jeter's leadoff single in the sixth.

Rodriguez singled one out later and [Robinson Cano](#) followed with a base hit to extend his career-high hitting streak to 22 games. He also has reached base safely in 25 consecutive games since June 20.

Griffin received a mound visit from pitching coach Curt Young, then gave up Teixeira's sacrifice fly and an RBI single to Swisher.

"The kid knows how to locate the baseball," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "He changes speeds, works fast and does what he needs to do."

Jeter singled leading off the game but was later out on a strange force at third. After Rodriguez's one-out single, left fielder Cespedes backhanded Cano's liner then dropped the ball, hesitated and then overthrew third as the baserunners held. Griffin, backing up the bag, retrieved the ball and ran to step on third for the force on Jeter. He threw to second, but Rodriguez made it in time even though he had hesitated between first and second after urging Jeter to go. A-Rod at one point threw his arms up as if to ask what had happened.

A's manager Bob Melvin credited Griffin for having the wherewithal to back up the base.

"There was mass confusion on that play," Griffin said.

Yankees special adviser Reggie Jackson rejoined the team and was in uniform after he made comments critical of Rodriguez and other former stars.

### ***Game notes***

Jeter's sixth-inning run scored gave him 1,822, tying him with Eddie Collins for 15th all-time. ... Yankees LF [Brett Gardner](#) will have arthroscopic surgery on his troublesome right elbow next week to remove inflamed tissue, likely ending his season. He was hurt diving for a ball against the Twins on April 17 and hasn't played since. ... Injured New York reliever [Joba Chamberlain](#) (ankle) is scheduled to pitch for a fourth time with the Gulf Coast Yankees on Friday. ... Former A's 3B [Eric Chavez](#) received a mostly warm welcome when he came to the plate for the first time in the second. ... Not counting canines, the game drew 23,382.

# NO A'S FOR YANKS

## Bombers fall to red-hot Oakland

By GEORGE A. KING III

OAKLAND, Calif. — As always happens in baseball, time eventually will dictate the Athletics' fate. Will they continue to be a player in the AL wild-card race? Or fizzle in August, a cruel month that strangles so many upstarts.

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**YANKEES** 3 **Boxscore**  
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Last night at the O.Co Coliseum, the sizzling A's looked every bit of a contender when they handed the Yankees a 4-3 loss in front of 23,382.

How bad of a draw are the A's? Even with the Yankees in town the A's attempted to set a world record by inviting ticket holders to bring their dogs to the game. The marketing gimmick drew 718 dogs.

Nevertheless, the A's have won six of seven and are a MLB-best 11-2 in July. They started the night one-half game behind the Tigers for the second wild-card ticket and stayed there when the Tigers beat the Angels, who are the leader for the first wild-card spot.

Neophyte right-hander A.J. Griffin in his fifth big league start, allowed two runs, seven hits and didn't walk a batter in six innings. The 24-year-old is 2-0.

"He changed speeds and moved the ball around," Raul Ibanez said of Griffin, who retired 11 straight batters in the second through six innings. "He did a good job."

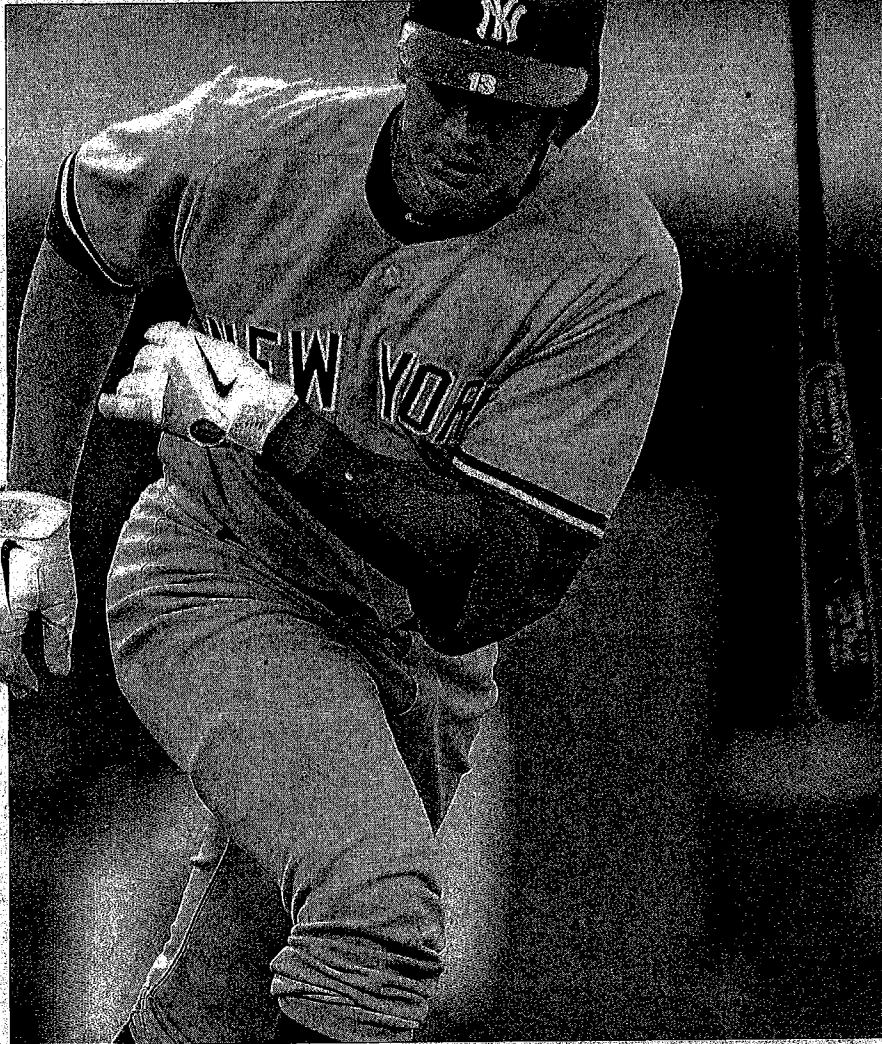
Freddy Garcia wasn't awful but did surrender four runs and nine hits in 5<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings and fell to 4-3.

Yoenis Cespedes hit a two-run homer off Garcia in the first inning on a curveball.

"It was down, a pretty good pitch," Garcia said. "He hit it good. I can't do much about it. That's the way he swings."

As for the overall picture, Garcia said he knew it was going to be a struggle.

"I couldn't find my stuff [tonight]," Garcia said. "I couldn't find any of my pitches. If I can't hit spots



**FRUSTRATION:** Alex Rodriguez flings his bat after grounding out in the third inning of the Yankees' 4-3 loss to the Athletics last night in Oakland, Calif. AP

... I don't throw 95-mph. For most of the game, I couldn't make pitches when I wanted."

Trailing, 4-2, in the ninth, Nick Swisher pulled the Yankees within a run with a one-out homer off All Star closer Ryan Cook. But Ibanez whiffed and Russell Martin grounded out to end it.

The loss coupled with the second-place Orioles beating the Twins, shaved the Yankees' AL East lead to nine lengths. It was just their third loss in a dozen games.

When Derek Jeter opened the sixth with a sharp single to right, he

stopped a string of 11 straight batters retired by Griffin. After Curtis Granderson fanned, Alex Rodriguez and Robinson Cano singled to load the bases for Mark Teixeira.

His fly ball to deep center scored Jeter and sent Rodriguez to third. Swisher's single to center scored Rodriguez and cut the deficit to 4-2.

Cano's single extended his hitting streak to 22 games, and Jeter's run was the 1,822 of his career and tied him with Eddie Collins for 15th place on the all-time list.

Garcia exited with two outs and a

runner on first in the sixth. David Phelps, recalled from Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Wednesday, replaced Garcia and kept it at 4-2 by slipping a called third strike by Jemile Weeks.

Phelps retired all seven batters he faced and fanned four of them.

As for Griffin, manager Joe Girardi said he was impressed.

"He locates the baseball and changes speeds," Girardi said of the pitcher whose fastball was 90 to 91 and curveball dropped into the low 60s. "He throws strikes."

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### ON DECK AT ATHLETICS

**TONIGHT — 10:05**  
RHP Ivan Nova (10-4, 4.18) vs. LHP Tommy Milone (9-6, 3.54)

**TOMORROW — 9:05**  
RHP Phil Hughes (9-7, 4.22) vs. RHP Jarrod Parker (6-4, 3.16)

**SUNDAY — 4:05**  
LHP CC Sabathia (10-3, 3.27) vs. RHP Bartolo Colon (6-8, 3.88)

All games on YES. WCBS (880 AM)

### INSIDE THE MATCHUPS

**YANKEES:** Nova struggled in his first outing after the All-Star break, giving up six runs in six innings in a 10-8 loss to the Angels. But in his last start against the A's in May, Nova pitched well, allowing three runs in seven innings and picked up the win.

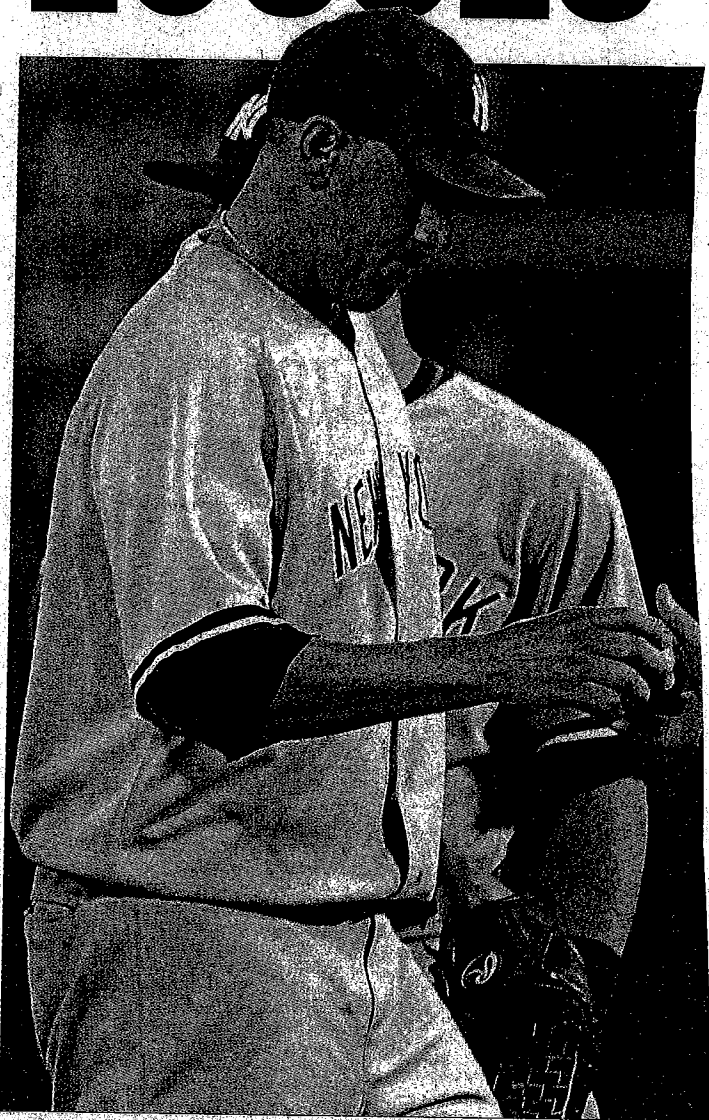
**A'S:** Milone had a solid outing in his last start, holding the Twins to two runs over six innings in Oakland's 9-3 victory. The rookie has won two of his last three road starts and now returns home, where he has a 1.03 ERA.

### STAT SO?

**YANKEES:** Today marks the 38th consecutive day the Yankees will be in sole possession of first place in the AL East. It is their longest stretch in the top spot since a 43-day span in 2010.

**A'S:** With Yoenis Cespedes' homer last night, the A's have hit 12 homers in their past six games and have hit a long ball in 23 of their last 24 contests (35 total).

# LOSSES



Joe Girardi takes ball from Freddy Garcia, who surrenders four runs to Oakland, in



# BUM BOMBERS

## Stumble vs. A's to start trip; Gardner likely done for year

BY MARK FEINSAND  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

OAKLAND — An hour before Thursday's game, the Yankees learned that Brett Gardner's season was likely finished.

Four hours later, so was their two-year winning streak in Oakland.

The Yankees saw their nine-game run at the Coliseum snapped, dropping a 4-3 decision to the A's to begin a seven-game West Coast trip.

Freddy Garcia allowed four runs in the first three innings, although he settled down and pitched into the sixth without further damage. David Phelps retired all seven batters he faced, but the Yankees weren't able to climb all the way back.

"I just didn't think his stuff was as sharp tonight, especially early on," Joe Girardi said of Garcia (4-3). "He did a heck of a job getting out of some jams tonight. He could have given up a lot more than he did. He battled."

"Freddy kept us in the game, we just didn't get him enough runs."

The Bombers cut the lead in half with a pair of runs in the sixth against rookie righthander A.J. Griffin (2-0), who picked up his second career victory with six strong innings.

Oakland's bullpen closed out the win over the final three innings, although Nick Swisher's home run off closer Ryan Cook in the ninth brought the Yankees within a run — and extended their streak of at least three runs scored to 43 straight games.

The last time the Yankees lost a game in Oakland had been

April 22, 2010, the day Dallas Braden famously told Alex Rodriguez to get off his mound.

The loss knocked the Yankees' lead in the AL East back into single digits, although their nine-game advantage over the Orioles remains the biggest in baseball.

Although the loss of Gardner for the year would be a big blow, the Yankees have posted the best record in the majors without his services for most of the season. Gardner hit .321 with a .424 on-base percentage in nine games

record without him for most of the year and we're going to have to do it. I wish he was coming back and I wish we had his speed element, but we're not going to have it. We're going to have to figure out how to do it without him."

Gardner made it as far as minor-league rehab assignments twice, only to be shut down after a game or two with discomfort in the elbow. His latest attempt never got that far, as he took four at-bats Sunday in a simulated game before complaining of pain once again. Gardner's latest MRI results were sent to noted orthopedists Dr. Timothy Kremchek and Dr. James Andrews, who decided surgery was necessary.

With Gardner's season likely finished, the Yankees will continue to monitor the trade market for outfield help while relying on Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones — along with late-inning defense from Dewayne Wise — to fill the void in left field.

Names such as Shane Victorino, Justin Upton and Rick Ankiel continue to float around the rumor mill, but the Yankees don't seem inclined make a big splash before the July 31 trade deadline.

Ibanez and Jones have done an admirable job in Gardner's absence, combining for 14 home runs and 36 RBI as left fielders in addition to the eight homers and 24 RBI they've posted as designated hitters.

"You look at the numbers that Andruw and Raul have amassed together with the home runs and the RBIs, and you're able to use Wise for defense late if you want to; they've done a good job," Girardi said.

A'S	4
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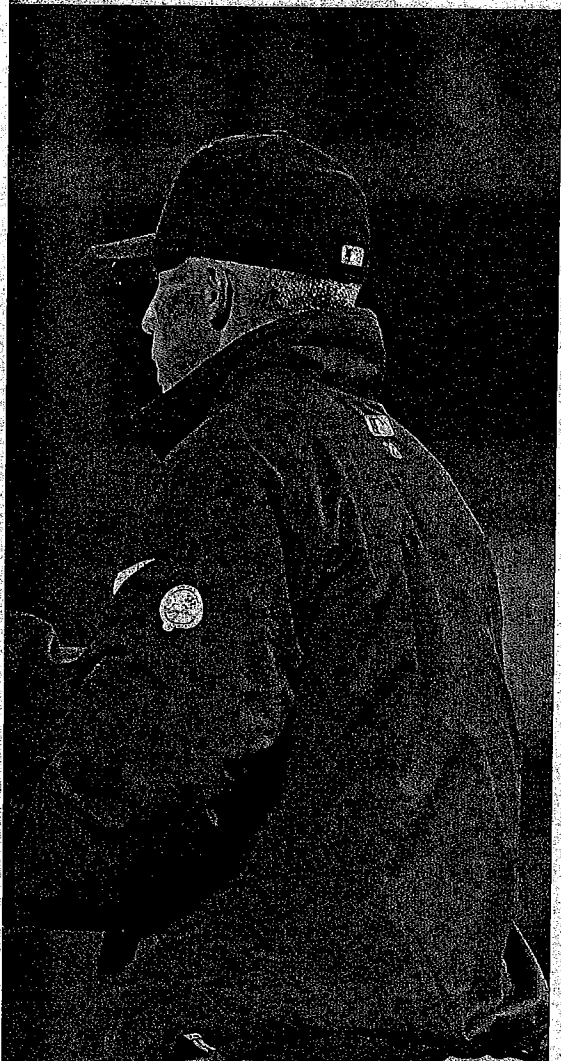
before landing on the disabled list.

The Yankees' left fielder will undergo arthroscopic surgery next week to remove inflamed tissue from his right elbow. Yankees team physician Dr. Chris Ahmad will perform the operation, one that a club spokesman said will "most likely" end his season.

Gardner has been out since mid-April with a right elbow strain, an injury that didn't seem all that serious when he suffered it while making a diving catch on April 17. But after Gardner suffered his third setback, his return this season appeared to be in jeopardy.

"They made it sound like we probably won't have him the rest of this year," Girardi said. "Let's get it cleaned up and get him healthy."

"He's a guy that helps us a lot. We've managed to amass this



sixth in favor of fellow righty David Phelps in relief. Photo by Getty



## Brett Gardner likely out for season; Yanks fall to A's

July 20, 2012 by ERIK BOLAND / erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. -- The reality of the Yankees' current situation is this:

Sometimes, the game result will be the least interesting development of the day.

Such was the case Thursday, a day that dawned with the Yankees holding a 10-game cushion in the AL East.

That lead was "trimmed" to nine games after a 4-3 loss here, a result more significant to the A's in that it kept them in the AL wild-card race and ended a nine-game skid to the Yankees at O.co Coliseum.

Thursday's Yankees headline?

They found out -- though it surprised few -- they'll likely be without lefffielder Brett Gardner the rest of the season.

The Yankees announced moments before the game -- one in which, if you're looking for an in-game headline, [Robinson Cano](#) extended his hitting streak to a career-best 22 games -- that Gardner would undergo arthroscopic surgery next week to "remove inflamed tissue from his right elbow."

Team physician Christopher Ahmad will perform the surgery and the team said the procedure will "most likely conclude" Gardner's season. Gardner has been on the disabled list since April 18 with a right elbow strain and bone bruise.

"Very unfortunate," said Raul Ibañez, who along with [Andruw Jones](#) has gotten the bulk of the playing time in Gardner's absence. "We've kind of been pretty much the whole year so it's not an adjustment for Dru or myself."

The Yankees have been preparing several weeks for what was announced Thursday, stepping up their efforts to secure outfield depth in advance of the trade deadline.

"It's definitely safe to say we're looking" for outfield help, one organization talent evaluator said.

But the Yankees, still with baseball's best record (57-35) after the loss to the A's, don't feel compelled to make a move; not with the production they've gotten from Ibañez, Jones and [Dewayne Wise](#).

And, with what one opposing team scout called a "thin" outfield market, it remains to be seen if anything can be done within reason, i.e. cost.

Among the outfielders the Yankees have looked at of late are the [Phillies' Shane Victorino](#), [Carlos Quentin](#) of the Padres and the A's [Coco Crisp](#), who singled and scored in a two-run third inning that gave the A's (48-44), a baseball-best 11-2 in July, a 4-0 lead against [Freddy Garcia](#).

General manager [Brian Cashman](#) said Sunday he believes the Yankees, as constituted, are a "championship caliber" team, therefore putting him in position of strength before the trade deadline at the end of the month.

Still, there is organizational concern regarding Ibañez, 40, and Jones, 35, and the unexpected amount of time they've spent in the field since Gardner went on the DL.

"Thirty-five is a lot of miles," Jones said with a laugh after Thursday night's game.

Jones said he feels healthy but the day after games "sore," which is not unusual.

"Everybody needs to go out there and just continue doing what we've been doing," he said.

To this point, neither Jones nor Ibañez has shown many concessions to age and, as manager [Joe Girardi](#) said, with the number of lefthanders the Yankees see, he hasn't had to start Ibañez in the field four, five or six straight days .

"This is a rare stretch where we're seeing six out of seven righthanders," [Girardi](#) said. "I'll watch Raul a little bit in that time."

Ibañez, who started in left, went 1-for-4 and is batting .243 with 12 homers and 40 RBIs. Jones, who pinch hit in the seventh and popped out, is hitting .239 with 12 homers and 26 RBIs.

Garcia, solid in his three previous starts since being reinserted in the rotation, wasn't sharp, allowing four runs and nine hits in 52/3 innings. Yoenis Cespedes' 12th homer of the season, a two-run shot in the first, gave Oakland a 4-0 lead.

"I was not able to find any pitch," Garcia said. "I was in trouble all game but I was able to keep the game close."

The Yankees were mostly controlled by 24-year-old righthander A.J. Griffin, making his fifth career start. After Ibañez reached on an infield single with one out in the second,

Griffin retired 11 straight, with Derek Jeter's second hit of the night breaking the streak in the sixth. Mark Teixeira had a sacrifice fly and Nick Swisher had an RBI single in the inning in which the Yankees pulled to within 4-2. Swisher's 14th home run of the season, in the ninth off Ryan Cook, cut the Yankees' deficit to 4-3.

Griffin (2-0, 2.70) allowed those two runs and seven hits in six innings.

"He started locating pretty good," Girardi said. "I talked about it before the game, this kid can locate pitches and that's what he did."

NorthJersey.com

## Yankees start trip with a 4-3 loss in Oakland

FRIDAY, JULY 20, 2012 LAST UPDATED: FRIDAY JULY 20, 2012, 2:28 AM  
BY PETE CALDERA  
STAFF WRITER  
THE RECORD

OAKLAND, Calif. —These aren't the same Oakland Athletics that the Yankees steamrolled the last time they were here.

Slugger Yoenis Cespedes was on the disabled list and right-hander A.J. Griffin was in the minors when the Yankees swept three games at Oakland Coliseum from May 25-27, a series that put Joe Girardi's club on the launching pad.

But on Thursday night, Cespedes crushed a first-inning, two-run homer off Freddy Garcia and Griffin mostly baffled the Yankees with his slow breaking stuff as the A's held on for a 4-3 victory.

The win snapped the Yankees' nine-game winning streak at the cavernous Coliseum.

It was the A's first win against the Yanks here since April 22, 2010 — the day the Yankees turned a triple play for the first time in 42 years. That was also the game that A's pitcher Dallas Braden famously told Alex Rodriguez to get off his mound after A-Rod trespassed while jogging back to the dugout.

Back to 2012.

From May 25 heading into Thursday, the Yankees (57-35) had won 34 of their last 47 games to claim baseball's best record. But Oakland (48-44) has the game's best mark this month.

As an added distinction, the Athletics' 11th win in 13 July games was witnessed Thursday by 23,382 people — and 718 dogs.

The canine count established an "unofficial" Guinness World Record for the most dogs at a sporting event according to the A's.

It was a ruff, er, rough night for Garcia, too.

"I was in trouble the whole game, but I was able to keep the game close," said Garcia, who lasted 5.2 innings and yielded four runs on nine hits and two walks with six strikeouts. "Most of the game, I couldn't make a pitch when I wanted to."

Following a wild pitch that put two runners in scoring position, Seth Smith's delivered a sharp two-run single to center gave Oakland a 4-0 lead in the third - though Cespedes had the more memorable hit.

Garcia (4-3) felt he'd made a decent pitch with a big breaking curveball that Cespedes, last winter's well-coveted Cuban free agent, golfed over the left field wall.

Robinson Cano extended his career-high hitting streak to 22 straight games during the Yanks' two-run sixth as Mark Teixeira contributed a sac fly and Nick Swisher slashed an RBI single.

But Raul Ibanez struck out with the tying runs aboard to end the inning. He was the last batter faced by Griffin (2-0), who yielded seven hits and walked none with four strikeouts in his fifth big-league start.

Nick Swisher said the differential between Griffin's upper-60 mph breaking ball and his 90-91 mph fastball was a huge contrast.

"Next time we face him, I think we'll know a little more about him," said Swisher, whose one-out, ninth-inning solo homer off closer Ryan Cook (10 saves) kept another streak going; the Yankees have scored at least three runs in 43 straight games.

That's five games short of the major league record owned by the 1994 Indians.

Just recalled from Class AAA Empire State, rookie David Phelps delivered 2.1 scoreless innings with four strikeouts in relief of Garcia.

"It's like an audition. You just want to go out and do your best every time out," Phelps said.

Girardi couldn't really fault Garcia's 105-pitch effort either. But the Yanks' day had already started on a downer with news that outfielder Brett Gardner was headed for season-ending arthroscopic elbow surgery.

"I wish he was coming back and I wish we had his speed element," said Girardi, who learned of Gardner's impending surgery after batting practice. "But we're going to have to live without it."

**BRIEFS:** Joba Chamberlain (ankle, elbow) is set to make his fourth minor-league today for the Yanks' Gulf Coast Rookie League affiliate. Girardi isn't looking at a timetable for the right-hander's return to his bullpen yet because Chamberlain has yet to pitch in consecutive games.

"Once we get him doing back to back, I think you have a better idea," Girardi said. "You want to see how he responds the second day...I think that would be the last test. (But) let's let the powers that be make that decision."

Chris Stewart started behind the plate after Russell Martin caught Wednesday's game at the Stadium. Girardi said his decision was influenced by Wednesday's upper 90-degree temperature and the cross-country trip following the game. Martin popped out as a pinch-hitter in the seventh.

Derek Jeter (2-for-4) scored his 1,822nd career run, tying him with Eddie Collins for 15th on the all-time list. ...Curtis Granderson (0-for-4) had his eight-game hitting streak snapped. ...Cano's 22-game hitting streak is the longest active streak in the majors and the longest by a Yankees since Jeter's 25-game streak in 2006.



## Yankees fall to Oakland A's, 4-3, snapping three-game winning streak

Published: Friday, July 20, 2012, 12:50 AM Updated: Friday, July 20, 2012, 12:58 AM



By **Marc Carig/The Star-Ledger**

OAKLAND, Calif. — For the longest time, nothing had gone wrong for the Yankees in Oakland.

They had won nine straight games here, a streak dating back to 2010. And it was here, earlier this year, that the Yankees used a series sweep to right their season. But all good things come to an end, and by the conclusion of a 4-3 loss to the streaking A's Thursday night, the Yankees had come away defeated on two fronts.

The Yankees' three-game winning streak ended after the A's tagged Freddy Garcia for four runs in 5 2/3 innings, including a tape-measure shot by Cuban sensation Yoenis Cespedes. But they also learned that left fielder Brett Gardner would likely miss the rest of the season.

The club announced that Gardner will undergo arthroscopic surgery next week to remove inflamed tissue from his right elbow. A club spokesperson said the surgery will likely sideline Gardner for the rest of the year.

That leaves the Yankees in the same boat as they've been since April, when Gardner first felt pain in his elbow, which the team has termed a strained elbow. They must keep winning without him — a challenge they nearly met once more Thursday night.



Despite Garcia's rough night, the Yankees rallied with two runs in the sixth, on a sacrifice fly by Mark Teixeira and a run-scoring single by Nick Swisher. In the ninth, Swisher brought the Yankees within one, launching a solo shot off All-Star closer Ryan Cook.

But the comeback fell short and the Yankees lost in Oakland for the first time April 2010.

However, the biggest loss of the day may have come before first pitch.

Even before the Yankees announced the news, manager Joe Girardi said the team had already been working on the premise that Gardner would not return.

"That's kind of what you do," Girardi said "Until someone's back, you really can't say we're counting on this guy. It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club. He's had a couple of different setbacks and I think you have to proceed that, if you were to get him, it wouldn't be until at least September."

In just nine games this season, Gardner hit .321 with no homers and three RBI. But his speed gave the Yankees their only base stealing threat in the lineup.

"Those times where it's hard to create runs, he's the one guy that can do a lot of that," Girardi said. "He puts a lot of pressure on the defense. His defense is outstanding out there. But you look at the numbers that those guys have put up, it's just a different game. It's nice sometimes to have that speed."

He is also a Gold Glove caliber defensive player in left field.

Gardner's agent, Joe Bick, said the Yankees outfielder has not ruled out a return.

"He's certainly disappointed it's come to this, but feels it's his best option for keeping open the possibility of getting back on the field at some point in 2012," Bick said.

Girardi said he's content with veterans Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones splitting duties in left field, even though both had been originally signed to share the designated hitter role.

General manager Brian Cashman also said recently that he'd rather risk playing the veterans in the field than paying a high price in money and prospects to upgrade before the trade deadline.

However, the Yankees have nevertheless been evaluating outfield options as the July 31 deadline approaches.

**NBCNewYork.com**

# The New A's Introduce Themselves to the Yankees

**Rookie leads A's to first home win over Yanks since 2010**

By Josh Alper

| Friday, Jul 20, 2012 | Updated 8:21 AM EDT

When the Yankees were last in Oakland, they were putting the finishing touches on an April sweep of the A's.

That was just business as usual. The final game of that sweep was the Yankees' ninth-straight win in Oakland, a streak dating back to 2010 and it came in the middle of Oakland's own nine-game losing streak that left them at 22-30 as May got underway.

It's been a very different story in Oakland since that point. The teams is 26-14 over their last 40 games, including Thursday's 4-3 win over the Yankees that ended that allowed them to reclaim ownership of their home field.

That might be a dubious prize given the quality of the edifice and size of the crowds, but you have to imagine it still feels nice to win a game in your own backyard. It feels even nicer that A.J. Griffin was the guy to do it.

Griffin, one of several unknown Oakland starters fueling this run, allowed two runs over six innings to pick up his second straight victory. Griffin has now allowed four runs in 18 innings against the Yankees, Rangers and Red Sox, and it bodes well for the future when you are able to shut down the three best offensive teams in baseball within the first five starts of your major league career thanks to a fastball-curveball combo that results in a 30 mph change in speed between pitches.

Oakland's part of a massive scrum for the second Wild Card spot in the American League, an unexpected turn of events this season and one that speaks well of the decision to keep more teams in the hunt by adding a playoff berth. With a young pitching staff and Cuban defector Yoenis Cespedes, who hit a two-run homer off Freddy Garcia early on Thursday, Oakland might be able to extend this relevance beyond their current hot streak.

Not that Oakland's relevance matters to the Yankees, despite many happy memories of playoff wins over the team way back when. It's just hard to generate much angst over a loss when you've got a double-digit lead in the division.

Garcia was neither terrible nor great, he was basically your average everyday Freddy Garcia and that's generally going to mean you need more than three runs to win a game. Thanks to Nick Swisher's ninth-inning homer, the Yankees did get three runs and that means their streak has hit 43 games on that front.

The Yankees will be seeing more new faces in the next few nights as the A's trot out Tommy Milone and Jarrod Parker before closing with old friend Bartolo Colon in an attempt to stop that scoring streak. The names might not mean much now, but there's a decent chance that the new A's will leave a couple more strong impressions before sending the Yankees on their merry way.

**CBSLocal.com**

## **Yankees Can't Solve Young A's Starter; Garcia Not Good Enough In 4-3 Loss**

July 20, 2012 6:18 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif. (WFAN/AP)** — The Yankees received word their left fielder will indeed be out for the long haul with what is likely season-ending elbow surgery, then they got shut down by an unfazed rookie whose velocity varied by about 30 mph.

Not quite the kind of start they had hoped for on their final West Coast swing.

Oakland's A.J. Griffin mixed speeds to shut down one of baseball's best lineups for five innings and Yoenis Cespedes hit a two-run homer as the Athletics beat the Yankees 4-3 Thursday night to snap a nine-game skid at home to New York.

"The kid knows how to locate the baseball," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "He changes speeds, works fast and does what he needs to do."

### **LISTEN: Girardi after Yankees' loss**

The Yankees found out before the game that left fielder Brett Gardner will have surgery next week on his elbow, which has sidelined him since he injured it diving for a ball on April 17 against the Twins.

Nick Swisher spoke to his teammate late Thursday.

"That was a big deal. He's the spark plug," Swisher said. "He has the ability to lead the league in stolen bases. It's tough to replace a world-class speed guy. Nobody likes losing a teammate. You call this year a wash and just wish him the best to get healthy."

Griffin already has shown poise in some high-profile moments — meeting the Bay Area rival Giants in his big league debut last month, hanging tough at two-time AL champion Texas his next time out, facing Boston on July 4 and beating the Twins for his first victory last Friday.

"It's fun. I didn't have a choice of who I pitched against," he said. "We're having a lot of fun right now. I like to hear the music after games."

Through the locker room noise, he turned to Sean Doolittle and said, "Hey, we just beat the Yankees!"

Seth Smith added a two-run single in the third for the A's, who won for the 11th time in 13 games to move a season-best four games over .500 at 48-44 — the first time the club has been there since it was 28-24 on May 31, 2010.

It was a rare dog day of summer for the Yankees, who still owned the best record in baseball (57-35) after a night in which 718 dogs attended the game as the A's attempted to set a Guinness World Record for most canines at a sporting event. They will submit their total to Guinness.

Cespedes' drive was Oakland's 13th homer in the last six games. The A's snapped New York's three-game winning streak and handed the Yankees just their third defeat in 12 games.

Swisher, Derek Jeter and Alex Rodriguez each had a pair of hits for New York, which swept a three-game series here from May 25-27 and owns a 24-10 record at Oakland since 2004.

A's All-Star closer Ryan Cook surrendered Swisher's one-out homer in the ninth before recovering for his 10th save in 13 chances.

Swisher's 14th homer, against his first team, helped New York extend its franchise-record run of 43 straight games with at least three runs as it opened the four-game series that kicks off a seven-game road trip in the team's final West Coast trek.

The red-hot A's handed Freddy Garcia (4-3) his first loss since April 28 against Detroit.

"I was fighting every pitch. I was in trouble the whole game," Garcia said. "When I threw the fastball they hit and drove in runs."

Garcia's nine hits allowed in 5 2-3 innings matched his most of the season. He struck out six and walked two.

The right-hander received a call from Mariners ace Felix Hernandez earlier Thursday in anticipation of their matchup Tuesday at Safeco Field.

"He said, 'I'm going to pitch against my idol,'" Garcia said.

Coco Crisp had three hits for an Oakland club that improved to 11-2 in July and opened a stretch with 17 straight against AL East opponents.

Griffin (2-0) allowed two runs on four hits in six innings, struck out four and didn't walk a batter for the first time in his fifth career start.

After allowing Raul Ibanez's one-out single in the second, Griffin retired the next 11 Yankees in order before Jeter's leadoff single in the sixth.

Rodriguez singled one out later and Robinson Cano followed with a base hit to extend his career-high hitting streak to 22 games. He also has reached base safely in 25 consecutive games since June 20.

Griffin received a mound visit from pitching coach Curt Young, then gave up Mark Teixeira's sacrifice fly and an RBI single to Swisher.

Jeter singled leading off the game but was later out on a strange force at third. After Rodriguez's one-out single, left fielder Cespedes backhanded Cano's liner then dropped the ball, hesitated and then overthrew third as the baserunners held. Griffin, backing up the bag, retrieved the ball and ran to step on third for the force on Jeter. He

threw to second, but Rodriguez made it in time even though he had hesitated between first and second after urging Jeter to go. A-Rod at one point threw his arms up as if to ask what had happened.

A's manager Bob Melvin credited Griffin for having the wherewithal to back up the base.

"There was mass confusion on that play," Griffin said.

Yankees special adviser Reggie Jackson rejoined the team and was in uniform after he made comments critical of slugger Alex Rodriguez and other former stars.

**Notes:** Jeter's sixth-inning run scored gave him 1,822, tying him with Eddie Collins for 15th all-time. ... Injured New York reliever Joba Chamberlain (ankle) is scheduled to pitch for a fourth time with the Gulf Coast Yankees on Friday. ... Former A's 3B Eric Chavez received a mostly warm welcome when he came to the plate for the first time in the second. ... Not counting canines, the game drew 23,382.



Friday, July 20, 2012

## Just one of those days for Garcia

OAKLAND, Calif. -- **Freddy Garcia** had one of those games. It was bad, yes, but it could have been worse.

### [Freddy Garcia](#)

#36 RP

New York Yankees

### 2012 STATS

- GM18
- W4
- L3
- BB17
- K42
- ERA5.37

"I couldn't find my stuff today," the Yankees' right-hander said after Thursday night's 4-3 loss to the A's. "I was not able to find any pitch. I was in trouble the whole game, but I was able to keep the game close."

Garcia gave up nine hits, but only four runs, in 5 2/3 innings. Still, it was his worst start out of four since he returned to the rotation three weeks ago.

"It's difficult because I couldn't hit my spots," Garcia said. "I need to find my spots and most of the game I couldn't make a pitch where I wanted to."

Ironically, one of the pitches that hurt Garcia the most was one that was exactly where he wanted it. He threw a curveball to A's cleanup hitter **Yoenis Cespedes** in the first inning. He got the ball down where he intended it, but the free-swinging Cuban defector still hammered it over the left-field fence for a two-run homer.

"It was right off the top of the ground," catcher Chris Stewart said. "He went out and golfed it. I knew the kid was strong, but even then I didn't think he got enough to get out of the park, and he hit it way out. It shows how much power he has."



## Yankees fall short in Oakland

Posted By [Chad Jennings](#) On July 20, 2012 @ 12:38 am In [Misc](#) | [65 Comments](#)

The Yankees streak of three-runs or more continued, but three runs wasn't enough tonight in Oakland. Nick Swisher's ninth-inning home run made it close, but the Yankees lost to the A's 4-3. Freddy Garcia took his first loss since returning to the rotation. Yoenis Cespedes hit a two-run homer in the first inning, Seth Smith had a two-run single in the third and Garcia was charged with four runs through 5.2 innings. The Yankees couldn't solve A's rookie A.J. Griffin who made his fifth big league start, all of which have lasted exactly six innings with three runs or less. He had retired 11 in a row before the Yankees finally got on the board with a two-run sixth.

## Postgame notes: Not exactly a night to remember

Posted By [Chad Jennings](#) On July 20, 2012 @ 1:49 am In [Notes](#) | [49 Comments](#)

Have the Yankees played a more forgettable game this season? If you didn't stay up late to watch this one, you really didn't miss out on much. Freddy Garcia wasn't good, but he wasn't exactly horrible. The Yankees couldn't do much against A.J. Griffin, but their three-runs streak continued. They made it a one-run game in the ninth, but couldn't finish the rally.

"It's difficult because if I can't hit my spot, I'm not throwing 95," Garcia said. "I need to find my spot. Base hit, infield hit, whatever. I think those kinds of games, everything's going wrong. But you know, I was able to keep pitching and pitching. ... I was in trouble the whole game, but I was able to keep the game close."

It was that kind of game. Trouble the whole game. Keeping it close. Scoring a few runs. Giving up a few more. This day was all about Brett Gardner being lost for the season — Joe Girardi said he didn't find out about the surgery until right after batting practice, just a few minutes before the Yankees announced it — and it really felt like the kind of game that we'll all forget within a few weeks.

"Freddy kept us in the game," Girardi said. "We just didn't get him enough runs."

[2]• Griffin's first five big league starts have all been quality starts. "He's got that equalizer with that 65-mph breaking ball," Nick Swisher said. "The next time we face him, I think we'll know a little more about him. He started throwing that breaking ball a lot. ... He's throwing his fastball at 90-91, you're talking about a 21, 22-mph difference. But you've got to give him credit. He did a good job. He didn't walk any guys. He really mixed his pitches in and out, changing speeds. He did a good job."

- It's always kind of amazing that big league hitters have trouble with pitches thrown slower than normal hitting speed. "You can see it when it comes out (of his hand)," Raul Ibanez said. "But there's a big difference in the speed."

- Garcia said it wasn't a bad pitch that Yoenis Cespedes clobbered for a two-run homer in the first inning. "Really good curveball, down," Garcia said. "He got it pretty good. Nothing I can do about it."

- Garcia is 7-8 with a 5.27 ERA in 23 career starts against the A's.

- In relief of Garcia, David Phelps look tremendous. He pitched 2.1 perfect innings with four strikeouts (three on fastballs, one on a curveball). "When I was down there (in the minors) I was really concentrating on throwing pitches that haven't thrown in different counts," Phelps said. "I was throwing changeups and curveballs behind in the count, working my way back into the count that way, and I had a lot of success doing that."

- Girardi on Phelps: "I thought he looked pretty similar (to earlier in the season). His stuff was really sharp. His fastball and curveball were really good tonight. He threw a few sliders. When we sent him down, we wanted to build him up because he wasn't getting a lot of work. He's built up, and I think he can really help us."

[3]• If you're wondering, there was no indication that the Yankees were thinking about swapping Phelps' and Garcia's roles. In fact, Girardi seemed generally happy with the way Garcia pitched tonight. "I just didn't think his stuff was as sharp tonight, especially early on," Girardi said. "He did a heck of a job getting out of some jams tonight. He could have given up a lot more than he did; he battled."

- Girardi was told about Gardner's upcoming surgery soon after batting practice. "They made it sound like we probably won't have him the rest of this year," Girardi said. "Let's get it cleaned up and get him healthy."

- Robinson Cano's hitting streak reached a career-high 22 games. It's the longest active streak in the Majors and the longest by a Yankee since Derek Jeter had a 25-game streak from August 20 to September 16, 2006.

- Jeter tied Eddie Collins for 15th on baseball's all-time runs scored list. He scored the 1,822nd run of his career.

- Swisher is hitting .321 with 13 walks in his past 10 games. His home run in the ninth kept alive the Yankees streak of 43 consecutive games scoring at least three runs.

- Let's give the last word to Swisher, on Gardner's injury: "I just talked to him on the phone. It's a big deal. Gardy was kind of that little spark plug, you know? That guy's got the ability to lead the league in stolen bases. You lose out on a guy like that, but you know, we've been hit with the injury bug pretty hard this year. For us, we've just got to pull it all together. Keep doing what we're doing, keep fighting and just throw our thoughts and prayers out there that it'll be OK. From what I've heard, no one even knows what happened."



Friday, July 20, 2012

## Rapid Reaction: A's 4, Yankees 3

**What it means:** That the Yankees aren't just going to roll through the second half putting up big offensive numbers every day. The team with the best record in the majors was held down by an A's team that has quietly been hot out West. The A's have gotten into contention because of the lowest ERA in the American League.

**An off night: Freddy Garcia** had his worst start since joining the rotation three weeks ago. He gave up four runs in 5 <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings. He gave up a two-run homer to **Yoenis Cespedes** in the first and two runs on three hits and a walk in the third. Shaky as this was, Garcia had been good lately. Including his five relief appearances before he went into the rotation, Garcia had a 2.52 ERA since June 5.

**The Streak:** The Yankees scored at least three runs in 43 straight games, a streak that was extended by **Nick Swisher's** ninth-inning homer. It's the second longest streak in history. The record of 48 consecutive games was set by the 1994 Cleveland Indians.

**The Streak II: Robinson Cano's** sixth-inning single extended his hitting streak to 22 games, a career high. It's the longest active hitting streak in the majors, and the longest for the Yankees since **Derek Jeter** hit in 25 straight in 2006.

**Meet Yoenis Cespedes:** Don't hang all the blame on Garcia for giving up a two-run homer to Cespedes. The pitch was down in the zone, and Cespedes still hammered it over the left-field fence for a two-run homer. Cespedes, who signed a \$36-million deal with the A's after defecting from Cuba, has been hitting everyone lately. He is now 14 for 26 with three homers in his past seven games.

**And A.J. Griffin:** The Yankees came into the game 26-11 over the past two years in games facing a starter who had never faced New York, but they seemed to have some trouble in their first look at **A.J. Griffin**. The right-hander gave up two runs in six innings. A former 13th-round pick, Griffin has a 2.70 ERA in five big league starts.

**A routine 7-1 putout:** With Jeter at second, **Alex Rodriguez** at first and one out in the first, Cano hit a line drive to Cespedes in left. Cespedes had the ball and then dropped it. Jeter had held at second, so the A's had an easy force at third, except Cespedes overthrew the bag and Griffin caught the ball backing up, then stepped on third to retire Jeter. Rodriguez hustled down to

second to avoid the double play.

**Remember that?:** The Yankees had won nine straight games in Oakland. How long has it been since they lost a game at the Coliseum? You may not remember much about the outcome of the game April 22, 2010, but you remember the story of the day. That was the day that **Dallas Braden** first made a name for himself by calling out Rodriguez for jogging over the mound.

**Woof, woof:** It was Dog Day at the Coliseum, as the A's tried to set a world record for most dogs to attend a sporting event. The A's announced that 718 dogs were counted, which was to be submitted for consideration for the Guinness Book of Records.

**What's next:** The Yankees send RHP **Ivan Nova** (10-4, 4.18) to the mound for the second game of the four-game series at 10:05 p.m. on Friday. Rookie LHP **Tommy Milone** (9-6, 3.54) starts for the A's.

07/19/12 10:37 PM ET

## Phelps returns to provide innings out of bullpen

OAKLAND -- David Phelps could be the go-to guy if the Yankees need more than three outs.

The right-hander was back with the big league team Thursday after he was recalled from Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre following Wednesday night's win over the Blue Jays.

"We've seen the last couple of weeks, there were times we would use him," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said of Phelps in key spots. "Some of our guys down there are mix-and-match. Sometimes they've thrown a couple of days in a row where, Cory [Wade] was that guy for the last year for us, that you would go to and I'd say, 'I need five outs from him. I don't want to mix and match today because I've used these guys too much.' Here's a guy that I feel you can do it with."

Phelps, 25, is 1-3 with a 3.05 ERA in 15 games (three starts) this season. Girardi said he wants to use Phelps more frequently than he would a long man, but Phelps could nonetheless pitch two innings. Phelps also serves as rotation insurance.



## Postgame notes: Productive return for Yankees rookie David Phelps

Published: Friday, July 20, 2012, 3:22 AM Updated: Friday, July 20, 2012, 4:08 AM



By **Marc Carig/The Star-Ledger**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- A few notes and quotes from the **Yankees' 4-3 loss to the A's** on Thursday night:

-- Right-hander **Freddy Garcia** fell to 7-8 with a 5.27 ERA in 23 career starts against the A's. He pitched into the sixth inning, allowing four runs on nine hits, before he was pulled with two outs. He called the outing one of those games when "everything's going wrong."

"I was in trouble the whole game," he said. "But I was able to keep the game close."

The four earned runs were the most that Garcia surrendered in one game since April 28 -- his last before being bounced from the starting rotation. Until last night, Garcia had posted a 2.36 ERA in his previous 13 appearances, the last three as a member of the rotation.

Garcia allowed a two-run shot to **Yeonis Cespedes** and a two-run single with the bases loaded in the third inning against **Seth Smith**.

"I just didn't think his stuff was as sharp tonight, especially early on," Yankees manager **Joe Girardi** said. "He did a heck of a job getting out of some jams tonight. He could have given up a lot more than he did. He battled."

-- An injury kept the Yankees from seeing Cespedes during the team's first trip through Oakland. But they got a good look at the Cuban sensation, who golfed a Garcia curveball into the stands in left field.

"He's got some bat speed," Girardi said. "We knew that; we know he has some power. Freddy left a curveball on the inner third and he hit it out."

Garcia said the curveball wasn't a bad pitch, though Cespedes made it look like one.

"Really good curveball, down," Garcia said. "He got it pretty good... Nothing I can do about it."

-- Right-hander **David Phelps** tossed a perfect 2 1/3 innings in relief of Garcia. Upon taking over for Garcia in the sixth, Phelps retired all seven batters he faced while recording four strikeouts.

It was a dominating return to the big leagues for Phelps, who had been sent down just before the All-Star Break, despite pitching well in a spot start against the Rays. The Yankees sent Phelps down so he could build up his arm strength. This way, he could be leaned upon to start, if needed. He was recalled on Wednesday.

While in the minors, Phelps said he worked on throwing his secondary pitches, even when he found himself in counts that favored hitters.

"I was throwing changeups and curveballs behind in the count, working my way back into the count that way," Phelps said. "And I had a lot of success doing that."

-- Before the game, Girardi said he envisioned using Phelps in late-game situations, perhaps even while protecting slim leads. But it's clear that Phelps also presents the Yankees with the choice of sliding into the starting rotation.

"When we sent him down, we wanted to build him up because he wasn't getting a lot of work," Girardi said. "He's built up and I think he can really help us."



-- The Yankees had won nine straight road games against the A's (48-44). It had been the Yankees' longest streak here since the Coliseum opened in 1968. The A's have heated up, improving to a big-league best 11-2 in July, vaulting themselves into the thick of the jumbled race to capture one of two wild cards.

"They're playing better," Girardi said. "They've won 10 out of their last 12, they had a big win yesterday (a walk-off against the Rangers), they're swinging the bats better, their starting pitching has been good and their bullpen has been good."

-- A's right-hander **A.J. Griffin** improved to 2-0 in his first five career starts after allowing just two runs in six innings against the Yankees.

"He's got that equalizer with that 65 mph breaking ball," said Yankees right fielder **Nick Swisher** said. "The next time we face him, I think we'll know a little more about him. He started throwing that breaking ball a lot."

Indeed, Griffin's **curveball averaged just 68 mph** compared to a fastball that sat at 89 mph. The speed difference gave the Yankees problems.

At one point, Griffin retired 11 straight Yankees.

"He really mixed his pitches in and out, changing speeds," said Swisher, who is 9-for-28 (.321) in his last 10 games. "He did a good job."

07/19/12 10:37 PM ET

## **Cano extends hitting streak to 22 games**

By Evan Drellich / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Second baseman Robinson Cano's hit streak reached 22 games at an opportune time Thursday night, in the sixth inning of the Yankees' 4-3 loss to the A's at the Oakland Coliseum.

Eleven Yankees in a row had been retired when the sixth began. Derek Jeter started the frame with a single off A's rookie right-hander A.J. Griffin, and Cano came through with the third single of the inning as the Yankees built their first rally of the night. New York plated two in the frame, cutting Oakland's lead in half to 4-2.

Cano's single came on a liner to left on a 1-0, 89-mph fastball that Griffin threw belt-high to the inside corner.

Cano entered the night hitting .402 (33-for-82) during his career-long hit streak. Just three Yankees have had hit streaks longer than 21 games since Joe DiMaggio's record 56 in 1941: Joe Gordon (29 games, 1942), Derek Jeter (25 games, 2006) and Don Mattingly (24 games, 1986).

Cano reached base on a fielder's choice in his first at-bat, on a line drive to Oakland left fielder Yoenis Cespedes. Cespedes dropped the ball and was ruled to have not made a catch. With runners on first and second to start the play, that set up a forceout at third base, and allowed Cano to reach. Cano finished the night 1-for-4.

07/20/12 2:50 AM ET

## Elbow surgery likely to end Gardner's season

By Evan Drellich / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- Yankees outfielder Brett Gardner won't have a chance at a fourth setback.

New York will most likely carry on the rest of the season without Gardner, who is scheduled for arthroscopic surgery on his right (non-throwing) elbow next week. Gardner's 2012 seemingly ends with just nine games played, the last on April 17.

"They made it sound like we probably won't have him the rest of this year," said manager Joe Girardi after a 4-3 loss to the A's Thursday night. He learned Gardner was headed for surgery before the game. "Let's get it cleaned up and get him healthy."

The Yankees have been the best team in baseball record-wise without Gardner for much of the year, but he's still a missed presence.

"He's a guy that helps us a lot," Girardi said. "We've managed to amass this record without him for most of the year and we're going to have to do it. I wish he was coming back and I wish we had his speed element, but we're not going to have it. We're going to have to figure out how to do it without him."

The procedure is intended to remove inflamed tissue and will be performed by team doctor Christopher Ahmad. A team spokesperson said the day of the surgery was unspecified.

Doctors James Andrews and Timothy Kremcheck reviewed the MRI after Gardner's third setback came at the start of the week. The injury, which Girardi said did not develop into anything new following this most recent exam, stems from a diving catch on April 17 at Yankee Stadium in an 8-3 win over the Twins.

Andruw Jones and Raul Ibanez, who have filled in well in left field, continue to shoulder the load for now. They're veterans -- the former is 35 and the latter 40 -- and a heavy workload could be a concern. Ibanez started in left Thursday against A's righty A.J. Griffin.

"The good thing about that is that there are enough left-handers that we see during the course of a season where these guys aren't playing seven, eight, nine days in a row," Girardi said. "It's three days. This is a rare stretch where we're seeing six out of seven right-handers. I'll watch Raul a little bit in that time."

Ibanez, 1-for-4 on Thursday, said he trained in the offseason not to be a designated hitter, but to play the field. Anything less, he believes, would have been cheating himself.

"If I was told that I was going to DH this winter, and I prepared to DH, that would mean that I'm slacking on my offseason conditioning," said Ibanez, who has 12 home runs. "I think, every offseason, especially the older you get, you don't train the same. You prepare to go out there all the time. I don't understand how to not do something a lot, at least most players don't."

Jones admitted that he's at times sore, but said that was normal in the course of things.

DeWayne Wise is a part of the outfield puzzle, too. Still, the Yankees will miss Gardner, who had a .345 on-base percentage in 2011, with 49 steals.

"I just talked to him on the phone. It's a big deal," Swisher said. "Gardy was kind of that little spark plug, you know? That guy's got the ability to lead the league in stolen bases. You lose out on a guy like that, but you know, we've been hit with the injury bug pretty hard this year. For us, we've just got to pull it all together. Keep doing what we're doing, keep fighting and just throw our thoughts and prayers out there that it'll be OK. From what I've heard, no one even knows what happened."

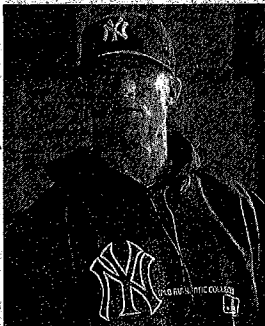
Gardner, who turns 29 in August, is arbitration-eligible for the second time this offseason. He went 9-for-28 (.321) with a .424 on-base percentage, two doubles, five walks and seven strikeouts in his limited action. He was 2-for-2 in steal attempts.

# Gardner, Set for Surgery, Is Probably Out for Year

By DAVID WALDSTEIN

OAKLAND, Calif. — Any slim hope the Yankees may have had that Brett Gardner would return from an elbow injury this season was almost certainly wiped out Thursday, when it was determined that he would have surgery.

The Yankees announced that Gardner would have an arthroscopic procedure next week to re-



BARTON SILVERMAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES  
Brett Gardner was hurt April 17 and has had setbacks since.

move inflamed tissue from his elbow. "It will most likely conclude his season," a spokesman said.

Gardner injured the elbow while diving for a ball in the outfield on April 17. The injury was not expected to linger, and certainly wasn't thought to be season-ending. But every time Gardner tried to make a comeback in a real game, the pain would resurface when he swung a bat against live pitching. The same setback occurred three times, and after a magnetic resonance imaging test

was performed on Tuesday and three specialists consulted, Gardner decided to have surgery.

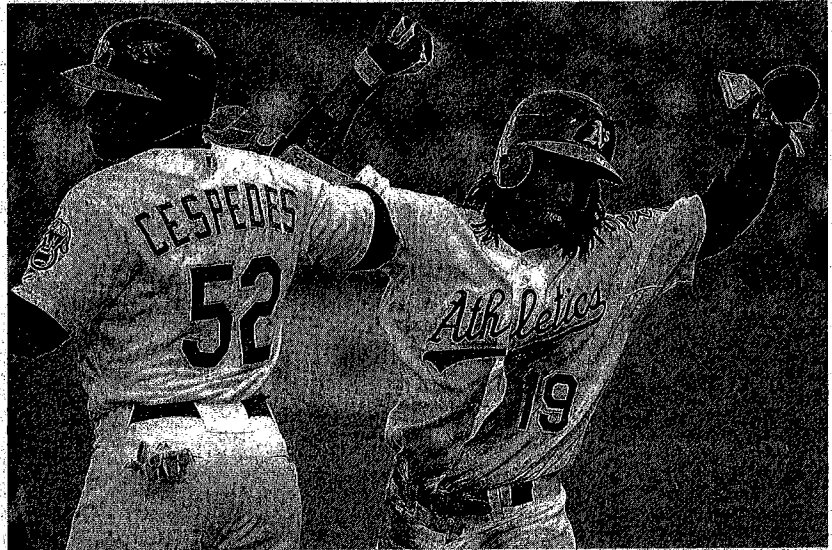
Now the Yankees have less than two weeks to decide whether to make a trade before the July 31 nonwaiver deadline to get outfield help. Without Gardner, the Yankees have lost their fastest player and an occasional candidate to slide over and back up Curtis Granderson in center field. Gardner started 10 games in center in 2011, and this season Granderson has played in 90 games going into Thursday's game against the Athletics, one fewer than Robinson Cano's team lead.

The Yankees have made up for the loss of Gardner's speed with an added dose of power in left field with the platoon of Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones, who have combined to hit 24 home runs and knock in 66 runs. Dewayne Wise has filled in as a defensive replacement in left and has also started two games in center, and moved there as a defensive replacement two additional times.

Most important, the Yankees had the best record in the majors at 57-34 going into Thursday's game.

Still, they may be concerned about the durability of Ibanez, who is 40, and Jones, who is 35, as the season wears on and presumably goes into October. They could pursue Shane Victorino of the Philadelphia Phillies, who may become available, in a trade. Victorino is a center fielder by trade, and could play left and give Granderson a rest, too.

But Yankees Manager Joe Girardi said he was not worried that Ibanez or Jones would wear down because there are enough left-handers in the American



THEARON W. HENDERSON/GETTY IMAGES

The Athletics' Yoenis Cespedes, with Jemile Weeks, after hitting a two-run home run in the first inning Thursday night against the Yankees in Oakland. Game coverage is at nytimes.com.

League to give Ibanez a rest as Jones plays.

"They've done a great job," Girardi said. "You look at the numbers that Andruw and Raul have amassed together, with the home runs and the R.B.I.s, and we've been able to use Wise for defense late if we want to; they've done a good job. We do miss that speed element that Brett brought to the game, but I've been pleased with what these guys have done."

**SUCCESS IN OAKLAND** The last time the Yankees were in the Bay Area to play the Oakland Athletics, they were treading water at 23-21. They were only a few days removed from a streak in which they had lost six out of seven games, and were floundering in fourth place in the American League East. But there is nothing

quite so invigorating for the Yankees as a visit to Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum.

Going into Thursday's game, the Yankees had beaten the Athletics nine straight times at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum dating to July 5, 2010. It was the longest winning streak by any visiting team here since the Coliseum opened in 1968. It was also the longest winning streak by the Yankees at the Athletics' home field since a 10-game streak from 1955-56, when they played in Kansas City.

On May 25, the Yankees, behind Ivan Nova, beat Oakland by 6-3, then won the next two games by a combined score of 11-2.

**JACKSON BACK IN UNIFORM** Reggie Jackson returned to the team and was in uniform before Thursday's game. It was the first time

he had been with the team since he made comments questioning whether Alex Rodriguez deserved to go into the Hall of Fame after he retires. Jackson, who holds the title of special adviser to the team, apologized to numerous people but declined to comment on the controversy. "I'm here to watch the game," he said. "Watch them keep winning."

During batting practice, Jackson chatted on the field with Rickey Henderson, another Hall of Famer who also played for both Oakland and the Yankees and serves a role with the A's that is similar to Jackson's with the Yankees.

"I think Reg has made a number of calls to rectify everything," Joe Girardi said. "I'm O.K. with it. I'm glad he's here and we can move on."

# Gardner is grounded

Elbow surgery likely will finish leftfielder's season

BY ERIK BOLAND  
erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — Brett Gardner's season is all but over.

The Yankees announced before last night's game that the leftfielder, on the disabled list since April 18 with a strained right elbow and bone bruise, would undergo arthroscopic surgery next week to "remove inflamed tissue from his right elbow."

Team physician Christopher Ahmad will perform the surgery and the team said the procedure will "most likely conclude" Gardner's season.

That didn't come as a complete surprise to the Yankees who, for several weeks, had been proceeding as if they'd be without Gardner, stepping up their efforts to secure outfield depth in advance of the trade deadline.

"It's definitely safe to say we're looking for outfield help, one organization talent evaluator said.

But the Yankees, with baseball's best record, don't feel compelled to make a move, not with the production they've gotten from Raul Ibanez, Andrew Jones and Dewayne Wise.

And, with what one opposing team scout called a "thin" outfield market, it remains to be seen if anything can be done within reason and without considerable cost.

Among the outfielders the Yankees have looked at are the Phillies' Shane Victorino, the A's Coco Crisp and Carlos Quentin of the Padres.

General manager Brian Cashman said Sunday he believes the Yankees, as constituted, are a "championship caliber" team, therefore putting him in a position of strength before the non-waiver trade deadline at the end of the month.

Still, there is organizational concern regarding Ibanez, 40, and Jones, 35, and the unexpected amount of time they've spent in the field since Gardner went on the DL.

To this point, neither has

**NOW ONLINE**  
Last night's Yanks-A's game ended too late for this edition.  
Story, photos at [newsday.com/yankees](http://newsday.com/yankees)

**Tonight**  
**Yankees at Oakland**  
TV: YES, 10:05 p.m.  
Radio: WCBS (880)

shown any concessions to age and, as Joe Girardi said, with the number of lefthanders the Yankees see, he hasn't had to start Ibanez in the field four, five or six straight days (Jones typically starts against lefties).

"This is a rare stretch where we're seeing six out of seven righthanders," Girardi said before last night's game against the A's. "I'll watch Raul a little bit in that time."

Ibanez came into last night's start in left hitting .242 with 12 homers and 40 RBIs. Jones entered hitting .241 with 12 homers and 26 RBIs. Both have seen time as designated hitter in addition to playing left.

"They've done a good job," Girardi said. "We do miss that

speed element that Brett brought to the game, but I've been pleased with what these guys have done."

Gardner's rehab comprised mostly frustration, most recently Sunday during a three-inning simulated game in Tampa, Fla.

Gardner's agent, Joe Bick, said Monday his client woke up earlier that morning in pain and would be sent for another MRI Tuesday. Those results were evaluated by Dr. Ahmad, as well as two of the country's top orthopedic surgeons, Dr. James Andrews and Dr. Timothy Kremchek.

Speaking before the announcement of Gardner's surgery, Girardi said "that's kind of what you do," when asked if he was assuming he wouldn't have Gardner at all.

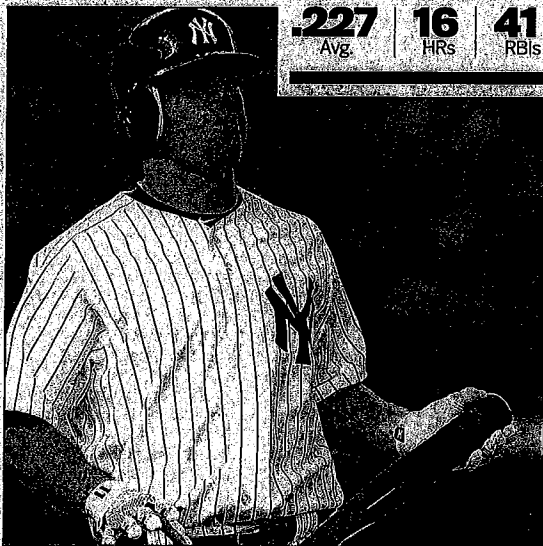
"Until someone's back, you really can't say, 'We're counting on this guy,'" Girardi said. "It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club."

And will miss, it appears, for the rest of 2012.

## Sub package

Cumulative numbers for the Yankees who have replaced Brett Gardner in leftfield:

<b>227</b> Avg.	<b>16</b> HRs	<b>41</b> RBIs
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Brett Gardner will undergo arthroscopic surgery next week.

NY Post 7/20/12

# Gardner to have elbow surgery, likely done for season

By GEORGE A. KING III

OAKLAND, Calif. — Brett Gardner's season consisted of nine games.

The left fielder will have arthroscopic surgery on his right elbow in New York next week to remove inflamed tissue, clean out some spurs and make sure there is nothing more serious going on.

Dr. Chris Ahmad, the Yankees' team physician, will perform the surgery.

The Yankees said the surgery "will likely conclude his season" and with a little more than two months remaining the odds of Gardner making it back are very long.

Now, the Yankees have to decide if the combination of Andruw Jones and Raul Ibanez are good enough to play left field for the rest of the season or should they look to make a deal for an outfielder before the July 31 trade deadline.

The Phillies have talked about dealing outfielder Shane Victorino, who can be a free agent at the end of the season.

\* Dr. Tim Kremchek and Dr. James Andrews talked with Ahmad on Wednesday and yesterday, and surgery was recommended. The trio of doctors didn't believe it was needed in June, but it's possible Gardner further damaged the elbow Sunday in a simulated game. Monday he reported soreness and

underwent another MRI exam Tuesday.

Despite last night's 4-3 loss to the A's, the Yankees still own the best record (57-35) in baseball and the largest lead (nine games) in the game and haven't been hurt by Gardner's absence.

That can be said for other injuries suffered by the Yankees. Mariano Rivera went down in early May with an ACL injury and Rafael Soriano has converted 24 of 25 save chances. CC

Sabathia was shelved for three weeks with a groin problem and the Yankees' AL East lead swelled from 2½ games to nine.

Ibanez and Jones have made losing Gardner easier to swallow. Jones and Ibanez are hitting .241 (90-for-373) with a combined 24 homers and 66 RBIs.

"They have done a good job," manager Joe Girardi said of his left fielders. "Look at the numbers, home runs and RBIs ... but we do miss [Gardner's] speed."

The Journal News  
7/29/12

## Gardner to have surgery on elbow

Outfielder will most likely miss rest of season

By Chad Jennings  
cjennings@lohud.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — Yankees left fielder Brett Gardner will undergo arthroscopic surgery on his strained right elbow, almost certainly ending his season after a series of setbacks from what was originally believed to be a relatively minor injury.

"It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club," manager Joe Gi-

See YANKEES, Page 3B

# YANKEES: Gardner to have arthroscopic surgery on elbow

Continued from Page 1

rardi said.

The procedure will be performed sometime next week by team physician Dr. Christopher Ahmad. In announcing the surgery, the Yankees acknowledged that Gardner's season is "most likely" over. He played in only nine games before straining and bruising his elbow while making a diving, sliding catch on April 17. He was placed on the disabled list two days later and has suffered three setbacks during his rehabilitation, the most recent coming on Monday.

"Until someone's back, you really can't say, 'We're counting on this guy,'" Girardi said. "He's had a couple of different setbacks and I think you have to proceed (assuming), if you were to get him, it wouldn't be until at least September."

With baseball's trade deadline 11 days away, the Yankees have time to make a move for a left fielder, but they seem happy with the production they've gotten without Gardner.

With veterans Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones essentially forming a left-field platoon — while Dewayne Wise and Jayson Nix get occasional playing time at the position — the Yankees have gotten a cumulative .748 OPS from the left field position. That ranks 16th out of 30 major-league clubs, about as perfectly average as possible.

Ibanez and Jones have been especially productive lately, and the Yankees seem content with that production.

"They've done a great job," Girardi said. "You look at the numbers that Andruw and Raul have amassed together with the home runs and the RBIs, and

you're able to use Wise for defense late if you want to. They've done a good job. We do miss that speed element that Brett brought to the game, but I've been pleased with what these guys have done."

Leaving Ibanez and Jones in left field has left the DH spot open for Alex Rodriguez and Derek Jeter to get regular rest, and Girardi feels the platoon has created enough rest for Ibanez and Jones to stay healthy.

All things considered, it's not a terrible situation, and the Yankees have the best record in baseball despite Gardner playing just nine games.

"Those times where it's hard to create runs, he's the one guy that can do a lot of that," Girardi said. "He puts a lot of pressure on the defense. His defense is outstanding out there. But you look at the

numbers that those guys have put up, it's just a different game. It's nice sometimes to have that speed. We're not a club that's going to steal a lot of bases at this point, especially without Gardy and (Eduardo Nunez) is not here. We're a little different club."

**Yankee clippings:** Reggie Jackson returned to the Yankees for the first time since his controversial statements about Alex Rodriguez and Andy Pettitte were published in Sports Illustrated. "I'm here like you, to watch the games," Jackson said. "To watch them keep winning"... Joba Chamberlain is scheduled to make another rehab appearance today. ... Reliever David Phelps rejoined the Yankees from Triple-A. He replaced D.J. Mitchell, who was optioned back to the minors.



NorthJersey.com

## Surgery likely to end season for Yankees' Brett Gardner

THURSDAY JULY 19, 2012, 11:40 PM  
BY PETE CALDERA  
STAFF WRITER  
THE RECORD

OAKLAND, Calif. – Brett Gardner's season never really got off the ground.

And now it's almost certainly over.

The Yankees' speedy outfielder is expected to undergo arthroscopic surgery next week to remove inflamed tissue from his chronically ailing right elbow.

Dr. Chris Ahmad, the club's physician, will perform the procedure that "will most likely conclude his season," Yankees spokesman Jason Zillo said Thursday, just prior to the opener of a four-game series against the Athletics at Oakland Coliseum.

A date for the surgery has yet to be scheduled.

But at least there's clarity about Gardner's status, which might prompt the Yankees to act more aggressively in the market for available outfielders.

With the July 31 non-waiver trade deadline looming, the Yankees have seemed content with their lefty-righty platoon of Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones and the occasional spark from Dewayne Wise, another veteran.

"They've done a great job," said manager Joe Girardi. "You look at the numbers that Andruw and Raul have amassed together with the home runs and the RBIs, and you're able to use Wise for defense late if you want.

"We do miss that speed element that Brett brought to the game, but I've been pleased with what these guys have done."

Entering Thursday night, Ibanez and Jones each had hit 12 home runs and combined for 66 RBI in 368 at-bats.

The lefty-hitting Wise was batting .278 (15-for-54) with three doubles, a triple, one home run and was 7-for-7 in stolen base attempts.

But that won't preclude the Yankees from further examining what it might take to pry Shane Victorino from the Phillies, or perhaps developing an interest in a lesser-profile player such as the Padres' Will Venable.

General manager Brian Cashman had recently been discouraged by the high price tags associated with potential trade targets, though he'd also remarked that the Yankees – owners of baseball's best record – hadn't missed a beat without Gardner.

But up until Thursday's batting practice, Girardi had maintained hope that Gardner might be able to return at some point – though it was a slim hope at best.

"He's had a couple of different setbacks. ... If you were to get him, it wouldn't be until at least September," Girardi said before the announcement that Gardner required surgery.

Reluctantly, the Yankees already had proceeded as though their opening-day left fielder wouldn't be back until 2013.

"That's kind of what you have to do," Girardi said. "Until someone's back, you really can't say we're counting on this guy. It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club."

Gardner averaged 48 stolen bases during the previous two seasons and he provided Gold Glove-caliber defense, though his batting average slipped from .277 in 2010 to .259 last season.

In making a diving catch April 17 against Minnesota at Yankee Stadium, Gardner suffered a right elbow strain. At the time, he was batting .321 in nine games.

Since then, Gardner had three starts and stops to his rehab – the latest coming last week when he experienced soreness in the elbow.

For a second time this season, Gardner's MRI results were sent to

Dr. James Andrews and Reds physician Timothy Kremchek for review.

The last time, Gardner was prescribed a cortisone shot and platelet-rich plasma injections.

Now, Gardner isn't expected to return until next spring.

"[I'll miss] those times where it's hard to create runs [and] he's the one guy that can do a lot of that," Girardi said. "He puts a lot of pressure on the defense, and his defense is outstanding out there."



## Agent: Don't count out Yankees' Brett Gardner for 2012

Published: Thursday, July 19, 2012, 9:40 PM Updated: Thursday, July 19, 2012, 9:54 PM



By **Marc Carig/The Star-Ledger**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- The Yankees have posted the best record in baseball without **Brett Gardner**. And if they are going to maintain it, it will also be without the speedy outfielder, who is scheduled for arthroscopic surgery that will likely end his season.

The Yankees announced the news tonight. The surgery, to be performed next week by team physician **Christopher Ahmad**, will be to remove inflamed tissue from Gardner's right elbow.

Gardner has been out since the middle of April with what the team had been calling a strain. But Gardner's agent, **Joe Bick**, said the Yankees outfielder has not ruled out a return.

"He's certainly disappointed it's come to this, but feels it's his best option for keeping open the possibility of getting back on the field at some point in 2012," Bick said.

Gardner played in just nine games before the injury kept him off the field. He had three attempts to come off the disabled list scratched when pain resurfaced in his elbow.

It's possible that the Yankees will stick with their current platoon of **Raul Ibanez** and **Andruw Jones** in left field. However, with the non-waiver trade deadline coming on July 31, the Yankees could also pursue another outfielder.

**CBSLocal.com**

## **Yankees' Gardner To Have Surgery On Elbow, Likely Done For Season**

July 20, 2012 6:41 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif. (WFAN/AP)** — Yankees left fielder Brett Gardner is scheduled for arthroscopic surgery on his troublesome right elbow next week, likely ending his season.

The Yankees said Thursday night Gardner would have inflamed tissue removed in a procedure that will be performed by team physician Dr. Christopher Ahmad. The date of his surgery wasn't yet known. Gardner had an MRI earlier this week after a third setback in his recovery from an elbow strain that has sidelined him since April 18. The Yankees, in making the announcement about an hour before the first pitch against Oakland at the Coliseum, said he wasn't expected to play again in 2012.

"We're going to get it cleared up and get him back on track so he can help us next year," manager Joe Girardi said after a 4-3 loss to the Athletics on Thursday night.

"He's a guy that helps us a lot," he added. "We've managed to amass this record without him for most of the year and we're going to have to do it. I wish he was coming back and I wish we had his speed element, but we're not going to have it. We're going to have to figure out how to do it without him."

Ahmad had been set to consult on the results with Dr. James Andrews and Reds medical director Dr. Timothy Kremchek. Girardi said before the game he was prepared to go the rest of the year without Gardner.

"That's kind of what you do. Until someone's back, you really can't say, 'We're counting on this guy,'" Girardi said. "It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club. He's had a couple of different setbacks and I think you have to proceed that, if you were to get him, it wouldn't be until at least September."

The left-handed Gardner was injured making a diving catch in a home game against the Minnesota Twins on April 17. He cut short two minor league rehab assignments because of discomfort in his non-throwing arm.

Nick Swisher spoke to Gardner late Thursday.

"That was a big deal. He's the spark plug," Swisher said. "He has the ability to lead the league in stolen bases. It's tough to replace a world class speed guy. Nobody likes losing a teammate. You call this year a wash and just wish him the best to get healthy. We have to pull it together. I think the guys have done a great job. We have guys who are capable."

Gardner batted .321 with three RBIs in nine games in his shortened fifth season with the Yankees. Raul Ibanez is hitting .242 with 12 home runs and 40 RBIs as the regular left fielder for New York playing in Gardner's place.

The 28-year-old Gardner played in 159 games last season and stole an American League-best 49 bases, his second straight year with 40 or more steals.

"Those times where it's hard to create runs, he's the one guy that can do a lot of that," Girardi said. "He puts a lot of pressure on the defense. His defense is outstanding out there. But you look at the numbers that those guys have put up, it's just a different game. It's nice sometimes to have that speed. We're not a club that's going to steal a lot of bases at this point, especially without Gardy and (Eduardo Nunez) Nunez's not here. We're a little different club."

Also, Girardi called the reports on reliever Joba Chamberlain's progress back from an ankle injury "very positive." He is scheduled to throw for a fourth time with the Gulf Coast Yankees on Friday.

Chamberlain tore a ligament and dislocated his ankle jumping on a trampoline with his son in March, but is expected to return this year. The right-hander is also coming off elbow ligament replacement surgery.

Still, Girardi isn't putting a timetable on when he might be ready — not until he works back-to-back days.

"I think once we get him going back to back, I think you'll have a better idea. You want to see how he responds the second day," Girardi said. "Those 30 days are ticking. I don't think (consecutive days) would be the last test. Let's let the powers that be make that decision."

## Pregame notes: Gardner having surgery

Posted By [Chad Jennings](#) On July 19, 2012 @ 9:03 pm In [Notes](#) | [100 Comments](#)

Brett Gardner's latest MRI results are in the hands of doctors, but Joe Girardi said those doctors have yet to meet with Gardner, and there is no new diagnosis or rehab plan to announce. But the Yankees are moving forward as if Gardner is lost for the season.

**UPDATE:** *No sooner had I posted this than the Yankees came through with an update: Gardner will have surgery next week to remove inflamed tissue from his right elbow. The surgery will "most likely" end his season.*

"That's kind of what you do," Girardi said. "Until someone's back, you really can't say, we're counting on this guy. It's unfortunate because I think we've missed some of the things that he brings to our club. He's had a couple of different setbacks and I think you have to proceed that, if you were to get him, it wouldn't be until at least September."

Brian Cashman has been telling anyone who will listen that he's not desperate to make a move. That sense of urgency might change now that Gardner has suffered *another* setback, but the Yankees are getting pretty good production out of Raul Ibanez and Andruw Jones — especially lately — and they have guys like Dewayne Wise, Chris Dickerson and Kosuke Fukudome and Darnell McDonald providing some depth. The Yankees still have the best record in baseball, so all things considered, it's not a terrible situation.

"You look at the numbers that Andruw and Raul have amassed together with the home runs and the RBIs, and you're able to use Wisey for defense late if you want to," Girardi said. "They've done a good job. We do miss that speed element that Brett brought to the game, but I've been pleased with what these guys have done."

A few minor moves...

[2] [3] • The Yankees have traded outfielder Dan Brewer to the Braves for cash. I was told today that it was just a move to give a guy a chance to play elsewhere. Brewer's not a bad player, but he was definitely trapped in this system. He got some time in big league camp a few years ago, but he never really cracked the prospect radar.

- My old friend [Donnie Collins](#) [4] — whose recent Penn State coverage has been as good as anyone's in the country — texted me this morning to say Darnell McDonald has cleared waivers and been assigned to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

- Also in Triple-A: Veteran starting pitcher Nelson Figueroa has been released. That might have been an opt-out situation. He was replaced on the roster by Double-A call-up Danny Farquhar.

- David Phelps has re-joined the big league club. He replaced D.J. Mitchell who was sent back to Triple-A and pitched five scoreless innings [5] today. [6] • Reggie Jackson is back with the Yankees for the first time since his controversial statements were published in Sports Illustrated. "I'm here like you, to watch the games," Jackson said. "To watch them keep winning."

- Girardi on Jackson's return: "I think it's all behind us. I think that's the most important thing. I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

- Joba Chamberlain is scheduled to make another rehab appearance tomorrow. "I think once we get him going back to back I think you'll have a better idea (of when he'll be activated)," Girardi said. "You want to see how he responds the second day. Those 30 days are ticking."

- Girardi said he plans to use Phelps as more than a long reliever. "We've seen the last couple of weeks, there were times we would use him," Girardi said. "Some of our guys down there are mix-and-match. Sometimes they've thrown a couple of days in a row where, Cory (Wade) was that guy (who could step in) for the last year for us, that you would go to and I'd say, 'I need five outs from him. I don't want to mix and match today because I've used these guys too much.' Here's a guy that I feel you can do it with."

- Girardi on why Chris Stewart is starting today: "Him and Freddy have been together and I've liked what they've done. Long flight yesterday. It was hot, hot day yesterday. Just keep both catchers fresh. They're both doing a great job."

- Tonight the Yankees face Oakland starter A.J. Griffin, who they've never seen before. "From what I've seen he's got outstanding command, good command of his fastball," Girardi said. "He's got a very slow curveball that he uses to put hitters away at times. He's a guy that's just going to pitch."

**MLB.com**

## **Yankees face another A's rookie starter**

By Adam Rosenbloom / MLB.com | 7/20/2012 8:36 PM ET

Prior to Thursday night's 4-3 win over the Yankees, the A's hadn't beaten New York in Oakland since April 22, 2010.

The next step? Taking the series.

If April 2010 seems like a long time ago, Oakland hasn't taken -- or even tied -- a series at home against the Bombers since April 2007. Tommy Milone will take the hill for the A's on Friday with hopes of guaranteeing at least a split.

Milone has a 1.32 ERA in his last five starts and is 5-1 with a 1.03 ERA overall at home. He faced the Yankees on May 27, but took the loss despite allowing only two runs in 6 2/3 innings. With a win, he'll become the ninth player in Oakland history to win 10 games in his rookie season.

Manager Bob Melvin has stressed the importance of keeping things simple on the mound, especially against a surging team like the Yankees. Milone is the second of three consecutive rookie starters for the A's for the first three games of their series against New York.

"You go out there and try to just make your pitch and not get too far ahead of things," Melvin said. "It's something that we stress, don't get too far ahead of yourselves."

Ivan Nova will get the nod for the Yankees having lost just once in his last 18 road starts dating back to June 20 of last year. In that span, Nova has gone 13-1 with a 3.15 ERA.

Nova made his first and only career start against the A's in May and earned the win in a 6-3 Yankees victory in Oakland. He allowed three earned runs in seven innings, but scattered six hits, including two home runs.

"I'm still [giving up] home runs, still making mistakes," Nova said following that start. "But you know, I have to forget about that today. We won, and I've got to enjoy the win and keep working hard and try to do better next time."

Since that outing on May 25, Nova has delivered a quality start in all but two of his eight starts.

### **Oakland: Walk-off specialists**

Brandon Hicks' walk-off home run against the Rangers on Wednesday was impressive, but fell right in line with what is becoming a recurring trend in Oakland.



Hicks' blast -- the first home run of his career -- marked Oakland's Major League-leading ninth walk-off win of the season, and the A's fourth in their past seven home games.

"It's pretty impressive to me to see the quality of at-bats we get late in the game and the intensity of the at-bats, and I've told them that before," Melvin said. "Once you've had success and you've had a couple walk-offs -- we've had quite a few here recently -- we get into the game, whether it's the ninth or extra innings or something like that and it's tied, we really feel like based on the results we've had that we can do it again."

Oakland had just three walk-off wins in 2011.

### **Yankees: Surgery for Gardner**

Yankees outfielder Brett Gardner is scheduled to undergo arthroscopic surgery on his right (non-throwing) elbow next week.

Doctors James Andrews and Timothy Kremcheck reviewed the outfielder's MRI after Gardner's third setback came at the start of the week. Gardner has not played since making a diving catch on April 17 at Yankee Stadium in an 8-3 win over the Twins.

The procedure, which will be performed by team doctor Christopher Ahmad, is intended to remove inflamed tissue.

Andruw Jones and Raul Ibanez will continue to fill in for the Yankees in left field, and will likely be mixed and matched based on opposing pitching. The left-handed-hitting Ibanez started in left Thursday against A's righty A.J. Griffin, but the right-handed Jones will likely get the nod on Friday against the lefty Milone.

"That's kind of what you do," Girardi said. "Until someone's back, you really can't say, 'Well, we're counting on this guy.' You know, it's unfortunate, because I think we've missed some of the things he brings to our club."

### **Worth noting**

- Robinson Cano extended his career-high hitting streak to 22 games with a sixth-inning single on Thursday night.

NY Post 7/20/12

# Joba set for 4th rehab outing

By GEORGE A. KING III

## YANKEES NOTES

OAKLAND, Calif. — Joba Chamberlain makes his fourth minor league rehab start tonight and is stepping up in class.

After the first three outings were for the Yankees' low-level Gulf Coast League team, Chamberlain is scheduled to throw two innings for Single-A Tampa against the Pirates in Bradenton, Fla.

Chamberlain is coming back from Tommy John surgery last summer and right ankle surgery this past March and has improved in each outing.

Tuesday, Chamberlain's fastball averaged 95-96 mph and topped at 98. He also was encouraged by the action on the slider.

The Yankees are monitoring what relievers will be

available at the July 31 trade deadline. But if Chamberlain continues to progress at the rate he has through three Gulf Coast League outings the Yankees might have a better arm to add than anyone on the market without having to give anything up.

The Yankees haven't given a timetable for Chamberlain's return to the big leagues, but it likely will not be during the current road trip that ends Wednesday in Seattle.

"He has to go back-to-back," manager Joe Girardi said. "Once he does that we will have a better indication how he responds but that 30-day clock is ticking."

Chamberlain's rehab assignment ends Aug. 8.

➤ Girardi used **Chris Stewart** behind the plate with **Freddy Garcia** on the mound. It was the fourth straight game Stewart was paired with the veteran right-hander.

"Him and Freddy have been together and I kind of like what they have done," Girardi said before the game. "It was a long day [Wednesday] and I want to keep both catchers fresh."

Garcia was 2-0 with a 3.18 ERA in his last three starts throwing to Stewart. But last night he gave up four runs and nine hits in 5<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings in the Yankees' 4-3 loss to the A's.

➤ **CC Sabathia**, who is from nearby Vallejo, has 275 people coming to the Coliseum Sunday to watch him pitch.

➤ **Mark Teixeira** spent the winter attempting to hit balls to left field from the left side in order to hike a career-low .248 average last season.

With his average at .231 on May 25, the switch-hitting Teixeira returned to his roots as a power hitter. Though his .252 average could be higher, Teixeira has 19 homers and a team-leading 64 RBIs after driving in a run last night.

"I think it gets harder as you get older to put up great numbers day in and day out," said Teixeira, who is batting .318 (14-for-44) with six homers and 20 RBIs in the previous 13 games. "So you try to take advantage of the good stretches."

➤ The Yankees had a nine-game winning streak at the O.Co Coliseum snapped.

# **THE WALL STREET JOURNAL**

WSJ.com

July 19, 2012, 7:39 p.m. ET

## **Teixeira Battles a Three-Year Slump**

**MIKE SIELSKI**

The fifth pitch that Blue Jays starter Ricky Romero threw to Mark Teixeira on Wednesday was a changeup on a 2-2 count, knee-high and on the outside corner, an inviting pitch, a pitcher's pitch. Teixeira, a switch-hitter, was batting right-handed when he took that short, violent swing of his, like a tennis pro swatting a backhand return, and drove the pitch over the left-center field wall, some 400 feet away.

The two-run home run, which came in the first inning of a 6-0 Yankees victory, extended a stretch of fine hitting by Teixeira, the team's first baseman. Hampered for much of the season's first half by a bronchial illness, he's batting .341 with six home runs over his last 12 games, a hot streak that has coincided with his return to full health.

Although he still hits for power, Mark Teixeira hasn't hit higher than .256 for a season since 2009.

But even with that recent surge, Teixeira has raised his average to just .255 and his on-base-plus-slugging percentage (OPS) to .848. Those figures are well below his career marks and continue a decline that traces to the start of the 2010 season, Teixeira's second with the Yankees. It is not an exaggeration to say that Teixeira has become a different hitter over the last three years, and a lesser one.

Though he remains among baseball's premier power-hitting first basemen, Teixeira is well aware that his production has fallen off. From 2003, when he began his career with the Texas Rangers, through 2009, he batted .290, recorded a .923 OPS, and averaged 35 home runs every 162 games (the length of an MLB regular season). Since then, he's batting .253 with an .842 OPS and averaging 30 home runs.

"The older I've gotten, it's harder to put up great numbers day in and day out," said Teixeira, 32, who signed an eight-year, \$180-million free-agent contract with the Yankees in January 2009. "I've told you guys before: To me, the season feels like one long slump with just a few hot streaks mixed in."

Teixeira's decline in productivity has coincided with what appears to be an erosion in his discipline as a hitter, according to Fangraphs.com, an online statistical database. Over his first seven years in the majors, Teixeira rarely chased a bad ball; the percentage of pitches he swung at outside the strike zone never exceeded 23.8, and that was in this rookie year. But for three years now, he's been going after these pitches 27% of the time, and this season, he's swinging at just 59.8% of the pitches he sees that are in the strike zone—the lowest mark of his career.

Danny Hall, who coached Teixeira for three years at Georgia Tech University, said that those statistics indicate that Teixeira has been overeager, too aggressive in trying to get on base and drive in runs. Yankee Stadium's right-field wall is just 314 feet from home plate, and Hall said that such a short porch might tempt Teixeira into becoming "a little pull-happy" whenever he's hitting left-handed. That is, Teixeira might be unconsciously trying to jerk pitches to right field, knowing that a run-of-the-mill fly ball in another ballpark might be a home run at Yankee Stadium, and he could be getting himself out of sync.

"When he was at Tech, he had a real mature approach as a hitter," said Hall, who's been the head coach at the school since 1994. "He knew his strike zone really well. Any time anyone gets more pull-oriented, they become more vulnerable."

There might be something to Hall's theory. Teixeira throughout his career has been a better right-handed hitter (.302 batting average, .938 OPS) than he has a left-handed hitter (.270/.884), but the disparity has steepened lately. In none of his last three seasons has Teixeira, when hitting left-handed, batted better than .244, and his OBP hasn't eclipsed .799. Meanwhile, his right-handed OPS over the same period has never dipped below a robust .940.

That home run off Romero was indicative of the patience and balance that Teixeira displays more frequently when batting right-handed, his natural side. "I'm sure there are pitchers who think they've caught him out front," Yankees outfielder Raul Ibanez said, "but really, he's caught you out front." What Ibanez meant was this: At his best, Teixeira has enough confidence (and, at 6-feet-3-inches and 215 pounds, enough strength and hand-eye coordination) to stay back on the ball—to trust himself to recognize a pitch's velocity and flight path and react accordingly. It has been easier for him to do this of late, and not merely because Teixeira traditionally improves his hitting over the course of a season or because the bronchial illness is no longer sending him into uncontrollable coughing fits and leaving him fatigued. The Yankees had won nine of their previous 11 games entering Thursday, and in seven of those 11, a left-handed pitcher had started against them.

"When you have tough stretches, you try to make sure when you do get hot, you stay in it a little bit," Teixeira said. "You're not going to hit a home run every game. You're not going to be able to drive in runs every game. But if you get those opportunities and you're feeling good, you can go a week where you hit a lot of home runs, drive in a lot of runs, and help carry the team for a little while."



Wednesday, July 18, 2012

## Nick Swisher plays pepper with Playbook

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By Thomas Neumann

Nick Swisher is perhaps the most exuberant player in the major leagues.

Brimming with confidence and enthusiasm, the Yankees outfielder is extremely popular among teammates and extremely unpopular among opponents. He's an ebullient spark plug, the kind of player who makes Yankees fans exult and opposing fans curse.

He was the first pick of the Athletics in the "Moneyball" draft of 2002. After four seasons in Oakland and one with the White Sox, he won a World Series with the Yankees in 2009 and appeared in the All-Star Game the following year. Prior to his professional career, Swisher was twice named first team All-Big Ten at Ohio State.

Swisher spoke with ESPN Playbook about Red Sox fans, music and the pressure of playing in New York while making the rounds promoting the Head & Shoulders Mane Man Challenge. Here's what transpired:

**Playbook:** You were a standout football player as a safety at Parkersburg (W.Va.) High. Which colleges were recruiting you?

**Swisher:** I had a whole heap of football letters, but I didn't have too many baseball letters. More than anything, I was a monster Notre Dame fan growing up. To be able to get that Notre Dame recruiting letter was by far one of my favorite things.

**Why did you choose to pursue baseball at Ohio State instead of football after high school?**

I went on my first recruiting trip to West Virginia, right there in my back yard. I wanted to check it out and see what it was all about. ... I went to a game and walked into the locker room after the game. I'd never seen guys that big *in my life*. So we walked in, and I looked at my dad and said, "That baseball thing is looking really good right about now."

**Which team do you dislike more -- the Boston Red Sox or the Michigan Wolverines?**

I think I'm gonna have to say the Michigan Wolverines. More than anything, I'm such a rivalry guy. I love those rivalry games. ... I love to see Ohio State play Michigan. I think that's what it's all about, because in those rivalry settings you can throw records out the window. Because you're going to get the best of both teams every single time you play.

**How are Yankees fans different from Red Sox fans?**

I guess I'm a little biased in saying that I think our fan base is a lot stronger. I get to run out to right field every single day in Yankee Stadium. We've got our Bleacher Creatures. You can feel that love when you take that field, man. It's an amazing thing. No offense to Red Sox fans – they have a great following as well – but that Yankees Universe, in my opinion, is unmatched.

**You were named the third-most hated player in baseball in a recent poll of 100 major leaguers -- behind only A.J. Pierzynski and Alex Rodriguez. What do your peers have against you?**

Everybody is entitled to their own opinion. That's not really something I stress a lot about. I know what I bring to the table, and I'm just going to continue to go out there and keep being myself.

**Who was your favorite athlete growing up and why?**

I'd probably be in a lot of trouble if I didn't say my father [former major league catcher Steve Swisher]. My dad has been my hero and my mentor. He's taught me everything I know about this game. I've been so fortunate to be a second-generation baseball guy and to learn the game at an early age, and I think it helped me get to this level. Just to have him in my life means the world to me.

**You released an album for children last year featuring cover songs of artists such as the Beatles, Rolling Stones and Tom Petty. What are some things you listen to that might surprise people?**

I love music in general. There are so many different genres that I like listening to. I'm a country guy. I'm an R&B guy. I'm a pop guy. I listen to some rap. ... When I had the opportunity to do that album, I jumped on it. Because I'm not just a baseball player. I have so much fun doing so many different things. I feel, as an athlete, you do get put on a pedestal, and you are able to do some amazing things. For me, I'm gonna jump at those opportunities, because I don't wanna be sitting in a rocking chair somewhere when I'm 60 years old wishing I would've done something. I'm gonna have a blast with it, and I'm gonna have fun.

**If you could jam with any musician in the world, who would it be?**

I've done it before, and I think I'd have to say my boy, Kenny Chesney. We have so much fun. He's got such a good sound. We all get together and jam out, and we have a blast.

**You pitched a scoreless inning in your only major league pitching appearance. Have you considered**

**lobbying Joe Girardi for more opportunities?**

There was an opportunity we had this year, and [Dewayne] Wise got that call. We were laughing about it after the game, seeing if there are any other teams in the big leagues that have two outfielders with a combined 0.00 ERA. ... You've gotta remember, I'm used to standing 250-260 feet away from the baseball. The next thing you know, you're standing 60 feet away from it, and man, it's scary. I mean, these are some big, big men who are swinging -- and I mean swinging hard -- and the last thing I want is a line drive going right back up the box.

**Compared to your experience playing for the A's and White Sox, how much more pressure is there playing for the Yankees?**

I think Charles Barkley once said, "Pressure is something you put in your tires." Either way, I enjoy what I do. I love what I do, and every time I take that field, I feel like a little kid. Brad Fischer, who was my bullpen coach when I was in Oakland, early in my career, had one of the greatest quotes I've ever heard. He said, "As long as you put on that uniform every day, you have a lifetime pass to be a kid." It's so true. We're a bunch of grown men playing a kid's game and having a blast doing it. ... I show up to the ballpark and do what I'm capable of doing, and when I go out and give it my best, I can go home and sleep at night.

**Do you think some players aren't able to play to their potential because of the scrutiny in New York? Or is it a myth?**

I don't know. I've heard a couple different things about New York. You thrive in New York or you dive in New York. I think that there's a lot of things we have to handle that not a lot of other teams do. But then again, there's great things that New York has that not a lot of cities have as well. So you've gotta deal with the bad, but the good, in my opinion, definitely outweighs anything bad that can happen here in New York.

**You've already won a World Series. Aren't you worried there won't be anything left to accomplish professionally if you win the Mane Man Challenge?**

If I win the Mane Man Challenge, I might have a ticker-tape parade for myself.



Friday, July 20, 2012

## Ibanez/Jones platoon ready for long haul

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Although everyone else around the Yankees might have anticipated that 40-year-old **Raul Ibanez** would be relegated to designated hitter duties for most of this season, Ibanez never thought that way.

"If it was told I was going to DH this winter and I prepared to DH that would mean I was slacking on my offseason conditioning," Ibanez said after the Yankees' 4-3 loss to the A's on Thursday night.

It's a good thing.

Ibanez is set to be the Yankees' primary left fielder for the duration of the season now that it's official that **Brett Gardner** will undergo surgery that will likely have him out for the rest of the year.

"You prepare to go out and play all the time," Ibanez said. "I don't understand how to not do something all out, as most players don't. You take pride in your preparation over the winter. That's what it's for."

As the left-handed hitting half of the left-field platoon, Ibanez is set to see more playing time than 35-year-old **Andruw Jones**, who starts against lefties.

It would be considered a tough blow for the Yankees to lose Gardner except they haven't had him all year, and still managed to have the best record in baseball.

"Everybody just needs to go out there and just continue to do what we've been doing and see what happens," Jones said.

If there is any concern about the Ibanez/Jones platoon down the stretch it could be that players' would wear down, and be unable to maintain their first-half production. Last September, Jones hit .344 in August, followed by .229 in September. Ibanez was steady most of the season last year, and he actually hit slightly better in the second half.

"The guys have been doing a great job," **Nick Swisher** said. "It's a big loss, but we just have to hope (Gardner) gets healthy and ready for next season."





Friday, July 20, 2012

## First Pitch: Time to go shopping?

With the not-exactly-shocking news that **Brett Gardner** will go under the knife, and likely be out for the season, the time may have come for the Yankees to consider something they had clearly been hoping to avoid: Making a trade for an outfielder at the trade deadline.

Even with last night's 4-3 loss to the Oakland Athletics, things are going so well for the Yankees right now that there is no need to make wholesale changes, or part with a boatload of top prospects.

But it does seem that with Gardner probably unavailable to them this year, they Yankees have one remaining hole to fill on the roster: They need a backup outfielder who can run and play centerfield. After all, **Curtis Granderson** cannot play every day, even if he had until two days ago.

I know, they already have **Dewayne Wise**, who has shown himself to be a more-than-capable backup when he has gotten a chance to play. But if the Yankees truly want to play deep into October this year -- and you know they do -- then an upgrade is probably in order.

Right now, the two best fits seem to be the Phillies' **Shane Victorino** and the Diamondbacks **Justin Upton**. Each has positives and negatives, but either could be made to fit in with the Yankees, depending on what the future plan is.

Victorino is the easy choice, since he has been part of a world championship team, and will be a free agent after this season. He has the experience the Yankees will need this fall without bringing along any long-term commitments.

Upton, of course, is less experienced, but also much younger (24) than the 31-year-old Victorino. But if the Yankees were to swing a deal for him -- and the word is the Pittsburgh Pirates are pushing hard to close a deal with Arizona -- they would inherit the rest of his five-year deal, which has three more seasons to run after this one and would cost them the remaining \$38.5M left on his contract.

And a deal for Upton does raise another interesting possibility -- the prospect that the Yankees could part ways with Granderson, on whom they have a \$13 million option for 2013. That would solve their next big dilemma, namely, whether they can afford to sign both Granderson and **Robinson Cano** to long-term deals when they become free-agents before the 2014 season and come in under Baby Boss Hal Steinbrenner's mandated \$189 million payroll.

Trading for Upton would allow them to retain Cano without a struggle, and provide them with a young,

improving centerfielder at a reasonable cost for the next three years.

What would obtaining either of these two take? Prospects, of course, since there are very few, if any, tradeable pieces on the major-league roster.

Which leads us to today's multi-part **Question of the Day**: First of all, which would you prefer to see the Yankees pursue, Victorino or Upton? And how much would you be willing to give up to get either of them? Would you go so far as to part with a **Manny Banuelos** or a **Dellin Betances**? How about an **Adam Warren** or an **Eduardo Nunez**?

Let us know below. **Brian Cashman** may be reading.

**Up now**: **Jeff Fletcher** has the Rapid Reaction from last night's loss to the A's, as well as a news story on Gardner's elbow surgery.

**Coming later**: Another fine **What2Watch4** on tonight's matchup, **Ivan Nova** (10-4, 4.18) vs. LHP **Tommy Milone**, (9-6, 3.54), first pitch at 10:05 p.m.

As always, thanks for reading.



Thursday, July 19, 2012

## The Series in Yankeemetrics (July 16-18)

### STAT OF SERIES

The Yankees extended their historic streak of scoring at least three runs to 42 games. Only one team in the Live Ball Era has had a longer streak in a single season: the 1994 Cleveland Indians (48).

### RAINY SWEEP

The Yankees finished off a sweep of the Blue Jays with a 6-0 rain-shortened, seven-inning win Wednesday. This was their eighth straight win in the Bronx over Toronto, one game shy of the longest home win streak against the franchise (1979-80).

### *Longest Hit Streak by LHB Yankees Live Ball Era*

1931 Earle Combs	29
1921 Babe Ruth	26
1986 Don Mattingly	24
2012 Robinson Cano	21<<
1923 Wally Pipp	21

>>active streak

**Robinson Cano** extended his hit streak to 21 games, the second-longest in a single season by a regular Yankee second baseman. Only **Joe Gordon**, who had a 29-gamer in 1942, has a longer one.

**Hiroki Kuroda** went the distance, tossing his third career shutout. It was the second straight season a Yankee pitcher has thrown a shutout of less than nine innings. **Phil Hughes** had a six-inning shutout last year in Chicago.

Before that the last Yankee with a shutout of fewer than nine innings was **Sam McDowell** in 1973. He was also the last Yankee to do it at Yankee Stadium.

### **ALL CC DOES IS WIN**

**CC Sabathia** tossed six scoreless innings in his first start back from the DL on Tuesday, helping the Yankees to a 6-1 win over the Blue Jays. He has now reached 10 wins in each of his 12 major-league seasons.

#### *Most 10-Win Seasons Thru Age 31 Season Since 1900*

CC Sabathia	12
Milt Pappas	12
Don Drysdale	12
Walter Johnson	12
Christy Mathewson	12

>>age as June 30 in season

He joins **Tom Seaver**, **Don Sutton**, **Carl Hubbell** and **Eddie Plank** as the only pitchers since 1900 to start their career with 10-win seasons in each of first 12 MLB seasons.

Sabathia threw his curveball a season-high 16 percent of the time (14 of 87 pitches) and the Blue Jays were hitless in five at-bats ending in his hook. All five of the outs with his curve came on pitches in the lower third of the zone or below.

CC also got the Toronto hitters to swing at a season-best 48 percent of his pitches out of the strike zone. All six of his strikeouts came on pitches out of the zone, as the Blue Jays went 1-for-12 in at-bats ending in a pitch to that location.

### **RAUL SO COOL**

Yankees pulled out a 6-3 win against the Blue Jays in the series opener on Monday thanks to a tie-breaking grand slam by **Raul Ibanez** in the eighth inning. With that blast, Ibanez became the second Yankee aged 40 or older to hit a grand slam. **Jose Cruz** also went deep with the bases full at age 40 in 1988.

***2-Out Tie-Breaking Grand Slam  
8th Inning or Later, Yankees Since 1950***

2012 Raul Ibanez Blue Jays

1987 Mike Pagliarulo Twins

1976 Oscar Gamble Brewers

1969 Joe Pepitone Senators

1961 Mickey Mantle Twins

Ibanez also became the third Yankee left fielder since 1950 with a go-ahead grand slam in the eighth inning or later, joining **Tom Tresh** against the Tigers in 1964 and **Shane Spencer** against the Diamondbacks in 2002.

Hughes had another effective outing (7 IP, 2 ER) by battling back after consistently falling behind in the count.

The Blue Jays were 1-for-9 in at-bats that started with a 1-0 count. Since the start of June, opponents are hitting .162 in those situations; before that, they hit .274.

Daily News 7/20/12

# Reggie quietly rejoins

**O**AKLAND — Reggie Jackson was back with the Yankees on Thursday, but Mr. October was in no mood to talk. Jackson, who got himself into trouble with the Bombers after his recent comments in Sports Illustrated, declined to address the fallout when approached by reporters in the Yankees clubhouse before Thursday night's loss to the A's.

"I'm here like you — to watch the games," Jackson said. "To watch them keep winning."

Jackson caused a stir within the

organization when he questioned the legitimacy of Alex Rodriguez's numbers because of the third baseman's use of performance-enhancing drugs in the SI

piece that was published two weeks ago.

Jackson, who is employed by the Yankees as a special adviser, called A-Rod, Joe Girardi and several members of the

organization to apologize, but the Hall of Famer was told to stay away from the team.

Jackson, who lives in Northern California, makes routine appearances with the Yankees when they play in Oakland,



PHOTOGRAPH BY AP/WIDEWORLD

PHOTOGRAPH BY AP/WIDEWORLD

PHOTOGRAPH BY AP/WIDEWORLD

- Daily News 7/20/12

# team, remains mum on flap

so his presence Thursday was not surprising.

"I think it's all behind us," Girardi said. "I think that's the most important thing. I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

## GETTING CLOSER

Joba Chamberlain (elbow and ankle surgeries) is slated to throw Friday for the fourth time since starting his rehab assignment last week.

Chamberlain, who threw a scoreless inning Tuesday for the

Gulf Coast League Yankees in Tampa, has not allowed a hit or a walk in his four innings, striking out six. He has given up one unearned run.

Girardi called the reports "very positive" on Chamberlain, but said he hasn't started to anticipate when he'll have the reliever back.

"I haven't done that because he hasn't went back-to-back yet," Girardi said. "... Once we get him going back-to-back, I think you'll have a better idea."

"You want to see how he responds the second day. Those 30 days are ticking."

## SCRANTON SWAP

David Phelps was back with the Yankees Thursday in Oakland, having been recalled from Triple-A for D.J. Mitchell, who was optioned back to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

"We don't want D.J. to sit too long," Girardi said. "We wanted Phelps to get built up, and he got built up."

Phelps struck out four in 2.1 scoreless innings in relief of Yanks starter Freddy Garcia Thursday night. Mitchell picked up the win for Scranton on Thursday, pitching five innings in relief.

# EXTRA INNINGS

## STAT OF THE DAY

# 43

Scranton games in which the Yanks have scored three or more runs, second only to the 1994 Indians' streaker 48 in the Live Ball era.

## TEST YOUR YANKEES IQ

Robinson Cano extended his hitting streak to 22 games, the fourth longest by a left-handed pitcher.

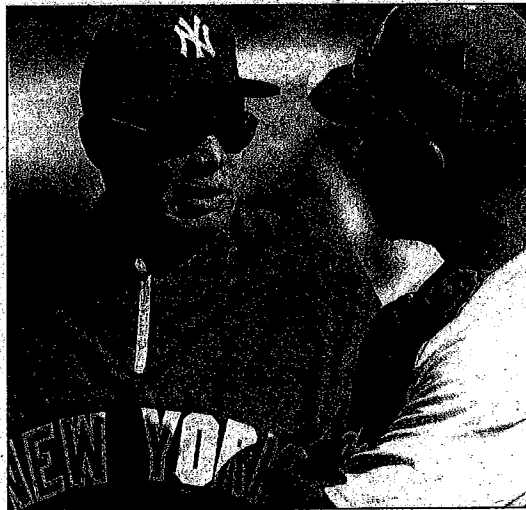
When history says you can't put other three bombers together longer streak?

## NEXT GAME



Tonight, 10 p.m., at Oakland vs. Ivan Nova (10-4, 4.18) vs. Tommy Milone (9-6, 2.54), TV: YES

PHOTO: JEFF MANNING/PHOTOGRAPH BY AP/WIDEWORLD



Reggie Jackson, back in a Yankees uniform yesterday, talks with Rickey Henderson before last night's game.

YANKEES NOTEBOOK

# Reggie dons uniform

BY ERIK BOLAND  
erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — Reggie Jackson had little to say yesterday as he appeared in uniform with the Yankees for the first time since making his controversial comments to Sports Illustrated.

"I'm here like you to watch the game," Jackson told reporters in the clubhouse before the game.

Jackson typically is much more verbose with the media but his comments, appearing in last week's Sports Illustrated, caused a firestorm that resulted in the Yankees telling him to temporarily stay away from the team. Conditions of him rejoining the team in Oakland, where Jackson spent the majority of his Hall of Fame career, likely included him keeping public remarks to a minimum.

In the SI story, Jackson was critical of those who have been linked to PED use — including current Yankees Alex Rodriguez and Andy Pettitte. Jackson also questioned the credentials of several Hall of Famers, including Gary Carter.

Joe Girardi said Jackson's presence was welcome.

"I think it's all behind us," the manager said. "I think that's the most important thing. I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

### ■ Jobs on track

Joba Chamberlain is scheduled for a two-inning stint with High-A Tampa today in Bradenton. Girardi said while the reliever is progressing steadily, he needs to go back-to-back outings before the prospect of a return becomes real.

"You want to see how he responds the second day," Girardi said. "[But] those 30 days [the typical rehab schedule] are ticking."

### ■ Phelps back

The Yankees recalled RHP David Phelps after Wednesday's game and optioned D.J. Mitchell to Triple-A. Girardi said Phelps could be used anywhere from late-inning mix-and-match reliever to long man.

newsday.com NEWSDAY, FRIDAY, JULY 20, 2012





## Reggie Jackson rejoins Yankees while staying mum on controversial comments

Published: Friday, July 20, 2012, 12:59 AM Updated: Friday, July 20, 2012, 1:06 AM



By **Marc Carig/The Star-Ledger**

OAKLAND, Calif. — Reggie Jackson rejoined the Yankees for the first time since his comments in **Sports Illustrated** created a controversy.

"I'm here like you — to watch the game," Jackson said. "To watch them keep winning."

With that, Jackson declined to say anything more about what amounted to a high-profile time out.

The firestorm began when Jackson questioned legitimacy of Rodriguez's records in light of his admitted use of steroids. The outspoken Yankees legend also questioned the credentials of several fellow Hall of Famers, including the late Mets great Gary Carter.

But Jackson's round of apologies have been enough to get him back into the organization's good graces. After the Yankees asked Jackson to stay away from the club for a four-game series in Boston for fear that his presence would cause a distraction, they welcomed him back in Oakland, far from the spotlight.

Jackson held court behind the cage during batting practice. He also chatted up A's Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson.

"I think it's all behind us," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "I think that's the most important thing. I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

— **The Yankees will use right-hander David Phelps** out of the bullpen after he was recalled from Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre on Wednesday. But the right hander will take on an expanded role.

Used previously as a long man, Girardi said Thursday that Phelps could be used as a traditional reliever, with two-inning stints in situations where the Yankees are protecting a late lead.

Phelps, 25, is 1-3 with a 3.05 ERA in 15 appearances with the Yankees. With the Yankees looking for another right-hander to use in late-game situations, Girardi said he wants to give Phelps a shot.

"We've seen the last couple of weeks, there were times we would use him," Girardi said.

Right-hander Cory Wade had filled a similar role before his sudden ineffectiveness led to his demotion to the minor leagues. Right-hander Chad Qualls, another option to potentially fill the role, has also struggled of late.

— **Robinson Cano extended his career-high hitting** streak to 22 games with a single in the sixth inning.

— **Derek Jeter scored No. 1,822 on Mark Teixeira's sixth-inning** sacrifice fly. He tied Eddie Collins for 15th on the all-time list.

— **Joba Chamberlain is scheduled to make a minor-league rehab** appearance Friday. The right-hander is trying to come back from an ankle injury suffered during his rehab from Tommy John Surgery.

— **Despite published reports linking the Yankees to Astros** left-hander Wandy Rodriguez, a person with knowledge of the situation said: "he's not even on their radar."

The person spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of talks.

— **The Yankees assigned outfielder Darnell McDonald** to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre after he cleared waivers.

## Yankees notes: Reggie Jackson returns

FRIDAY, JULY 20, 2012  
THE RECORD

### **Reggie returns**

Back among the Yankees, Reggie Jackson declined any further comment about the firestorm created by his Hall of Fame opinions, which led to a public apology. "I'm here like you, I'm here to watch the game – watch them keep winning," Jackson said as the Yankees headed out for batting practice at the Oakland Coliseum.

A Yankees' special adviser, Jackson – who makes his home in the Bay Area – was in uniform before the Yankees and Athletics opened a four-game series. Jackson apparently has decided to skip this weekend's Cooperstown induction ceremonies after several Hall of Famers were critical of his recent remarks.

Jackson said he didn't view Kirby Puckett, Don Sutton, Phil Niekro and the recently deceased Gary Carter as Hall of Famers and questioned the legitimacy of Alex Rodriguez's batting records due to A-Rod's admission of steroids use as a Texas Ranger.

The Hall of Fame slugger later stated that his comments were "inappropriate and unfair" and that he would "make personal apologies to those within the Hall of Fame community that I offended and to the Yankees organization for any disruption that I caused in the clubhouse."

Jackson was in the Yankees' pre-game clubhouse but mostly out of the sight of reporters. Mr. October later observed batting practice from behind the cage but did not appear to have any direct contact with A-Rod.

"I think it's all behind us ... that's the most important thing," said manager Joe Girardi. "I think Reggie has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm okay with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

### **Phelps promoted**

Right-hander David Phelps was recalled and reliever D.J. Mitchell was optioned to Class AAA Empire State. "We feel we can use him in a lot of situations," Girardi said of Phelps, who was 1-3 with a 3.05 ERA in 15 appearances (three starts) before he was sent down July 5 to build up his arm strength.

-- Pete Caldera

**CBSLocal.com**

## **Reggie Jackson Back With Yankees, Mum On Comments**

July 20, 2012 6:58 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif. (WFAN/AP)** — Reggie Jackson rejoined the Yankees as special adviser Thursday and was in uniform for the opener of a four-game series against the Oakland Athletics after he made critical comments of slugger Alex Rodriguez and other former stars.

Jackson, a Hall of Famer nicknamed Mr. October for his postseason heroics, said last week he made a mistake questioning the credentials of A-Rod and others. The former A's and Yankees star told Sports Illustrated that some of Rodriguez's statistics were tainted by his admitted use of performance-enhancing drugs.

Manager Joe Girardi said Thursday it's time for everyone to move forward, and he is happy to have Jackson back.

"I think it's all behind us. I think that's the most important thing," Girardi said. "I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

Jackson declined to comment as he made his way through the clubhouse before New York took the field at the Coliseum for batting practice.

"No. I'm here, like you, to watch the game — watch them keep winning," Jackson said before heading out to the field, where he chatted up Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson behind the batting cage.

Jackson — who had initially been set to be away indefinitely from the club, perhaps until late in the season — stood perched against the cage as Rodriguez and the rest of the players took their batting practice cuts.

Jackson has spoken to Rodriguez to explain his comments.

Jackson also said he didn't see Gary Carter, Kirby Puckett and others as Hall of Famers. Jackson is skipping this weekend's Hall festivities in Cooperstown.

The 1977 World Series MVP with the Yankees, Jackson didn't travel to Boston for New York's four-game series at Fenway Park right before the All-Star break to avoid becoming a distraction. And he wanted to stay under the radar again Thursday — as much as he could given the circumstances, that is.

Jackson told SI that A-Rod was a friend, while adding: "But I think there are real questions about his numbers. As much as I like him, what he admitted about his usage does cloud some of his records."

Jackson also said there were several players that he didn't view as worthy of Cooperstown.

"I didn't see Kirby Puckett as a Hall of Famer. I didn't see Gary Carter as a Hall of Famer. I didn't see Don Sutton as a Hall of Famer. I didn't see Phil Niekro as a Hall of Famer. As much as I like Jim Rice, I'm not so sure he's a Hall of Famer," Jackson was quoted by SI.

Carter died in February and several former players have criticized the timing of Jackson's remarks. Wally Backman, Carter's teammate on the 1986 championship Mets, called the comments "a disgrace." Fellow Hall of Famer Tom Seaver told reporters in Buffalo that "Reggie sometimes turns the logical part of his brain off."

"God gives us many holes in our body," Bert Blyleven, also singled out by Jackson, told WFAN on Wednesday. "And he just spoke out of the wrong one. That's the way I look at it."

Posted: Thursday July 19, 2012 9:19PM ; Updated: Thursday July 19, 2012 9:19PM

# SI.com

## Reggie Jackson back in uniform with Yankees

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) -- Reggie Jackson rejoined the **New York Yankees** as special adviser Thursday and was in uniform for the opener of a four-game series against the **Oakland Athletics** after he made critical comments of slugger **Alex Rodriguez** and other former stars.

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Carter died in February and several former players have criticized the timing of Jackson's remarks.



Thursday, July 19, 2012

## Reggie Jackson returns to Yankees

By Jeff Fletcher  
Special to ESPNNewYork.com

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Reggie Jackson returned to the [New York Yankees](#) after a short banishment in the wake of his critical comments about [Alex Rodriguez](#), but he didn't have much to say about the situation.

"I'm here like you, to watch the game, to watch them keep winning," Jackson told reporters before Thursday night's game against the [Oakland Athletics](#).

Jackson, a special adviser to the Yankees, was in uniform for the pregame workout.

"I think it's all behind us; that's the most important thing," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "(Jackson) has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here."

Jackson, a Hall of Famer nicknamed Mr. October, said last week he made a mistake questioning Rodriguez and others. The former Athletics and Yankees star told Sports Illustrated that Rodriguez's statistics were tainted by his admitted use of performance-enhancing drugs.



07/19/12 10:37 PM ET

## **Reggie back with Yankees for A's series**

OAKLAND -- Reggie Jackson was more interested in chatting with fellow Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson than the media Thursday at the Oakland Coliseum.

Jackson, a legend with the A's and the Yankees, was back in a New York uniform as a special adviser Thursday and watched batting practice from behind the batting cage. He had been away from the team since the series before the All-Star break.

"I'm here, like you, to watch the game," Jackson told reporters in the Yankees clubhouse before heading to the field. "Watch them keep winning."

Jackson was on leave after critical comments he made to Sports Illustrated about several Hall of Famers and players linked to performance-enhancing drugs, including third baseman Alex Rodriguez.

A week ago Thursday, Jackson released a statement that said he was reaching out to the offended parties and that he looked forward to returning to the team. Yankees manager Joe Girardi said the issue is in the past.

"I think it's all behind us," Girardi said. "I think that's the most important thing. I think Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here. Let's just move on."

## **Worth noting**

- How rehabbing right-hander Joba Chamberlain responds to back-to-back outings is important, but not the final hurdle. Chamberlain is scheduled to throw in a Gulf Coast League game Friday.

"I don't think that would be the last test," manager Joe Girardi said Thursday. "Let's let the powers that be make that decision."

How the pitcher handles three games in four days is important too, Girardi said.

- Outfielder Darnell McDonald has been outrighted to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

**O**AKLAND, Calif. — Reggie don't change. Keep stirring the drink. Reggie Jackson returned to the Yankees last night after being given a timeout by the team.

Though he was back in uniform as special advisor, there clearly is a cold war between Reggie and Alex Rodriguez, but that's the price for having strong opinions.

Remember Reggie, you are the straw that stirs the drink.

Isn't that why they named a candy bar after you? Don't go soft on us now just because you upset a lot of people with your brazen Hall of Fame comments in Sports Illustrated and raised the question that Rodriguez' numbers are in ques-



tion because of Rodriguez's admitted use of performance-enhancing drugs. You are Reggie Jackson for crying out loud. You are not Roy White. Stay Reggie forever.

That's why New York loves you.

Don't ever lose that fire we saw when you charged down those Fenway dugout steps looking for a piece of Billy Martin in the days of the Bronx Zoo. You may not be right, but you are always Reggie, and Reggie is entitled to his opinion even when you ruffle some feathers.

Rodriguez's feathers are ruffled because Jackson told Sports Illustrated: "I think there are real questions about his numbers."

When Rodriguez was asked before the Yankees' 4-3 loss to the A's at O.co Coliseum if he had the chance to talk things out with Jackson, Rodriguez passed on the question and said he would answer it later.

Jackson spent most of the pregame in areas off limits to the media. When he did come

# Stir it up, Reggie

## Controversy aside, Jackson should keep speaking his mind

into the clubhouse, he was asked if he would talk about the situation. He declined.

"No, I'm here like you to watch the game — watch them keep winning." He then moved past reporters. The winning stopped.

Jackson is trying to lay low and not further upset Yankees officials. During batting practice he had a long conversation with fellow Hall of Famer Rickey Henderson and then positioned himself behind the batting cage. Though several Yankees talked with Jackson, including Derek Jeter, Rodriguez kept his distance, staying far away, up the first-base line.

I never would have questioned Gary Carter's Hall of Fame credentials like Jackson did, especially so soon after Carter's tragic passing. Carter was a leader in every way and proved his championship worth with the 1986 Mets. But hey, Reggie, you just may have something against catchers. After all, you took on icon Thurman Munson when you first became a Yankee.

As for Bert Blyleven, it took forever for the baseball writers to deem him worthy of the Hall of Fame so what's the big deal with Reggie questioning his Hall worthiness. Blyleven has a big mouth, too, and I expect him to unload on Reggie over the weekend in Cooperstown, especially regarding his close

friend Carter. Blyleven already said on WFAN's Boomer & Carton show that "God gives us many holes in our body. And [Reggie] just spoke out of the wrong one."

Manager Joe Girardi spent time with Reggie last night and said it's time to move past the controversy.

"I think it's all behind us," he said. "Reg has made a number of calls to try to rectify everything. I'm OK with it. I'm glad he's here."

Jackson also told Sports Illustrated he also didn't see Kirby Puckett, Don Sutton, Phil Niekro or Jim Rice as Hall of Famers, and wisely will skip the Hall of Fame festivities this weekend in Cooperstown.

This is not the first time Jackson ticked off the organization and hopefully it is not the last.

Jackson ended his heartfelt apology last week, saying, "I remain dedicated to the game of baseball."

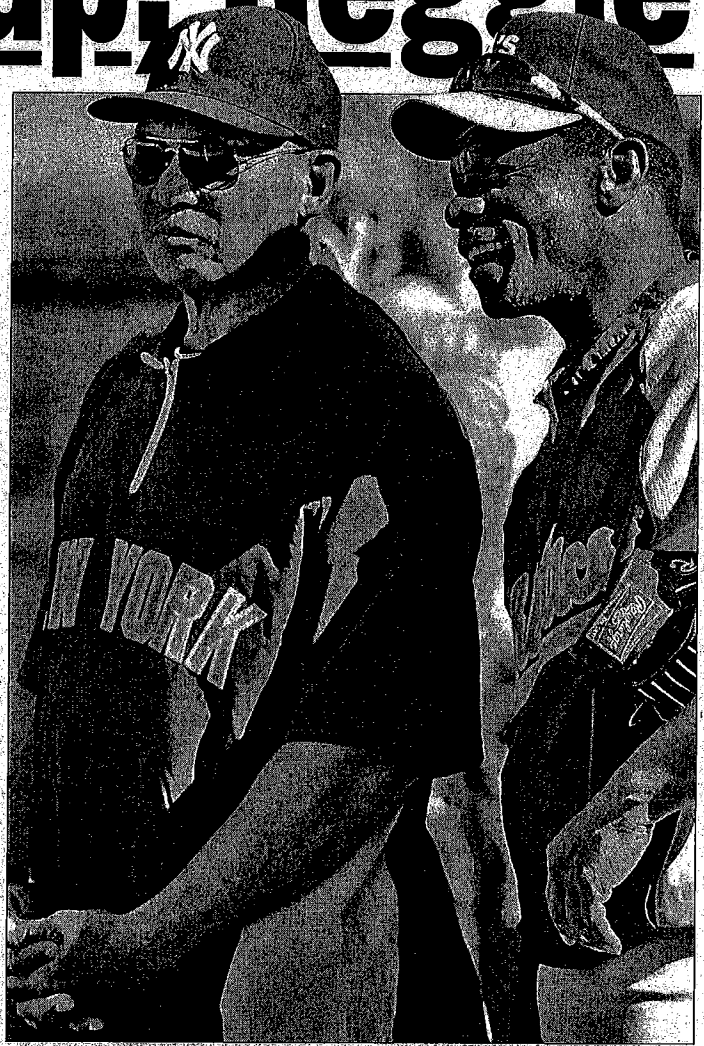
He must remain dedicated to the Art of Being Reggie, too. Henderson agreed.

"Reggie needs to be Reggie. Don't change."

Reginald Martinez Jackson made his major league debut 45 years ago last month. He became Mr. October with the Yankees in Game 6 of the World Series on October 18th, 35 years ago.

Keep stirring the drink, Reggie.

kevin.kernan@nypost.com



**KEEP TALKING MR. OCTOBER:** Reggie Jackson, talking with fellow Hall of Famer Ricky Henderson last night, rejoined the Yankees after being away from the team for making controversial comments about the Hall of Fame credentials of Gary Carter and Alex Rodriguez.

EPA



## **Bradley: Life for Yankees Triple-A players is tough without a home**

Published: Friday, July 20, 2012, 5:00 AM



**By Jeff Bradley/Star-Ledger MLB Columnist**

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Francisco Cervelli has a big knife in his hand, and you could not blame any of his teammates on the Empire State Yankees if they are a bit frightened.

Tensions are running high among the ranks of this Triple-A team. It's 96 degrees outside. Players are packed shoulder to shoulder in a tiny clubhouse, all but bumping into one another as they eat pizza and turkey burgers off Styrofoam plates. And Yankees GM Brian Cashman keeps claiming guys on waivers instead of calling up his own farmhands. If someone like Cervelli snapped, it would not come as a big surprise.

So the repeated sound of a machete-style knife on a cutting board is alarming.

Thankfully, Cervelli is only using the knife to cut apples, oranges and peaches, which he then feeds into a juicer. Still, each time the blade hits the board, heads turn.

"This is what I do every day," says Cervelli, the 26-year-old catcher who spent parts of the last five seasons as the Yankees backup.

Then, as he looks around the clubhouse at the array of food that's scattered about, he says, "Fruit before the game and vegetables after the game. Because I need the right vitamins if I'm going to stay healthy this year."

Things like eating healthy have become part of the challenge for the team that would normally be called the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Yankees. The team that, on this night, is about to play what feels like the 97th away game this season, because, even though the Yankees are the home team on the scoreboard at Frontier Field, they are not really home.

While their stadium, PNC Park, in Moosic, Pa., receives a \$43.4 million renovation, the Triple-A Yankees have become a modern-day barnstorming team. They traverse the International League map, which stretches as far north as Buffalo, as far west as Indianapolis, and as far south as Gwinnett County, Ga.; on buses and airplanes. But they never have a place to unpack their suitcases.

This game in Rochester, against the Chicago White Sox's Triple-A affiliate from Charlotte, is their 54th "home" game of the season. The breakdown of the 72 games they will play as the non-road team is as follows: 37 in Rochester; 10 in Syracuse; eight in Allentown, Pa.; seven in Batavia, N.Y.; six in Buffalo; and four in Pawtucket, R.I.

The Yankees had eyed playing Scranton's 2012 home schedule in Newark, but the Mets — who share exclusive baseball rights in New York and northern New Jersey with the Yankees — blocked the move last September because they claimed the presence of a Yankees affiliate so close to Queens might harm attendance at Citi Field.

That left Scranton scrambling, and forced to resort to this summer's vagabond existence.

"We're making the best of it," says Russell Branyan, a 36-year-old, 14-year big-league veteran with 194 home runs on the back of his baseball card. "But it's definitely a tough situation. These are circumstances beyond our control, so what are you going to do?"

As he talks, Branyan helps prepare a plate of food for his 5-year-old son, Cash, who has made the trip up with his sister, 2-year-old Quinn, from Tennessee to see dad for a few days. That's another thing

the Yankees — there are many family men on a team with an average age of about 30 — are trying to deal with.

"I have a nine-month-old daughter," says 31-year-old shortstop Doug Bernier. "Our first child. She and my wife are home in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. They've been up here once. I went home for the All-Star break. Other than that, it's been talking on Skype. Most of the guys on this team have families, so that's been hard on almost everybody."

From a competitive standpoint, the Yankees have held up pretty well, and have actually managed a significantly better record at "home," where they're 33-23. Must be the pinstriped uniforms, or batting last, because in Rochester they play in front of several hundred scattered fans, dress in a small L-shaped clubhouse, and try to do all their strength and conditioning work in a hallway that's about 15 feet wide.

"It hasn't been fun," says former Mets pitcher John Maine, who has been with the team for about a month as he attempts a comeback after missing all of 2011. "I mean, none of us even have cars. So we eat at the hotel or make sandwiches in the clubhouse."

Maine is one of only a handful of veteran players on the team who has the extra funds to pay for his own hotel room. Most of the others double up, which also gets old in a hurry.

"Baseball's about making adjustments," says Frank Menechino, a former big-league infielder who is one of the coaches. "And they've had to make adjustments. We're in close quarters constantly. Guys get heated. They argue like brothers and sisters in a house. It's just aggravating. But when they get out on the field, they just play the game."

For most teams, the road is a place to bond, but that's when you play half your games away from home. Just as important is the time at home, when players can take time to remember that there's more to life than baseball, when they go home to a wife and kids. Or, at the very least, go home to an apartment, instead of to another restaurant and hotel.

"We've had a sense of humor about it since April," says Menechino. "We've had to or someone would be dead by now. You've got to laugh a lot of things off. That's harder for some guys than others. But we can't change it. The guys who adjust and the guys who deal with the baseball part of it are going to be the guys who will move on and succeed. The guys who let it become an excuse, well, no one cares. I tell them, 'Only your mom cares. Nobody cares except your mom. And your mom's not here. So get on with it.'"

Back in the clubhouse, Cervelli puts the knife down. He walks out of the clubhouse door, sits down on one of the trainer's tables in the hall, and turns on his iPad to watch a Spanish-language soap opera.

When someone tells him it's a far cry from the leather sofas and high-definition, large-screen TVs that fill most big-league clubhouses, he laughs.

"Yes, it is," Cervelli says, raising the cup of juice in a mock toast. "But today, this is home."

# Getting to Know Yankees' 1st Round Draft Choice Ty Hensley - a Fan's Q & A

**YAHOO!** CONTRIBUTOR NETWORK

By Drew Sarver

July 19, 2012

Ty Hensley grew up around baseball, so it was no surprise that it was the career path he chose to follow. His Dad, Mike, was a second round pick of the St. Louis Cardinals in 1988 and played three seasons of minor league ball before an arm injury ended his career.

The senior Hensley went on to coach baseball at Oral Roberts and Kansas State, so Ty was always around the sport. When Kansas State changed coaches in 2003, Mike was out of a job, but not for long. Ty asked his Dad if he could help make him to become a better all-around player. The answer to Ty's query was an easy one.

Fast forward to June, 2012 and Ty's name is called as the 30th overall pick by the New York Yankees in the Major League Baseball amateur draft. It was the first step for the Edmond (OK) Santa Fe High School star in fulfilling a lifelong goal. The next step begins when Ty makes his professional debut on July 30 for the Gulf Coast League Yankees. It will also be his 19th birthday.

I had the chance to ask Ty about draft day, his alternate plans had he not signed with the Yankees and much more.

**Drew Sarver:** Getting a professional contract signed came down to the final hours. Were you ever worried that it wouldn't get done? Were you prepared to attend Ole Miss (University of Mississippi)?

**Ty Hensley:** I was always prepared to go to Ole Miss, down to the day I made my final decision. I loved the people, the town, and the opportunity I would have had there. As far as worrying a deal wouldn't get done, well I would be lying if I said I wasn't concerned when I left Tampa on June 8th.

The surprise of MRI results jolted me down to the core. I had no idea what it meant to me, let alone the Yankees. I had never experienced injury, soreness or pain in my shoulder. I doubted everything I thought I knew about me and my situation. But after a few weeks and seeing other doctors, I realized that my situation was different, but not in necessarily a bad way, and I started to feel better about things. If at the end of the day I had decided Ole Miss was the best option for me, I would not have had any trouble heading to Oxford (MS).

*(An abnormality on an MRI caused Hensley's signing bonus to drop from \$1.6MM to \$1.2MM) <sup>1</sup>*

**DS:** Who called you to tell you that you had been drafted by the Yankees? What was your initial reaction?

**TH**

: My regional crosschecker, Dennis Woody, and (Yankees) Scouting Director Damon Oppenheimer called me a pick before to let me know. I closed my eyes and said to myself, "This is really going to happen, I'm going to be a Yankee". I was humbled and excited at the same time.

**DS:** You've already been quoted as saying you want to get to the Majors as quickly as possible. When do you expect to be throwing off the mound at Yankee Stadium?

**TH:** My goal was always to be there by 21 if I passed on the college experience. I know it's lofty, but those are the types of goals I set for myself. Obviously, how I perform and the needs of the club will factor in that timeline.

**DS:** You got a chance to come up to NY recently. What did you think of the new Yankee Stadium?

**TH:** In a word, "awesome". The facility is first class, but what makes it special is the organization itself. It represents the New York Yankees and it just doesn't get any better than that. We used to have Frank Sinatra night at our house in Manhattan, KS. There wasn't a whole lot do do in that town. Mom would tell us we were in the "Big Apple" for the night, make pasta and play Frank. It hit me hard to hear "New York, New York" played after the Yankees won. It felt right.

**DS:** Who was your baseball idol growing up?

**TH:** Outside of my Dad and his players at Kansas State, Roger Clemens and Chipper Jones.

**DS:** How old were you when it occurred to you that perhaps you had Major League talent? Was your goal always to make it as a pitcher?

**TH:** I knew I was different at about the age of 12, to what degree I wasn't sure, but I always believed that the Major Leagues were in reach. Baseball was our lives, so when I was little I just thought that is what I was going to do, sort of like most kids think they will go to college after high school.

I was and am a ballplayer; it's what I do. As far as pitching goes, no not really. In fact my Dad encouraged me to let my bat play. Up until my senior year I was a switch-hitting catcher as well as a pitcher. In fact, draft websites originally had me ranked as a catcher going into this year.

I probably would have been a top 3 round draft choice as a position player had I kept catching. But once you hit 97 on the mound though, the arm pretty much starts to trump all; add a plus curve and game over- you are a pitcher.



**DS:** Which of your pitches do you have the most confidence in and why?

**TH:** My fastball, because I can throw it for strikes whenever I need to, and my curve because when it's on it is pretty tough to hit. The bottom just drops out.

**DS:** Are you going to miss getting the chance to bat in the minor leagues?

**TH:** Absolutely. It will make for extremely long games. I love being able to impact the game offensively.

**DS:** What do you do to kick back and relax?

**TH:** When I have time outside of workouts, I fish and hit the golf ball a little bit.

**DS:** If you had your choice, what number would you wear in the Majors?

**TH:** If I had my choice, it would be 17. It has always been my Dad's number, my number, and my brother's number. My dad had a gold necklace with 17 on it when he was playing and he gave it to me on my 17th birthday, and I will give it to my brother on his. Ironically, Oklahomans Bobby Murcer wore 1 (and 17) and Mickey Mantle wore 7 for the Yankees. I'm going to take that as a good sign!

**DS:** That's a little ironic for me too, since Mickey Mantle is my all-time favorite ballplayer and Bobby Murcer was my idol growing up! Great job, Ty, and best of luck to you.

**TH:** Thank you and I appreciate it!

# SBNation.com

## World Football Challenge 2012: Yankee Stadium Conversion Underway

Jul 19 7:55p by [Ed Valentine](#)

The process of converting the Yankee Stadium baseball diamond into a soccer pitch has begun. Yankee Stadium will be the site of two matches in the ongoing 2012 World Football Challenge, the first of which will be Sunday, June 22, when European champions [Chelsea](#) will take on Ligue 1 runners-up Paris-Saint Germain at 7 p.m. ET.

A look at the beginning of the creation of the Yankee Stadium pitch is below:



*(Photo courtesy of the New York Yankees)*

The second match at Yankee Stadium will pit Real Madrid against AC Milan on August 8.

You can see the layout of what the pitch will look like and the complete World Football Challenge schedule [in our StoryStream](#).

This version of Yankee Stadium, opened in 2009, has hosted boxing and college football in addition to baseball. These will be the first soccer matches at the Stadium.

The Yankees will be on the West Coast for the next week for a total of seven games against the Oakland Athletics and Seattle Mariners. The first of those games is Thursday night

**ADifferentLeague.com**

## **Chelsea the history-makers in first ever match at Yankee Stadium**

**By Andrew Tuft**

**Friday 20 July 2012**

Chelsea will be part of an historic occasion on Sunday as they compete in the first ever football match to be played at New York's iconic Yankee Stadium, the Daily Mail has reported.

The Champions League winners are due to face French side Paris Saint-Germain, managed by former Chelsea boss Carlo Ancelotti. The friendly is part of the pre-season preparations for Roberto Di Matteo's side, who defeated Seattle Sounders earlier this week and will meet an MLS All-Star team and Italian side Milan before returning home

Although the old Yankee Stadium hosted football matches on a regular basis - particularly in the era of Pele and the original New York Cosmos - the new Yankee Stadium has never been used as a football arena. Since the New York Yankees moved to their new home in 2009 it has only ever seen baseball played on the infield, which now has to be torn up, including the pitcher's mound, and replaced with turf suitable for football.

[\[Print without images\]](#)



**ESPN.com:** Sounds - ESPN  
Playbook



Thursday, July 19, 2012

## Stadium Songs: New York Yankees

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By Andrew Pentis  
ESPN The Magazine

Every day of baseball season, in seventh innings around the country, fans stand and sing lyrics that were written way back in 1908. The sheer shelf life of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" proves that America's first pastime has long been intertwined with its tunes. But for a more unique connection between city and club, teams rely on their own traditions -- some newer, some older.

We decided to find out the one song that each team relies on to get fans on their feet.

We're featuring the music from one team per day here on ESPN Playbook. To see past entries, [click here](#).

### New York Yankees

**Song:** "New York, New York" by Frank Sinatra

**Tradition:** Played after wins -- and losses -- in the Bronx



### Fun facts:

- Of his taste in music, former owner George Steinbrenner once said, "Anything by Frank Sinatra."
- Sinatra's version is a cover of Liza Minelli's song from the 1970 film by the same name. In 1980, the club began playing Sinatra after wins and Minelli after losses. Bothered by this, Minelli demanded a change, and in response the team dropped her version entirely.

### Bonus music:

- "God Bless America" has become a staple of the Yankees game experience since Sept. 11, 2001.
- The grounds crew rocks out to the YMCA while manicuring the infield mid-game.
- The first seconds of 2 Unlimited's "Workaholic" is played after every run scored by the team

## Robert W. Creamer, 90, Sports Biographer

By DOUGLAS MARTIN

Robert W. Creamer, who as a boy saw Babe Ruth belt home runs and went on to become a self-described "troubadour" of sports, writing acclaimed biographies of Ruth and Casey Stengel and joining Sports Illustrated as one of its first writers, died Wednesday in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. He was 90.

The cause was prostate cancer, his son Tom said.

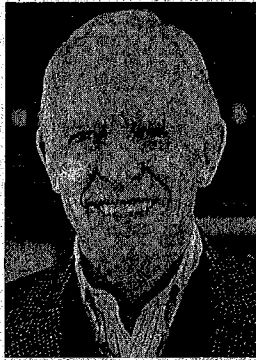
Mr. Creamer's book on Ruth, "Babe: The Legend Comes to Life" — which came out in 1974, the year Hank Aaron broke Ruth's career home run record — was infused with details, including Ruth's pregame meal: three hot dogs. Roger Angell, writing in *The New Yorker*, said Ruth had "at last found the biographer he deserves in Robert Creamer," describing his writing as "swift and clear and stamped with a confirming intelligence."

In 1984, Mr. Creamer (pronounced kreemer) followed up with "Stengel: His Life and Times," a comprehensive look at the baseball legend who played for or managed all four major league teams from New York City. Mr. Creamer presented Stengel, who was often portrayed as an idiot savant, as a nuanced personality of wit and intelligence. But he did not neglect the "old professor's" knack for squeezing new possibilities out of the English language in a personalized dialect called Stengelese. One gem Mr. Creamer chose: "There comes a time in every man's life at least once, and I've had plenty of them."

Jonathan Yardley, writing in *The Washington Post Book World*, said the Stengel book was the second-best American sports biography. The best, he said, was the Ruth book.

Mr. Creamer also contributed to films and television shows about baseball, notably "Baseball," the multipart 1994 Ken Burns series, in which Mr. Creamer joined George Plimpton, former Gov. Mario M. Cuomo, Studs Terkel and others as an on-camera commentator.

Robert Watts Creamer was



JERRY BAUER

Robert Creamer in 1991. As a boy, he saw Babe Ruth play.

born on July 14, 1922, in Bronxville, N.Y., and raised in Tuckahoe, N.Y., where he lived until 2004.

He grew up playing with scuffed, battered baseballs in open fields and empty lots. His mother turned on the living room radio before he came home from school so he could listen to

### Comprehensive books on Babe Ruth and Casey Stengel.

games, because it took a while for the set to warm up, he said in the Burns documentary.

He was almost 10 when he first visited Yankee Stadium, and in those days, he wrote in *The New York Times*, you could explore it like a cathedral when services were not being held. He remembered fans being allowed to prowl the field after games; when he felt daring, he slid into a base.

He attended Fordham and Syracuse Universities but did not graduate. During World War II, he fought in combat for 30 days in Germany and was wounded. After his discharge, he worked as an advertising copywriter and as an assistant editor at Collier's

Encyclopedia.

When he heard that Time-Life (now Time Warner) was starting a magazine to provide a more literary take on the exploding postwar sports scene, he pressed hard for a job and was hired as one of Sports Illustrated's first writers. He later became a senior editor and wrote the Scorecard feature at the front of the magazine. He retired in 1985 but continued to contribute to the magazine.

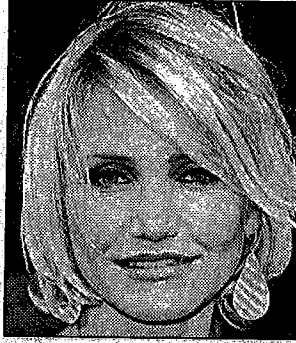
Mr. Creamer's other books include "Baseball in '41: A Celebration of the Best Baseball Season Ever — in the Year America Went to War" (1991); "Season of Glory: The Amazing Saga of the 1961 New York Yankees" (1988), written with Ralph Houk; and two "as told to" autobiographies, one written with Red Barber, the sportscaster, and the other with the umpire Jocko Conlon. He also ghostwrote a 1964 autobiography for Mickey Mantle.

Mr. Creamer got the idea for his Babe Ruth book after reading an article about Ruth by Roger Kahn in *Esquire*. An editor told him that there had not been a substantive biography since Ruth's death in 1948. Mr. Creamer began the book in 1969 and rushed to finish it as Aaron approached Ruth's record of 714 career home runs. He completed the book by fall 1973; Aaron hit his 715th homer on April 8, 1974.

One of his regrets, he said, was that he never interviewed any woman who claimed to have slept with Ruth. That did not stop him from observing that everything about Ruth exuded sexuality: "the restless, roving energy; the aggressive skills; fastball pitching; home-run hitting; the speed with which he drove cars; the loud, rich voice; the insatiable appetite, the constant need to placate his mouth with food, a drink, a cigar, chewing gum, anything."

Mr. Creamer's wife, the former Margaret Schelz, died in 2001. He is survived by his companion, Barbara Eaton; his sons, James, Tom, John and Robert; his daughter, Ellen Creamer Sitron; his sister, Jane C. Daych; and eight grandchildren.

Daily News 7/20/12



## Diaz on a date

**CAMERON Diaz** (above) seems to be back in the dating game following her split with **Alex Rodriguez** last year. The bubbly beauty was spotted dining with a handsome man at Rao's on Monday. A spy said, "It looked like a date," and when fellow diners asked staff who the guy was, a waiter said, "I guess it's her boyfriend." Spies said Diaz's mystery man was "handsome and athletic" and looked like "Family Guy" creator **Seth MacFarlane**, but sources said he and Diaz have only briefly met once in the past.

# Hall shouldn't shut out steroid era

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — The greatest living players will take the stage this weekend at the Baseball Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

Take a good look at them because they likely represent the last vestiges of innocence in this game, baseball's final clean Hall of Fame class.

Here come the dirty players next summer, and there will go the neighborhood.

## On baseball

By Bob Nightengale

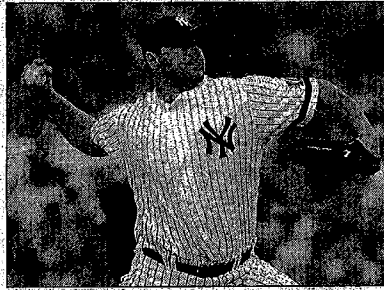
Barry Bonds, baseball's home run king and perhaps the greatest all-around player since the sport was integrated, is on the ballot for the first time this December. Roger Clemens, the most dominant pitcher of his generation, with 354 victories, will be there. So will Sammy Sosa and his 609 home runs. And Mike Piazza, the greatest power-hitting catcher in history. And first baseman Jeff Bagwell — again.

None of these players ever publicly tested positive for steroids or amphetamines. Yet whether they appeared in front of a congressional hearing, were tried in federal court, were accused by their former trainers or teammates or flunked the eye test with their distorted bodies, all have been painted as cheaters to some degree.

Hall of Famers such as Reggie Jackson vow there will be a boycott if any players linked to illegal performance-enhancing drug use are inducted into the shrine. Goose Gossage plans to be heard, loud and clear, if any steroid user gets into the Hall. The stage might be empty.

However, as a tenured member of the Baseball Writers' Association of America who has a Hall of Fame vote, let me offer two words to those players on the next ballot: Welcome, fellas.

There, I said it. I will vote for Bonds. And



2007 photo by William Perlman, The Newark Star-Ledger

**Incoming?** Roger Clemens, exonerated in court, will be on the next Hall of Fame ballot.

Clemens. And Sosa. And Piazza. I'll think about Bagwell. And will continue voting for Rafael Palmeiro, who tested positive in his final season when he reached 3,000 hits.

Go ahead, unleash those nasty e-mails and comments. Hey, it's OK to admit racists, criminals, drunks and recreational drug abusers, but let's not tarnish the sacredness of the Hall of Fame.

Please.

These players linked to PEDs belong in Cooperstown. They are the greatest of their generation. It just so happens to be the steroid generation.

If you want to put an asterisk on their plaque, as former home run king Hank Aaron suggests, so be it. If you want to put them into a separate wing, no problem. But to banish them is wrong.

These guys played in a generation when everyone looked the other way.

Did anyone really believe Mark McGwire and

Sosa could hit balls farther than anybody ever, looking like cartoon characters with their massive arms and chests, and do it naturally?

Did we really believe the outbreak of acne, the rash of joints and limbs popping from bones and the increase in head sizes was simply an epidemic that mysteriously invaded baseball?

When the Oakland Athletics and Texas Rangers showed up each spring looking bigger than the Oakland Raiders and Dallas Cowboys, did we suddenly believe that baseball had greater training methods than the NFL?

If you want the truth, baseball general managers and managers loved having steroid users on their team. They were typically the most dedicated players. They ate right. They got their rest at night. And, oh, did they ever train.

And how about this: Do we know there aren't any steroids users already in the Hall of Fame? Aren't amphetamines considered a performance-enhancer? If so, can any Hall of Famer stand up and say he never used amphetamines before a game?

The trouble with being judge and juror as a Hall of Fame voter is that we don't know who was clean and who was dirty. Are you going to keep Bonds out but let Clemens in because Clemens was exonerated in court while Bonds fights his conviction on obstruction of justice? Are you going to let Piazza in and keep out Sosa while both deny taking steroids?

Let's judge these players solely on their performance on the field, and if inducted, remember that they were the best players during their era.

It just so happens to be the steroid era.

The Baseball Hall of Fame, after all, is a historical museum and not a cathedral.

Daily News 7/20/12

# Piazza's wife pinch-hits a blast at Roger

BY CHRISTIAN RED  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

AT LEAST ONE PIAZZA thinks that Roger Clemens was on something other than an adrenaline rush when he whipped a bat shard at Mets catcher Mike Piazza during Game 2 of the 2000 World Series.

In a video posted on TMZ, Piazza and his wife — former Playboy Playmate Alicia Rickter — are interviewed by a TMZ reporter coming out of Giorgio Baldi's Santa Monica, Calif., restaurant Wednesday night. Mrs. Piazza does not shy away from tossing some high heat at her husband's former nemesis.

"Does (Piazza) think that Roger Clemens was onroids when he broke that bat?" Rickter asks, repeating the question. "Yes. He does think that

she replies. When the camera operator asks, "Who does?"

Rickter points to her husband and blurts, "He does!"

Piazza stands to the left and has a sheepish smile while his wife detonates on the Rocket.

"I do. I do. I do," Rickter continues, shifting gears after the interviewer tells Piazza his wife is getting him in trouble.

Later in the video, Piazza tries to make amends, calling Clemens a "great pitcher" when asked whether the former Yankee's reputation and career are tarnished. The seven-time Cy Young Award winner was acquitted of all perjury charges last month in federal court, after being charged with lying about his use of performance-enhancing drugs.

"The only time I've ever known him is hitting against him," Piazza says. "It's really



Mike Piazza (l.) points bat shard back at Roger Clemens, and now former Mel's wife Alicia Rickter (r.) verbally takes swings at ex-Yankee. Photos by Howard Simmons/News and Jordan Strauss/WireImage

tough for me to say, cause I never played with him, just against him. I mean, look, he was a great pitcher. His record speaks for itself.

Piazza got beaned by Clemens during the 2000 regular season and then had the infamous confrontation during the Subway Series when the pitcher

threw a broken bat shard at him. Piazza does lament one baseball moment he shared with Clemens — when the two were National League All-Star batterymates in 2004.

"It didn't go too well," Piazza says in the video, referring to the experience. Clemens gave up six runs in the first inning. "He was frustrated. We had a tough night. From a professional standpoint, I wish he did well. It's professional pride. But what are you going to do?"

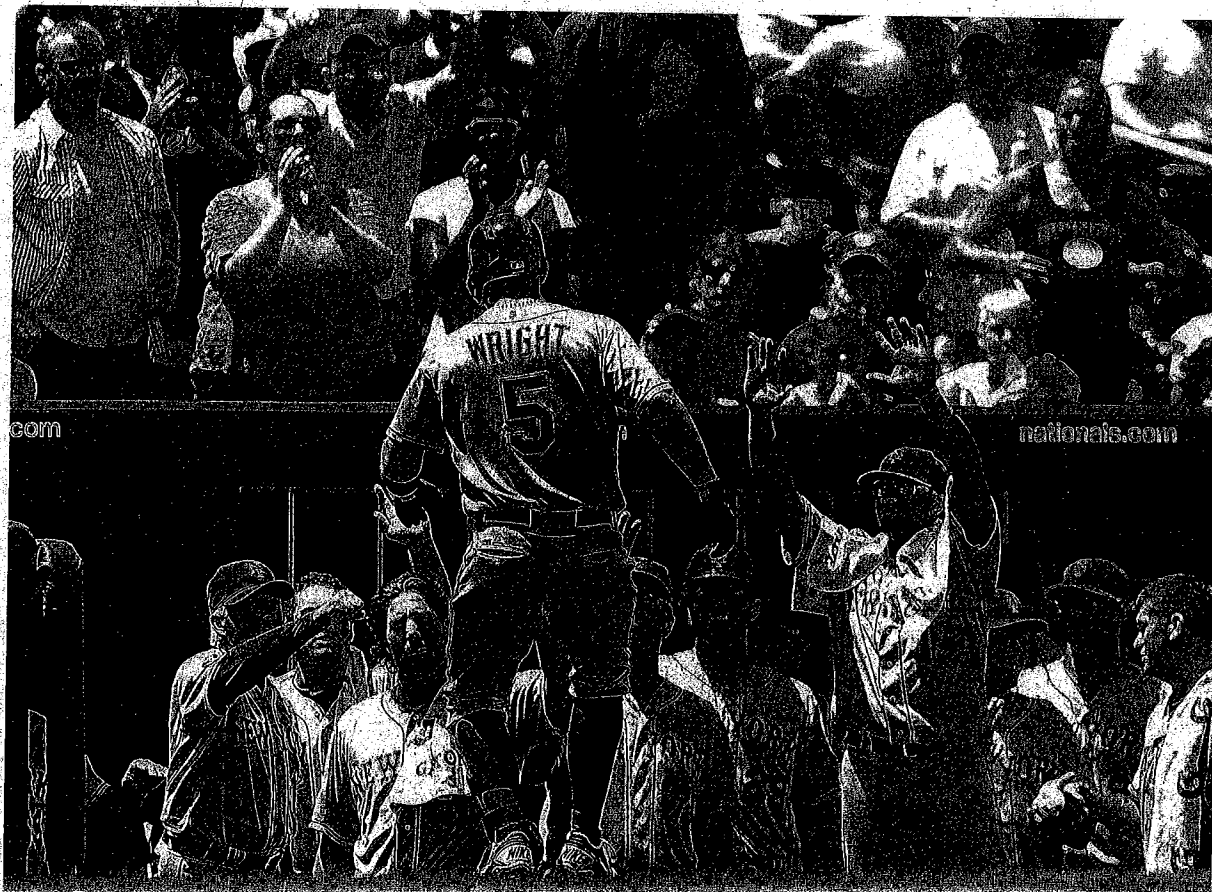
Piazza's agent Dan Lozano declined to comment to The News.



ONLINE ONLY!  
watch the video >  
NYDailyNews.com



## BASEBALL



David Wright being congratulated after hitting his second home run of the game, a three-run shot in the fourth inning, as the Mets snapped a six-game skid. GREG FURUEZ/GETTY IMAGES

## Wright Homers Twice as Mets Salvage Final Game of Trip

By ANDREW KEH

WASHINGTON — David Wright, as he has done many times this season, put the Mets on his shoulders Thursday and ensured they would leave here on a positive note.

METS	9	Wright
NATIONALS	5	hit two home runs

to pace the Mets to a vital 9-5 victory over the Washington Nationals. The win snapped a six-game losing streak that began after the All-Star break and was threatening to derail the Mets' season. They finished a road trip through Atlanta and Washington at 1-6 and will look to regroup at home against the Los Angeles Dodgers this weekend.

"All in all, it was a brutal road trip for us, results-wise," said Wright, who homered in his first two official at-bats Thursday after homering in his last one Tuesday night. "But hopefully this gives us a little momentum heading home."

The game, a mostly lopsided punch-up, had been billed as a

pitchers' duel between R. A. Dickey and the Nationals' Gio Gonzalez, the National League co-leaders in wins with 12 apiece. Dickey did his part, lasting seven and one-third innings, giving up 10 hits and 4 runs, 3 of which were earned, to improve to 13-1.

"Going into the game, you think, O.K., I might get two or three, but I'm not going to get any more than that," Dickey said.

But Gonzalez did not have his usual form, and Wright, who drove in five runs and remained the team leader or co-leader in nearly every offensive category, even stolen bases, altered the game's script from the beginning. He came up with one out and a runner on base in the first inning and sent a first-pitch fastball from Gonzalez soaring beyond the visitor's bullpen in left-center field.

Ryan Zimmerman — like Wright a third baseman who bats third — provided some symmetry in the bottom half of the inning when he hit a home run into the stands in left-center, a few yards from where Wright's had

landed, to cut the Nationals' deficit to 2-1.

But Ike Davis kept the Mets humming in the second when he smashed a hanging 2-2 curveball over the fence in straightaway center field, restoring his team's lead to two runs.

From there, the Mets kept up the pressure. With the bases

### An expected pitchers' duel is one-sided, as Dickey goes to 13-1.

loaded and no one out in the third, Scott Hairston grounded into a double play that scored Ruben Tejada. Jason Bay followed with a walk and Davis followed with a single to left to extend the Mets' lead to 6-1.

Gonzalez's day came to an end as Manager Davey Johnson retrieved him with one out in the fourth and a runner on second. Walking slowly across the grass,

Gonzalez grimaced as he stared into the sky.

"We swung the bats good against one of the best pitchers in the game," Manager Terry Collins said. "You've got to like that."

Reliever Craig Stammen fared no better. First Tejada sent a run home with a single to center. Then, with two runners on base, Wright drove his second homer of the game to center field, increasing the Mets' lead to 9-1.

The Nationals got a run back on Michael Morse's sacrifice fly to right field in the sixth. Morse ended Dickey's afternoon in the eighth when he drove in another run.

What followed was five nervous outs, as the Mets entrusted the game's outcome to their shaky bullpen. The Nationals drew to 9-4 when Wright's throwing error allowed Morse to score from second. Bryce Harper came up with the bases loaded, but Josh Edgin got him to fly out to end the inning.

In the ninth, Bobby Parnell allowed a leadoff single and hit the next batter. He got the next two

outs, but the Nationals cut their deficit to four on an infield single by Roger Bernadina. Parnell then struck out Sandy Leon with runners on second and third to end the game, giving Dickey his 13th victory.

The Mets used four relievers to finish the game, and though their efforts were not particularly clean, Wright saw a positive development. "It was a good little confidence booster for some of the bullpen guys to come in and finish that out," he said.

The real boost for the bullpen, though, came from Wright, who built a lead that even the Mets' relievers could not bungle.

### INSIDE PITCH

Outfielder MIKE BAXTER, who displaced his collarbone and sustained a rib injury on June 1, has been the designated hitter this week for the Mets' Class A team in Port St. Lucie, Fla. TERRY COLLINS said. Baxter has not yet started throwing, which means there is a long way to go before he becomes available for the Mets.



# Joel Sherman

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HARDBALL

## Phil-in' Cole's pockets

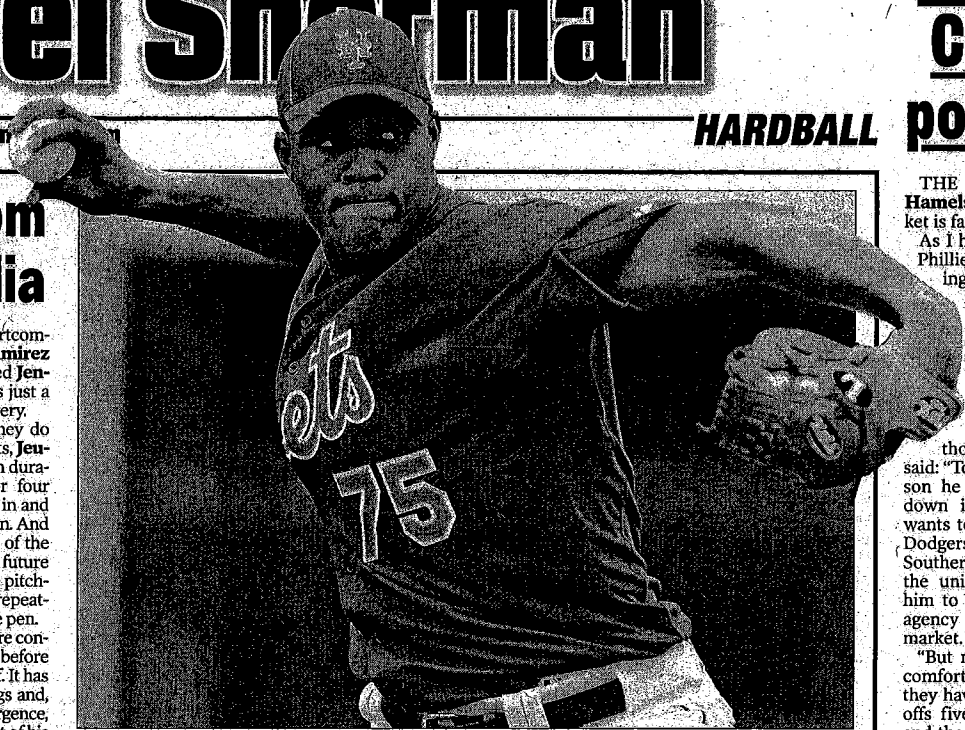
### Pen help from inside Familia

IN order to address their relief shortcoming, the Mets have rushed **Elvin Ramirez** and **Josh Edgin**. They have auditioned **Jerry Mejia** as a reliever in the minors just a year removed from Tommy John surgery.

But I have been wondering why they do not try to use one of their top prospects, **Jeury's Familia**, in the pen. He has shown durability as a minor league starter for four straight seasons now. He could break in and get major league experience via the pen. And the Mets privately believe what most of the industry does — Familia's long-term future might be as a reliever, mainly because pitchers with high-end stuff, but difficulty repeating their delivery generally land in the pen.

The Mets, a team official told me, were considering Familia for big-league relief before Familia lost his delivery in the first half. It has been much better his last three outings and, the official said, "Given the recent resurgence, I think we'd be reluctant to take him out of his element, as he's never relieved before, but it may be an option for later in the year."

**AMAZIN' OPTION:** While the Mets still view Jeury's Familia as a future starter, one team official said the prospect could become a relief option later this season. AP



THE chance **Cole Hamels** gets on the market is fading.

As I have reported, the Phillies were intensifying their efforts to retain the home-grown lefty. Two executives said they believed the Phillies would go at least six years at \$130 million.

And one of those executives said: "To me, the only reason he would turn that down is that he really wants to go home to the Dodgers (Hamels is from Southern California) or the union is pressuring him to get out into free agency and move the market."

"But my sense is he is comfortable in Philly, they have made the playoffs five years in a row and the \$130 million says they value him, so it is going to take a heck of a reason to say no to that."

THE Mets should push hard for a reliever — but not just for this year.

The Mets, even after their 9-5 victory yesterday over the Nationals, have about a 20-percent possibility to reach the one-game wild-card playoff. So even if they defy the odds, the Mets' postseason could last one game. When those are the chances and the team is still essentially in a rebuild, then general manager Sandy Alderson is right, you don't give up important future pieces.

For those saying "do something," what exactly does that mean? No team's motto is "Let's Help the Mets." In fact, other clubs see the bullpen deficiency, sense desperation. Thus, the prices for even "do anything" relievers are high and likely will stay that way until nearer the July 31 deadline.

Besides, Alderson does not have a "do anything" roster. Even with a relief addition such as Francisco Rodriguez or Brett Myers, the Mets would still possess too little power, speed, ability to counteract lefty pitching, defensive acuity and rotation depth.

Does that mean don't try? Of course not. It just means be realistic. Despite all the names heard annually, there were just 31 trades made last year between June 1-July 31. Most were of the Juan Rivera for cash variety. Maybe one-third involved someone approaching star level or better. Trades are tough to make, everyone is

# NO 'BULL'

## Mets must push for long-term relief

looking to fleece one another.

So what should the Mets do? I think they must hunt relievers controllable beyond this season. Because the 2013 pen does not project as markedly better than 2012, unless you see big things next year from a core of Frank Francisco, Bobby Parnell, Josh Edgin and, perhaps, Jerry Mejia. The Mets need to deepen that group. But how?

They have duplicity with, say, a lefty-hitting second baseman. But the industry knows the Mets have had multiple disciplinary problems with Jordany Valdespin and that arbitration eligible Daniel Murphy is about to get expensive for a defensively deficient player without power. With Matt Den Dekker coming, the Mets should definitely make available fellow lefty-hitting outfielder Kirk Nieuwenhuis (viewed as a fourth outfielder in the

industry) and maybe even Lucas Duda. Duda's real position, first base, is blocked by Ike Davis.

Double-A shortstop Wilfredo Tovar is described as a Ruben Tejada clone. Colin McHugh and Cory Mazzoni are secondary starter candidates behind Zack Wheeler, Matt Harvey and Jeury's Familia.

Can the Mets find a long-term power arm offering their surplus at a time when other clubs are hesitant to move cost-efficient fireballers?

"Acquiring a controllable guy would certainly be our preference," a Mets official said. "The problem is those guys are so scarce, and the cost, at least at this point, is prohibitive. We agree — the need for 2013 will be there — but that need may be easier to service this winter than now."

Which is why the Mets are shopping

in the K-Rod/Myers bin because the prices for expensive, looming free agents may fall in the next 11 days. Still, for example, the Rays have always liked Duda and have interesting young arms.

The Mets are linked with Kansas City's Jonathan Broxton. But Broxton is a free agent after this season and — for what it is worth — Dodger people did not see him as someone who had the stomach for New York. The Royals view Kelvin Herrera as their future closer, but also have depth in righty power arms far from free agency in Louis Coleman, Aaron Crow and Greg Holland. So do the Mariners (Steve Delabar, Charlie Furbush, Tom Wilhelmson), who always need offensive help.

In other words, the Mets need to keep shopping for ways to solve their biggest problem — and not just in 2012.

➤ The Padres have been expected to make **Huston Street** available.

But I hear Street likes San Diego and the team likes the closer enough that it will try in the next few days to see if an extension can be worked out.

If that fails, the Padres will make him available in the last few days before the deadline.

However, multiple officials think the Padres have enough teams bidding aggressively that they will move third baseman **Chase Headley**.

There is big interest from teams such as the Dodgers and Orioles because Headley is 28, can't be a free agent until after the 2015 season and there is belief he will flourish outside of vast Petco Park. Since 2008, when he became a full-time player, Headley's road line of .301 average/.367 on-base percentage/.451 slugging percentage compares well to a more famous Chase, Philadelphia's — Utley: .270/.373/.452.



07/19/12 6:10 PM ET

## Strong case for Price as best pitcher in AL

### Rays southpaw in elite company, but doesn't get much attention

By Hal Bodley / MLB.com

ST. PETERSBURG -- David Price is hands-down the best pitcher in the American League right now, if not all of baseball.

The Rays left-hander became the AL's first 13-game winner on Thursday afternoon, with an impressive 6-0 victory over Cleveland at Tropicana Field.

Whether the 26-year-old is the best at this stage of the season in all of baseball comes down to a comparison with Mets knuckleballer R.A. Dickey.

Dickey also won his 13th in a matinee on Thursday as the Mets clobbered Washington, 9-5, shortly after Tampa Bay sealed its victory. The argument for Dickey would be that he's lost just once in 14 decisions. But his earned run average is a shade higher than Price's, 2.72 to 2.64.

That debate put aside, there's little disagreement Price is No. 1 in the AL. He's 13-4, with the 2.64 ERA.

As Major League starters go, I believe Price is underrated. It may be unfair to state this, but he doesn't get the exposure of Detroit's Justin Verlander, or Philadelphia's Roy Halladay, the Yankees' CC Sabathia or even Dickey.

There were a lot of folks who thought Price should have started for the AL in last week's All-Star Game instead of Verlander. Price was on a roll, while Verlander -- as he showed in the first inning in Kansas City -- has been struggling. Just as controversial was Dickey being snubbed for the NL start when manager Tony La Russa picked San Francisco's Matt Cain. Price, who's in only his fourth season, came into the Midsummer Classic later and showed his colors by throwing a perfect seven-pitch inning.

In a victory Thursday that was crucial for the Rays after Wednesday night's 10-6 loss to the Indians, Price allowed just two singles and walked three during seven innings. He didn't allow a hit until Jose Lopez singled in the fifth.

That hit came after a walk to Carlos Santana and created the toughest inning for him. Santana was cut down attempting to go to third on a botched hit-and-run play, Shelley Duncan fanned and after Price walked Lou Marson, Aaron Cunningham flied out to center.

End of threat.

"What a difference 16 hours makes," said Rays manager Joe Maddon. "You come back after a game like last night. ... David was outstanding. He had once again great command of his fastball and started mixing in some of the other things, but fastball command was incredible -- 97-98 [mph]."

Maddon, who insists Price is pitching better now than he did in 2010, when he was 19-6 with a 2.72 ERA to finish second the AL Cy Young Award voting, agrees his left-hander is the best in the league.

"Having not seen everybody in awhile, I'd say no question, he's in the top two or three," said Maddon. "From a purely selfish standpoint, I'd have to say he is the best in the American League right now."

Maddon believes Price is reaching the point in his maturity "where he knows what to do with the tools in his tool box. I'm talking about pitching -- ability. I'm talking about winding up and throwing a strike when he wants to. He's getting to that point, pitching more intelligently, with better command of everything, picking the right spots to try other things. It's just maturing, but I honestly believe he's pitching better than he did a couple of years ago."

Price concurs. He said he's throwing his fastball more consistently and overall has better command of his pitches. Velocity of his fastball is 95.5 mph, the fastest he's ever thrown.

Price has won five straight decisions and seven of his last eight. His July ERA is 1.69.

Losing pitcher Ubaldo Jimenez said Price "is a tough guy, a left-handed pitcher throwing 97-98 miles an hour, with a good breaking ball. I definitely had to go out there and try to minimize the errors and mistakes because when you give up a run or two, it's going to be really hard to win [against him]."

Or, as Indians manager Manny Acta put it: "He overpowered us, mid-90s fastball and backdoor slider to our righties. We just didn't have very good at-bats against him."

After seven innings and 108 pitches, Maddon felt Price had had enough. Reliever Wade Davis allowed just one walk over the last two innings.

"If it had been a closer game, I could have let him go out for the eighth inning, but under the circumstances, 6-0, it wasn't wise. A hundred and eight pitches is a good day's work for me," said Maddon. "He really wasn't going to throw a complete game, so there was no sense at that point to send him back out."

The Rays have been as inconsistent for over a month as any contender, and have dropped back in the AL East standings.

"If we can get that winning taste back in our mouth where we come to the field and feel like we're going to win every game, we'll start putting some streaks together and start winning a lot of games," Price said.

Several weeks ago when asked if he honestly feels the Rays can compete with the Yankees this season, Maddon said yes without hesitation.

"The pitching is what keeps us in the games," he added.

And right now, that starts with Price.



07/19/12 7:12 PM ET

## Red Sox must calculate Crawford's trade value

By Richard Justice / MLB.com

Let's count the reasons it makes sense for the Red Sox to at least consider trading Carl Crawford.

First, there's money.

There, that does it.

OK, it's not just about money. If Crawford had thrown MVP-type numbers on the board in his first two seasons in Boston, the Red Sox wouldn't even be thinking about dealing him.

Regardless, this isn't strictly about production. Crawford arrived in Boston with a solid 10-year track record as one of the few players capable of making an impact on games with his glove, speed and bat.

He had a bad first season in Boston, and he got hurt at the beginning of his second. Stuff happens. These last 16 months don't erase all the good things he did with the Rays.

Crawford wouldn't be the first player to have a tough transition to a new team, especially when burdened by the kind of expectations he'd never had before. He has played well since returning to Boston's lineup, and there's zero reason to believe he won't settle in and resume a nice productive career.

Unfortunately, because he didn't put up Hall of Fame stats in his first 10 minutes with the Red Sox, plenty of fans turned on him. In addition, the general manager who signed him, Theo Epstein, is now running the Cubs.

There didn't seem to be a unanimous agreement about signing him in the first place, so when the Marlins seemed willing to discuss a Crawford-for-Hanley Ramirez swap, the Red Sox were intrigued.

Even with Crawford out of the lineup, the Red Sox have scored the second-most runs in the Major Leagues. If they could unload the remaining \$110 million on Crawford's deal, they could use some of that money to shore up a rotation that is 12th in the American League in ERA, 10th in innings and 10th in opposing OPS.

There's going to be an assortment of quality starting pitching on the market this offseason: Cole Hamels, Zack Greinke, James Shields, Kyle Lohse, Brandon McCarthy, Ryan Dempster, Jake Peavy and Joe Blanton, to name a few.

The Red Sox were criticized for not spending more money last winter, but that's just silly talk. The Red Sox have been second or third in payroll the last three years, so to criticize their spending is ridiculous.

Still, the larger issue is that baseball's financial landscape has undergone a fundamental change since Crawford joined the Red Sox. Baseball's new labor agreement includes a tough luxury tax on payrolls above \$189 million beginning in 2014.

Every team, including the Yankees and Red Sox, is attempting to position itself to get under \$189 million by then. The Red Sox already have \$94 million committed to six players in 2014 -- Adrian Gonzalez, Josh Beckett, John Lackey, Dustin Pedroia, Clay Buchholz and Crawford.

Crawford is owed \$21 million a season over the next five years. His contract clearly won't keep the Red Sox from upgrading, but to trade him for, say, Ramirez would give GM Ben Cherington more flexibility to tweak his roster.

Meanwhile, Ramirez will make \$15.5 million and \$16 million over the next two seasons. One large potential hangup comes from reports that the Marlins would like the Red Sox to take closer Heath Bell and the \$9 million he'll make in 2013 and 2014.

The Red Sox would be taking enough of a gamble on Ramirez, who has batted .246 the last two seasons. But Bell leads the Majors in blown saves, with six, and has pointed a finger at himself as being the largest reason the Marlins are 10 games out of first in the National League East.

Manager Bobby Valentine has done a superb job maneuvering Boston's bullpen despite the absence of closer Andrew Bailey. Only the A's have had a better bullpen in the AL.

Despite everything the Red Sox have gone through this season, they're a mere 1 1/2 games out of the AL Wild Card lead. If Lester, Beckett, et al., begin to roll up quality starts, there doesn't appear to be any reason why the Red Sox can't make the playoffs.

But as he looks at the rest of 2012, Cherington must also key an eye on 2013 and beyond. That's where it gets interesting. That's where he must be tempted to keep talking to the Marlins.

# SI.com

July 19, 2012

## Trade deadline preview: AL East

With the July 31 nonwaiver trade deadline exactly two weeks away, we continue our roll through the six divisions to see which teams are buying, which are selling and what moves they can — and should — make.

Next up, the American League East, where all five teams are at or above .500 at this writing. (NOTE: All teams ranked according to current standings; playoff odds data supplied by Baseball Prospectus.)

**New York Yankees** (55-34, 9 games ahead)

**Playoff odds:** 95.3% Division/3.1% Wild Card/98.4% Total

**Buying/selling:** Buying

**Top need:** Leftfield

Despite myriad injuries — most notably to Mariano Rivera, Andy Pettitte and Brett Gardner, all currently on the 60-day disabled list — and subpar half-seasons from Russell Martin, Mark Teixeira and Alex Rodriguez, the Yankees have the game's best record, and the highest chance at winning their division according to the BP odds. The mainstream media may be eager to spend the team's money in pursuit of a big-name acquisition such as Cole Hamels, but that hasn't been general manager Brian Cashman's modus operandi at the trade deadline, at least since the Cliff Lee trade fell through in 2010. Blame the new Collective Bargaining Agreement, which would deprive the team of a draft pick if Hamels (or another pending free agent) departs, and which has onerous penalties in place for exceeding the luxury tax threshold down the road. Not helping matters is a minor league system whose top pitching prospects, Manny Banuelos and Dellin Betances, have been either injured or erratic, and whose top bats are a ways from the big time.

With CC Sabathia back from the disabled list as of Tuesday, and Pettitte due back from a broken ankle in early September, Cashman appears convinced that the team can scrape by with Freddy Garcia or David Phelps in the fifth starter spot, and the bullpen could get boosts not only from Joba Chamberlain (rehabbing from Tommy John surgery) but possibly from Rivera, who was thought to be lost for the

season back on May 4 when he tore his ACL shagging fly balls; the pitcher may have an outside chance at a September return. Meanwhile, with Gardner suffering yet another setback as he rehabs from a right elbow strain and bone bruise and their leftfielders delivering a combined .234/.305/.435 performance, the primary focus is on adding an outfielder. With the Diamondbacks' Justin Upton able to block a deal to the Yankees, the Phillies' Shane Victorino is the top available option; even in a down season (.251/.316/.389), he'd be a massive defensive upgrade over Raul Ibanez. Oakland's Coco Crisp is another player New York has reportedly scouted; toiling in a tough environment for hitters, his his .232/.294/.313 line isn't pretty, but should lower his asking price, particularly given that he has around \$10 million remaining on a contract that runs through next season.

**Baltimore Orioles** (46-43, 9 games behind in division, 1/2 game behind in Wild Card)

**Playoff odds:** 1.2% Division/10.6% Wild Card/11.8% Total

**Buying/selling:** Selling

**Top need:** Prospects

If you told the Orioles at the outset of the season that they'd be in this position two weeks before the trade deadline, they might have leaped at the possibility, particularly given the franchise's 14-year sub-.500 streak. Even so, recent weeks have underscored the likelihood that the team's won-loss record thus far has been a mirage. Over the past month, the Orioles are an AL-worst 7-16 while being outscored 139-69; with a -55 run differential, their overall Pythagorean record is a non-contender-like 39-50. As ever, their biggest problem is starting pitching. The team is 12th in the league in rotation ERA (4.75) and quality start rate (43 percent), while the closest thing they have to an ace, Jason Hammel, just underwent arthroscopic knee surgery that will sideline him into late August.

Furthermore, the trove of young arms that once looked so rich — Brian Matusz, Jake Arrieta, Chris Tillman and Zach Britton — has combined for a 5.58 ERA in 195 innings, with Arrieta banished to Triple-A and Britton mired there in the wake of spring shoulder troubles. Given that and an offense that ranks 11th in the league in scoring at 4.13 runs per game, the Orioles have no hope of outslugging the competition or getting by with a back-end patch, and they'd be silly to trade blue-chippers Dylan Bundy or Manny Machado for a Zack Greinke rental.

Baltimore would better off continuing to fortify their rebuilding efforts, even if the returns won't be grand. Pending free agent Mark Reynolds is hitting just .213/.340/.396, but in a thin first base



market, he makes for a reasonable buy-low option, as would fellow all-or-nothing hacker Chris Davis (.262/.305/.454). J.J. Hardy is due less than \$15 million for 2013-2014. Wilson Betemit is an affordable bench bat. Kevin Gregg is an experienced closer and... well, that's about the best thing that can be said about him. There may be value in the Orioles finishing at or above .500, but the danger of overestimating their progress this season remains significant.

**Tampa Bay Rays** (46-44), 9 1/2 games behind in division, 1 game behind in Wild Card)

**Playoff odds:** 1.2% Division/22.0% Wild Card/23.2% Total

**Buying/selling:** Unclear

**Top need:** Offense

The Rays still have a puncher's chance at making the playoffs, but they're just 31-36 since Evan Longoria hit the disabled list with a hamstring strain in late April, managing a bare 4.00 runs per game since then in a league where 4.48 is average. Indeed, offense is a problem in a lineup capable of fielding six players with on-base percentages of .306 or lower: Will Rhymes (.306), B.J. Upton (.305), Desmond Jennings (.298), Sean Rodriguez (.274), Luke Scott (.261) and Jose Molina (.253). The return of Matt Joyce, who has missed four weeks due to an oblique injury, will help (Rhymes was optioned), but Longoria has yet to start another rehab stint after suffering a setback on June 18.

Given that and the fact that once again, fans are staying away from Tropicana Field in droves (the team's attendance ranks 13th in the AL), there's talk that the team could instead go against the grain and become sellers, particularly if their fortunes don't reverse in the next week. Fox Sports' Ken Rosenthal reports that the Rays are open to moving any of their right-handed starting pitchers, namely James Shields, Jeremy Hellickson, Alex Cobb, or starter-turned reliever Wade Davis. Though not a Hamels or a Greinke, Shields would occupy a tier with the Cubs' Ryan Dempster and former Ray Matt Garza; like the latter, he's cost-controlled, with club options of \$9 million and \$12 million for the next two years. The 30-year-old is extremely durable, averaging 33 starts and 220 innings per year since 2007, and as in 2010, his high ERA (4.44) is being driven by a stratospheric BABIP (.347, third in the league), while his strikeout and walk rates remain strong (8.3 and 2.7 per nine, respectively). Hellickson, who won Rookie of the Year honors last year, has seen his home run rate spike to 1.6 per nine; there's no urgency to deal him, but a mid-rotation starter who's cost-controlled through 2016 could fetch a significant haul. Beyond the rotation, pending free agent Upton is underachieving yet again (.244/.305/.376), but teams still covet the 27-year-old's athleticism and dream on his upside.

**Boston Red Sox** (46-44, 9 1/2 games behind in division, 1 game behind in Wild Card)

**Playoff odds:** 2.4% Division/21.3% Wild Card/23.6% Total

**Buying/selling:** Buying

**Top need:** Starting and relief pitching

With the returns of Jacoby Ellsbury and Carl Crawford over the past few days, and Dustin Pedroia later this week, the Sox appeared on course to field their A-list lineup for the first time all season, only to watch David Ortiz — the only one of their 13 highest-paid players who has been worth the money thus far — hobble off the field with a right Achilles injury on Monday night. Early indications are that the tendon is neither ruptured nor torn, and he may avoid a DL stint.

Despite so many injuries, the offense ranks second in the league in scoring at 5.00 runs per game, and the real need is on the other side of the ball. The rotation's 4.71 ERA ranks 11th in the league, their 48 percent quality start rate ninth, and save for fill-ins Franklin Morales and Aaron Cook (3.34 ERA despite just two strikeouts in 29 2/3 innings), no Sox starter has an ERA below Felix Doubront's 4.41. The Sox are said to be heavily in pursuit of Dempster, but they're reportedly one of 10 teams interested; they've also been linked to Francisco Liriano, though why they'd settle for another enigma with so many on staff is less clear. As for the bullpen, with Daniel Bard lost in the weeds and Andrew Bailey not yet throwing off a mound, they're said to be interested in the Rockies' Rafael Betancourt, perennially one of the majors' top setup men, and as of this year, an able-bodied closer as well. With the returns of Ellsbury, Crawford and Ryan Kalish, the Sox suddenly have a glut of outfielders to deal, with Ryan Sweeney or Daniel Nava both representing useful role players, and Cody Ross an inexpensive starter. Furthermore, the farm system, which was depleted by the Adrian Gonzalez trade, has enviable depth, with ESPN's Keith Law suggesting it's one of the game's most improved this season, so a Dempster-level acquisition should be possible.

**Toronto Blue Jays** (45-45, 10 1/2 games behind in division, 2 games behind in Wild Card)

**Playoff odds:** 0.0% Division/3.5% Wild Card/3.5% Total

**Buying/selling:** unclear

**Top need:** starting pitching

While the Blue Jays aren't far out of a playoff spot, their odds are getting longer by the day; not only are pitchers Kyle Drabek, Jesse Litsch, Luis Perez and Sergio Santos out for the season due to surgery, but slugger Jose Bautista hit the DL after sustaining a soft-tissue injury to his wrist on Monday night, one whose severity has yet to be determined at this writing.

Even so, the Jays have yet to throw in the towel; they're said to be focused on upgrading their pitching and have been scouting the likes of Garza and Liriano. Ever in the market for a value play, general manager Alex Anthopoulos has also expressed an interest in Justin Upton; the Jays do have the prospects to make such a trade. If they do move into selling mode, battle-tested lefty reliever Darren Oliver, shortstop Yunel Escobar and catcher J.P. Arencibia will draw interest; the latter pair are blocking prospects Adeiny Hechevarria and Travis d'Arnaud. Another potentially intriguing target is Travis Snider, who was bypassed for promotion from Triple-A in favor of Anthony Gose when the team sent Bautista to the DL. Snider hit just .248/.307/.423 in 877 major league plate appearances from 2008-2011, but the former blue-chip prospect is still just 24, and is batting .322/.415/.548 at hitter-friendly Las Vegas.

## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



Once a slick fielder at George Washington, Fernelys Sanchez is now a member of the Orlando Braves in the Gulf Coast League. Brian Branch Price

# Brave new world

## Former GW star adjusts to minor league life

BY SETH WALDER  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

JUST LAST month, Fernelys Sanchez was roaming the halls of George Washington HS in Manhattan, a senior on the verge of graduation.

Today, he's a professional baseball player in Florida.

Sanchez was drafted in the 16th round by the Atlanta Braves in this year's draft, signed on June 28 and almost immediately headed down to Florida to join up with the Orlando Braves of the Gulf Coast League, whose season just recently started.

Thrust into the world of everyday baseball, Sanchez' life is a little bit altered now.

He wakes up earlier now, at 6 a.m., to grab breakfast with his teammates so they can be on the field at 7:20 sharp. He's in the batting cage by 7:45.

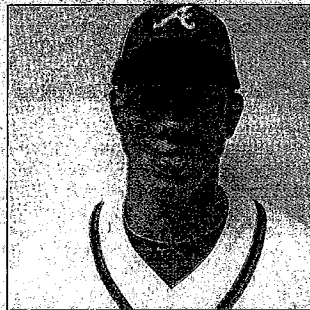
"We hit in the cage, we do drills, we work in the outfield," Sanchez said.

He grabs some food quickly after morning workouts before getting ready for a game at noon. After the games are over, he lifts weights.

It's a lot of work for one day, but that's what it means to be a professional ballplayer.

GW coach Steve Mandl said he didn't think the workload would faze Sanchez, or former Trojan teammate Nelson Rodríguez, who recently signed with the Indians.

"For my guys it's not a big change (in the amount of) work," said Mandl. "We're doing it 24/7 anyway."



Fernelys Sanchez is in his first full month as a professional baseball player after being drafted by the Braves in June. Justin Clift

"It's not hard," Sanchez said. "It's the same game I've been playing since I was little."

It's the same game, but with much better players.

"The PSAL, they had a couple of good pitchers. It's not like everybody is good," Sanchez said. "Now every time you go up there, it's (against) a draft pick or a free agent they signed for a reason."

Sanchez was injured for most of George Washington's regular season, but he came back as a DH for much of the playoffs. After several weeks of practice down in Flori-

da, he earned his first start on July 10 against the Gulf Coast Tigers. Batting third, Sanchez went 0-4 with three strikeouts.

"Timing wasn't that good," said Sanchez, who is confident that things will get better. "When I got here I wasn't surprised (at the competition level). You gotta do your job to move up."

As of Thursday, Sanchez was batting .235, with four hits and 10 strikeouts in 17 at-bats.

Mandl thinks the hardest part for Sanchez and Rodríguez will be picking up little things on their own that can improve their games.

"The biggest thing I see them having to adjust to is (having) to start learning to make adjustments on their own," said Mandl. "They need to start figuring things out themselves."

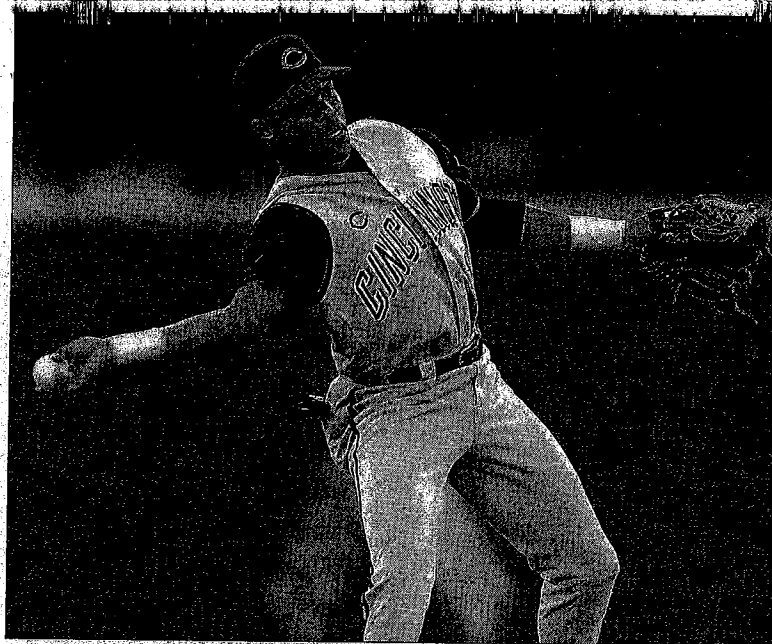
After settling in to living full-time at a hotel — he's gone to quite a few movies in the evenings with his teammates — Sanchez hit the road for his first road trip last Thursday to play the Gulf Coast League Yankees.

Sanchez is excited about the pro baseball path that lies in front of him. He's learning to adjust to the various "traditions" he says, like running hard all the time.

But as he learns, Sanchez says there's one thing he still misses about New York: more than anything else, "The home-cooked food," he said.

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2004 photo by Dilip Vishwanat, Getty Images

**Game-changer:** Barry Larkin won three Gold Gloves for his defensive prowess, but he also helped redefine expectations for shortstops by batting .295 over his 19-year career with the Reds.

## Reds star proved shortstops could stand out with bat as well as glove

Defensive prowess was the leading qualification for stardom at shortstop when Barry Larkin arrived in the majors in 1986 with the Cincinnati Reds.

Along with contemporaries such as Cal Ripken Jr. and Alan Trammell, Larkin helped redefine the offensive expectations for his position, ushering in the era of power-hitting shortstops that included Alex Rodriguez, Nomar Garciaparra and Miguel Tejada.

There had been slugging shortstops before Larkin, most notably Chicago Cubs icon Ernie Banks, who hit 512 home runs but spent the second half of his career at first base and played more games there than at short.

Few have exhibited Larkin's combination of defensive skill — he was a Gold Glove winner from 1994 to 1996 — and offen-

sive capability at the plate and on the bases. Larkin ranks fourth among Hall of Fame shortstops in both on-base-plus-slugging percentage (.815) and stolen bases (379). Only Honus Wagner tops him in both categories.

Though few debate Larkin's credentials as a Hall of Famer, his case when ranking him among his peers is weakened by his inability to stay on the field because of injuries. Only eight times in his 19 seasons did Larkin play as many as 130 games.

Any list of the game's greatest shortstops would have to include Wagner, an eight-time NL batting champion with a career average of .328, at or near the top. He was one of the five original inductees, and his plaque calls him "the greatest shortstop in baseball history."

Ripken could contest that

claim on the basis of his record streak of 2,632 games played and his 431 home runs, the most among players who were primarily shortstops. According to Baseball-Reference.com, Ripken ranks a distant second to Wagner — 126.2 to 90.9 — among shortstops in wins above replacement (WAR), a statistic that measures offensive and defensive contributions. Larkin is the eighth Hall of Fame shortstop listed, at 67.1, also behind turn-of-the-century player George Davis (80.2), Ozzie Smith (73), Robin Yount (72.4), Arky Vaughan (70.5) and Luke Appling (69.9).

Larkin, who will be the 25th shortstop inducted into the Hall, can safely claim a spot in the top 10 among his brethren, probably somewhere in the middle of that distinguished group.

### Cream of the crop at shortstop

Of the 25 shortstops honored by the Hall of Fame, here are the top 13 and their accomplishments:

Player	Induction team	Year	Highlights
Honus Wagner	Pirates	1936	Won eight National League batting titles.
Joe Cronin	Red Sox	1956	AL Writers' MVP in 1930 when he hit .346 with 126 RBI.
Luke Appling	White Sox	1964	Won AL batting title twice and collected 2,749 hits.
Lou Boudreau	Indians	1970	AL MVP in 1948 when he hit .355 with 18 HRs and 106 RBI.
Joe Sewell	Indians	1977	One of toughest hitters to strike out with 114 in 7,152 at-bats.
Pee Wee Reese	Dodgers	1984	Formed one of game's top double-play combinations with Jackie Robinson.
Luis Aparicio	White Sox	1984	Won nine Gold Gloves during his 18-year career.
Arky Vaughan	Pirates	1985	Owens second-highest batting average (.318) among HOF shortstops.
Phil Rizzuto	Yankees	1994	Won seven World Series titles in 13 seasons.
Robin Yount	Brewers	1999	Two-time AL MVP with 3,142 career hits.
Ozzie Smith	Cardinals	2002	"The Wizard" won 13 Gold Glove Awards.
Cal Ripken	Orioles	2007	Played in 2,632 consecutive games.
Barry Larkin	Reds	2012	Won NL MVP in 1995, then became first shortstop to join the 30-30 club (33 home runs, 36 steals) a year later.

Source: USA TODAY Sports research

**SI.com**

**Cliff Corcoran > INSIDE BASEBALL**

## **Larkin's underrated greatness goes beyond his place among shortstops**

Player	bWAR
Honus Wagner	103.2
Cal Ripken, Jr.	85.0
Ozzie Smith	73.0
Bill Dahlen	70.9
Luke Appling	69.9
Derek Jeter	68.0
Barry Larkin	67.3
Alan Trammell	67.1
Arky Vaughan	66.3
Bobby Wallace	66.0

This Sunday, longtime Cincinnati shortstop Barry Larkin will be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Larkin, who received 86.4 percent of the vote in his third year on the ballot, is a clearly deserving inductee. Over his 19 seasons, all with his hometown Reds, he made 12 All-Star teams and won eight Silver Sluggers, three Gold Gloves and the 1995 National League Most Valuable Player award.

He was a slick fielding shortstop who hit for solid averages (.295 career, .300 or better nine times, albeit some in injury-shortened seasons) and had an excellent plate approach (.371 career on-base percentage and 122 more walks than strikeouts over the course of his career). He possessed modest power (15 home runs per 162 games over his career with a single-season high of 33 in 1996) and

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# Santo, Larkin take place among greats

Barry Larkin was elected to the Hall of Fame in his third chance. Ron Santo did not get chosen until 37 years after he played his last game. With their inductions scheduled for Sunday, USA TODAY Sports' Jorge L. Ortiz takes a look at where both players rank among Hall of Famers at their respective positions.

## Numbers indicate longtime Cub should have been inducted sooner

Considering Ron Santo was a nine-time All-Star, won five Gold Gloves and finished with 342 home runs — more than all but two third basemen in the Hall of Fame — it's hard to understand why he was snubbed for such a long time.

The small list of third basemen enshrined in Cooperstown, N.Y., offers a clue as to the reasons.

Even among the exclusive club of 207 former major league players in the Hall, third basemen make for an especially select subset, with Santo becoming the 12th member, not counting three ex-Negro Leaguers. And that includes Paul Molitor, who played only a third of his games at third base.

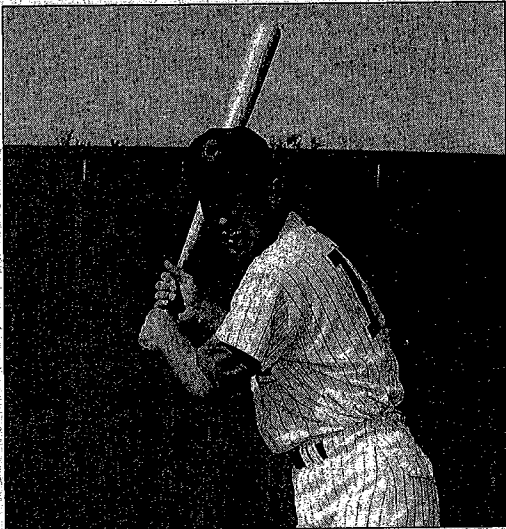
No other position has a smaller representation in the Hall.

Mike Schmidt set the standard for the complete package of power hitting and polished fielding that represents the ideal third baseman, and he's joined among the elite by Eddie Mathews (512 career home runs), George Brett (three batting titles) and Wade Boggs (five batting crowns, .328 average).

Santo, a Chicago Cub for 14 of his 15 seasons and later a team broadcaster, would seem to fit quite well in the notch below.

His on-base-plus-slugging percentage of .826 ranks fifth among the 12, more than 100 points above the .723 mark posted by Brooks Robinson, who earned entry into the Hall more because of his peerless fielding than his bat.

In every season from 1963 to



1969 photo by Robert H. Houston, AP

**Select company:** Ron Santo, above, is one of three third basemen in MLB history with at least 300 home runs and five Gold Gloves. Mike Schmidt and Scott Rolen are the others.

1970, Santo produced at least 25 home runs and 90 RBI. Yet he didn't live to see the day when he would gain entry into Cooperstown, as his candidacy was rejected time and again by the Baseball Writers' Association of America and later by the Veterans Committee.

Santo, who battled diabetes during and after his career, died in December 2010, about a year before his election to the Hall through the Golden Era Committee.

Besides the high standards for

third basemen, his case might have been hurt by place and time. He never played in the postseason, and seven of his Cubs teams had losing records.

A four-time National League leader in walks, Santo also played before the advent of sabermetrics, at a time when his career .362 on-base percentage — the same as Pie Traynor's — might not have been fully appreciated.

Sunday, the ultimate appreciation for his accomplishments will finally arrive.

### Santo's statistics rank among all-time third basemen

Of the 15 third basemen inducted to the Hall of Fame, here are the top 10 and their accomplishments:

Player	Induction team	Year	Highlights
Jimmy Collins	Red Sox	1945	Hit .300 or better five times.
Frank Baker	Athletics	1955	"Home Run" Baker led AL in homers four times.
Eddie Mathews	Braves	1978	Became seventh player to hit 500 home runs (512).
Brooks Robinson	Orioles	1983	Set records for putouts (2,697), assists (6,205) and chances (9,165).
George Kell	Tigers	1983	Led majors in double plays six times and assists four times.
Mike Schmidt	Phillies	1995	Three-time NL MVP with 548 career home runs, 10 Gold Gloves.
George Brett	Royals	1999	.390 average in 1980 was highest since Ted Williams hit .406 in 1941.
Paul Molitor	Brewers	2004	3,319 career hits rank ninth all time.
Wade Boggs	Red Sox	2005	Won five batting titles and retired with .328 batting average.
Ron Santo	Cubs	2012	Compiled .277 batting average, 342 homers, 2,254 hits, five Gold Gloves.

Source: USA TODAY Sports research

great speed (379 career stolen bases at an 83 percent success rate, including a career-high 51 in 56 attempts in his MVP season).

There wasn't anything Barry Larkin didn't do well on the baseball diamond, and he upheld similar standards off of it, winning the 1993 Roberto Clemente Award, which recognizes involvement in the community, and 1994 Lou Gehrig Award, which recognizes character and integrity.

So why did it take Larkin three years to get his invitation to Cooperstown? For the answer, let's take a look at the table to the right showing where Larkin ranks on the list of the greatest shortstops in major league history. Counting only the seasons in which shortstop was the player's primary position, those are the career leaders in Baseball-Reference's Wins Above Replacement (bWAR) at shortstop:

If you don't recognize their names, Dahlen and Wallace were defensive specialists from the turn of the century. Dahlen and Trammell, the latter of whom is still on the ballot, are the only two who aren't in the Hall of Fame.

There are two ways to interpret that list. The first is to take it as gospel and say that Larkin was the seventh-best shortstop in baseball history. The other, preferable method, is to notice that everyone below Ripken is pretty tightly bunched and that some of the greatest shortstops in baseball history didn't make the top 10. In an attempt to address both of those issues, let's look at peak value. Here's a list of the greatest shortstop peaks in history ranked by the cumulative bWAR of the players' five best seasons in which shortstop was their primary position:

Player	bWAR
Honus Wagner	48.1
Alex Rodriguez	44.3
Cal Ripken, Jr.	42.8
Ernie Banks	40.4
Lou Boudreau	37.8
Arky Vaughan	37.7
Robin Yount	34.9
Hughie Jennings	34.4
Nomar Garciaparra	33.2
Alan Trammell	32.9
Luke Appling	31.9



George Davis	31.9
Derek Jeter	31.8
Ozzie Smith	31.0
Barry Larkin	30.8
Jim Fregosi	30.4
Pee Wee Reese	29.9
Bobby Wallace	29.7
Bill Dahlen	28.9
Dave Bancroft	27.6

The first thing you'll notice there is that we found all of those missing greats: Rodriguez, Banks, Boudreau, Yount, even Garcíaparra, all of whom show up in this top 10. However, this list doesn't help us much with sorting out that clump of similarly valued careers above; with the exception of Pirates great Arky Vaughan, who ranks sixth, players three through 10 on the career list show up in the tightly bunched second half of the peak list. From a cursory look at these lists, the only thing that's absolutely clear is that Honus Wagner and Cal Ripken Jr. were the two greatest shortstops in major league history, but you probably didn't need these lists to figure that out.

Everyone on the career list shows up on the peak list, so let's focus on the latter in an attempt to pare down and sort through those 19 men. First, let's eliminate everyone in the second half of the peak list who didn't make the career list. Goodbye, Hall of Famers George Davis (career bWAR in shortstop seasons: 52.9) and Dave Bancroft (46.5), who plied their trade at the turn of the century and at the dawn of the liveball era, respectively. So long, Jim Fregosi (43.3), who ceased being both a star and a shortstop after being traded to the Mets for Nolan Ryan at age 29.

Let's keep Pee Wee Reese, however, as he ranks 11th on the career bWAR list at 62.9 and lost three full seasons to World War II in between seasons of 5.5 and 5.7 bWAR. It's reasonable to assume he could have compiled 15 bWAR during those lost seasons, and if he did, he would have ranked third on the career bWAR list.

The result is a group of eight shortstops of alarmingly similar value. Here they are with their career and peak bWAR totals as well as an average of the two, just to make the comparison easier:

Player	Career	Peak	Avg
Ozzie Smith	73.0	31.0	52.0
Luke Appling	69.9	31.9	50.9

Bill Dahlen	70.9	29.9	50.4
Alan Trammell	67.1	32.9	50.0
Derek Jeter	68.0	31.8	49.9
Barry Larkin	67.3	30.9	49.1
Bobby Wallace	66.0	29.7	47.9
Pee Wee Reese	62.9	29.9	46.4

Reese is last, but, again, he shouldn't be penalized for his military service. If you give him 15 extra career wins above replacement, he tops this list with a 53.9 average. If you split the difference, he's right in the middle of the pack at 50.2. Smith and Wallace seem to stand out a bit as the best and worst of this group, but I'm not confident that bWAR, particularly its defensive component -- Total Zone, which factors in heavily for both of those men as well as Dahlen -- is accurate enough to make such distinctions.

The only firm conclusion to be drawn from the list of eight, six of whom are Hall of Famers, is that Alan Trammell, who is Larkin's most similar player according to Bill James' Similarity Scores, has been mistreated by the Hall of Fame voters and is every bit as deserving of induction as Larkin. It's probably too late for Dahlen, whose case is largely dependent on his fielding, something we'll never be able to accurately evaluate from more than a century away, but Trammell got 36.8 percent of the vote on this year's Hall of Fame ballot and deserves to go in before he runs out of chances in 2016.

What about the seven men with significantly higher peaks, but lower career totals? Can we fairly conclude that any of them deserve to be placed below Larkin on our all-time shortstops list?

Yes. Yes we can.

Start with Hughie "Ee-Yah" Jennings, another turn-of-the-century Hall of Famer. Jennings' peak value comprises the vast majority of his career value. There were just six seasons in which shortstop was his primary position that he stayed healthy enough to play in 100 or more games. His peak with the 1890s Baltimore Orioles was impressive, but his career bWAR in his shortstop seasons was 37.2.

Next up is Garciaparra, who looked like a future Hall of Famer in his early 20s, but never fully recovered from a wrist injury suffered at age 27 and whose last big impact season as a shortstop came in 2003 at the age of 29. Nomar's career shortstop bWAR: 40.8

Next, Yount, who's MVP-winning 1982 season stands as one of the greatest seasons ever by a shortstop, but who moved to centerfield for his age-29 season due to a shoulder injury. Yount was an offense-first shortstop who had an OPS+ above league average in just six of his seasons at the position and his career shortstop bWAR is just 47.9.

Ernie Banks is the only man on any of the above lists who didn't play at least half of his career games at shortstop. Through his age-30 season, Banks was a superstar at the position, one of the best hitting shortstops ever and the winner of back-to-back MVP awards in 1958 and 1959 despite his Cubs' losing record and fifth-place finish both seasons. However he had limited range at short, and in 1962, his age-31 season, he moved to first base and never played so much as an inning at shortstop

for the rest of his career. At his peak, Banks' bat made him one of the best shortstops ever, but he only had seven star-quality seasons at the position and his career bWAR in his shortstop seasons was 52.0, not that far above Yount's. It's a tougher call than the previous three, but I think due to Banks' lack of longevity and fielding prowess at the position, I'm going to drop him behind the Larkin group as well.

An even tougher call is former Indians player/manager Lou Boudreau. Shortstop was Boudreau's primary position throughout his career, and he won the 1948 Most Valuable Player award at the position. He could hit and field, and despite a short career (he was effectively finished at age 33), he has a solid 59.2 career shortstop bWAR. The catch is that, with the exception of his MVP season, his best offensive seasons came during the three war years that Reese missed, 1943, 1944 and 1945. Boudreau had an arthritic ankle that caused him to be rejected by the draft board, so he got to feast on war-time pitching for three years, and that is a large part of what has him this high on the list. Like Reese, we don't really know how his numbers would have changed without the war, and it seems a bit unfair to say that he wouldn't have had excellent age-25 to -27 seasons facing the same competition he did at the age of 30 in '48. Still, the combination of his short playing career and the confluence of his peak and the war years seems like enough to knock him down a peg.

That leaves just four shortstops that I would comfortably rank above the Larkin Eight: Wagner, Ripken, Vaughn and Alex Rodriguez (who compiled 61.6 bWAR in his shortstop seasons before agreeing to move to third base at the age of 28 in deference to Derek Jeter, an inferior player, to facilitate a trade to the Yankees). That makes Larkin one of the dozen best shortstops in baseball history by my accounting, and an argument could be made to place him as high as fifth on that list.

In 2001, Bill James ranked Larkin, who played until 2004, sixth on his list of the all-time greatest shortstops in *The New Bill James Historical Baseball Abstract*. That was before Rodriguez and Jeter had cracked the top 10, but James took into account Yount and Banks' entire careers to place both ahead of Larkin, so it's easy to swap those two out for the younger players. In those rankings, James wrote that, "Larkin is one of the 10 most *complete* players in baseball history. He's a .300 hitter, has power, has speed, excellent defense, and is a good percentage player. He ranks with DiMaggio, Mays, and a few others as the most well-rounded stars in baseball history."

So, again, why did it take Larkin three years to get into the Hall of Fame?

Most likely, there were two reasons: injuries and context. Setting aside his rookie season, in which he didn't debut until August, Larkin averaged just 119 games played per season over the course of his career. Four times in 18 years he failed to play in 100 games and on four other occasions he failed to reach 120. He played in 140 or more games just seven times, 150 or more just four times. If Larkin had the health of Ripken, Jeter, Rodriguez or Smith, just to name a few, he'd have broken away from that clump of eight similarly valued shortstops in both career and peak\* value, but injuries muted what could have been an inner-circle-quality career.

*\*The most glaring examples: In 1989, before the league's offensive explosion, Larkin hit .340/.368/.444 through July 9, but tore the medial collateral ligament in his throwing elbow in a skills exhibition before the All-Star game and didn't return to action until September, and then only as a pinch-hitter. In 1997 he hit .317/.440/.473 but played in just 73 games due to a variety of injuries in his left leg, and*

As for the context, note that of the top 15 shortstop peaks listed above, seven of them were authored by men whose careers overlapped Larkin's (1986 to 2004). In the '80s there was Ripken, Smith, Yount and Trammell. In the '90s, there was the Big Three of Rodriguez, Jeter and Garciaparra. Smith is the only fellow National Leaguer in that group, but he was so popular with the fans and around the league

that Larkin didn't start an All-Star Game until his age-29 season and didn't win a Gold Glove until he was 30 (though he started winning Silver Sluggers at 24).

Ripken's last great season was his MVP campaign in 1991, by which point Yount was in centerfield and Smith and Trammell were in their twilight years, and the Big Three didn't make an impact until 1996, when Rodriguez won the American League batting title and was the runner-up for MVP, and Jeter won the AL Rookie of the Year.

So, Larkin did have his moment as the best shortstop in baseball, but it was brief, briefer even than that four-season window of 1992 to 1995. In '93, his season ended on August 4 due to a thumb injury. The next year brought the strike, which shortened both the '94 and '95 seasons, and the latter was dominated by Ripken who, though no longer an elite hitter, eclipsed Lou Gehrig's seemingly unbreakable consecutive games streak just in time to help bring fans embittered by the strike back to the game.

Given the misfortune of the remarkably similar Trammell, it's probably a small miracle that Larkin made it into the Hall as quickly as he did. It could be that the concurrent eligibility of another very similar player, 2011 inductee Roberto Alomar, was a factor in helping voters realize just how good Larkin was. Another might have been the regression of the shortstop position from the heights of the Big Three's peak to the point that Elvis Andrus has made the All-Star team in two of the last three seasons.

Ultimately, how or when Larkin got into the Hall is less important than the fact that he is where he belongs, among baseball's greatest players.

**CBSports.com**

## **'Favored' Dodgers and Cubs still haggling over prospects in Dempster talks**

By Jon Heyman | Baseball Insider

July 19, 2012 11:11 pm ET

The favored Dodgers and Cubs have gone back and forth over which prospects Los Angeles would have to send to Chicago for Ryan Dempster as talks continue Thursday night with L.A. and a few other teams.

The Dodgers have long been seen as the most likely landing spot for Dempster, but the Nationals, Braves and others were said to still be in the picture as Los Angeles and Chicago continued to barter.

One executive on a rival team said "it appears the Dodgers are the favorite," which has been the sense for a while. Though as of 10 CDT, it didn't appear a deal was close.

Friday is seen as something of a soft deadline, as Dempster is due to start for the Cubs Friday night at St. Louis with a 33-inning scoreless streak on the line. Some have suggested the Cubs would likely be selling high to trade Dempster, who leads the N.L. in ERA with a 1.86 mark, before he throws another pitch.

"They should trade him now. Why take a chance?," one rival GM said.

But another said, "Theo (Epstein and Jed Hoyer are) in good position. He's got the hottest pitcher in the game."

The Dodgers are most in need of a hitter but are also hoping to add a starting pitcher, which would enable them to move a starter into the pen.

CBSports.com suggested the Dodgers might be the favorite two weeks ago. Dempster, who has veto rights over trades, is said to be willing to go to the Dodgers, according to a report by Ken Rosenthal of FOXSports.com. Dempster is close to Dodgers pitcher Ted Lilly.



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## Cliff Corcoran > MLB AWARDS WATCH

### Mike Trout runaway AL favorite

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Mike Trout is going to win the American League Rookie of the Year award. It's not a sure thing just yet because there are some 70 games left in the season, but all Trout really has to do to wrap up the hardware at this point is stay healthy. That's especially impressive considering the depth of rookie talent in the AL. Eleven players -- not including preseason favorites Matt Moore and Jesus Montero -- are having compelling seasons worthy of consideration for this list and three of the four spots below Trout are new this week.

Things are equally competitive in the National League, where the order of the top three spots below were the best I could do in the absence of a three-sided coin.

*Note: Rookies are players who, prior to the current season, had fewer than 130 at-bats or 50 innings pitched in the majors or spent fewer than 45 days on the active roster prior to rosters expanding on Sept. 1. The number in parentheses after each player's name reflects his rank on the previous list. All stats are through Wednesday, July 18. League leaders are in bold, major league leaders in bold italics.*

#### American League

##### 1. Mike Trout, OF, Angels (1)

**Season Stats:** .353/.406/.584, 13 HR, 44 RBI, 65 R, 30 SB

**Last Three Weeks:** .382/.421/.750, 6 HR, 14 RBI, 9 SB

How large is Trout's lead for the AL Rookie of the Year award? Consider this: He has played in 70 games this season and the Angels have 70 games remaining on their schedule. That makes the math easy. If Trout plays as much over the next 70 games as he has over the last 70, he could hit .247 over the remainder of the season and still finish the season with a .300 average, and if he has just half as many home runs, stolen bases and runs scored over the next 70 games, he'll end up with 45 steals, roughly 20 homers and close to 100 runs scored.

Given his play in the field -- he's a strong Gold Glove candidate as well -- his clear impact on the Angels' fortunes in the first half, and his pedigree (first-round pick, top prospect, 20-year-old budding superstar), I doubt any of the men below could pass him even after a comparatively weak second 70 games. If his next 70 games are a repeat of the last 70, he'll finish with 60 steals, 26 homers, 88 RBIs and 130 runs scored, plus that fantastic slash line above. That could well lead to him adding AL Most Valuable Player honors to the ROY award.

## **2. Yoenis Cespedes, OF, A's (N/A)**

**Season Stats:** .288/.346/.507, 11 HR, 42 RBI

**Last Three Weeks:** .345/.387/.517, 2 HR, 10 RBI

It seems clear now that the only thing standing between Cespedes and major league stardom is health. He missed nearly all of May due to a hand injury, played just two innings across a 10-game span in mid-June due to a hamstring strain and would have missed more time had the All-Star break not synched up perfectly with the thumb strain he suffered on the final day of the first half.

Cespedes came out firing for the second half, however, going 10-for-18 with two homers and two doubles as a designated hitter in the first four games after the break. Thanks to those four days off, he has now played in 21 consecutive games, his longest such streak this season. He won't catch Trout in this race, but if he stays healthy in the second half, he could put up a 20-homer, 90-RBI season with double-digit steals (he has six in eight attempts), a nice start for a 26-year-old player whose only minor league exposure has been three mid-season rehab games.

## **3. Will Middlebrooks, 3B, Red Sox (3)**

**Season Stats:** .291/.324/.520, 11 HR, 42 RBI

**Last Three Weeks:** .195/.214/.390, 2 HR, 6 RBI

It's been three weeks since I last visited this race, but of those 21 days, four of them were the All-Star break and Middlebrooks missed seven others due to a hamstring injury. Thus, as poor as that Last Three Weeks line above is, it only covers nine games (and one scheduled off-day), which is one reason that Middlebrooks remains third on this list.

The other reason is that the other non-Trout contenders from three weeks ago have all fallen off the list entirely. Second-place Yu Darvish went 0-2 with a 6.75 ERA in those three weeks and his current 3.96 ERA is his highest season mark since mid-April. Fourth-place Jarrod Parker went 2-1, but with a 5.71 ERA and would have ranked sixth if this list was longer. Fifth-place Wei-Yin Chen went 0-2 with a 5.32 ERA.

## **4. Tommy Milone, SP, A's (N/A)**

**Season Stats:** 9-6, 3.54 ERA, 1.22 WHIP, 6.0 K/9, 2.92 K/BB, 1 CG, 6.4 IP/GS

**Last Three Starts:** 1-1, 2.00 ERA, 1.33 WHIP, 9.5 K/9, 9.50 K/BB, 6.0 IP/GS

In stark contrast to the three pitchers who have fallen off this list, Milone has dominated over his last five starts, going 3-1 with a 1.32 ERA, 1.03 WHIP, a staggering 8.67 strikeout-to-walk ratio (26 strikeouts against three walks in 34 innings) and averaged 6.8 innings per start. In addition, in the first of those starts, he became the first AL rookie this season to complete a game. On the season as a whole, Milone hasn't been the most dazzling of the AL's crop of rookie pitchers, but he leads them in innings pitched with 114 1/3, the 14th most among all American Leaguers. Even after adjusting for their wildly disparate home ballparks, he has a slight edge over Darvish, who is next among AL rookies with 109 innings, in ERA+ 113 to 112 as well as the advantage in WHIP (1.22 to 1.34) and strikeout-to-walk ratio (2.92 to 2.12).

## **5. Scott Diamond, SP, Twins (N/A)**

**Season Stats:** 8-3, 2.96 ERA, 1.21 WHIP, 5.1 K/9, 3.69 K/BB, 6.5 IP/GS

**Last Three Starts:** 2-0, 3.86 ERA, 1.14 WHIP, 4.7 K/9, 2.75 K/BB, 7.0 IP/GS

Diamond leads all AL rookies with at least 10 starts in ERA+ (138), innings per start, K/BB ratio and WHIP. He has thrown just three innings less than Parker in two fewer starts, and has finally reached the point at which I feel it's

appropriate to include him against pitchers such as Milone and Darvish who have been in their team's rotations all year, though the nearly 30 extra innings Milone has thrown are still enough to overcome Diamond's superior rate stats.

Diamond, like Milone, is a 25-year-old lefty who isn't projected to be much more than a back-of-the-rotation arm over the long term. His 4.46 ERA over his last six starts would seem to support that projection. What got him on this list was the 1.61 mark he put up over his first seven major league starts.

Honorable mention in this increasingly deep AL rookie field goes to Tigers outfielder Quintin Berry, A's closer Ryan Cook, and Rangers reliever Robbie Ross.

**Off the list:** Yu Darvish (2), Jarrod Parker (4), Wei-Yin Chen (5)

## **National League**

### **1. Wade Miley, SP, Diamondbacks (1)**

**Season Stats:** 10-5, 3.13 ERA, 1.11 WHIP, 6.4 K/9, 3.62 K/BB, 6.5 IP/GS

**Last Three Starts:** 1-2, 8.44 ERA, 1.69 WHIP, 6.8 K/9, 4.00 K/BB, 5.3 IP/GS

### **2. Bryce Harper, CF, Nationals (2)**

**Season Stats:** .278/.349/.458, 8 HR, 26 RBI, 44 R, 11 SB

**Last Three Weeks:** .271/.320/.386, 1 HR, 6 RBI, 11 R, 3 SB

### **3. Norichika Aoki, RF, Brewers (3)**

**Season Stats:** .288/.363/.428, 5 HR, 20 RBI, 40 R, 11 SB

**Last Three Weeks:** .300/.394/.383, 1 HR, 6 RBI, 11 R, 1 SB

I generally try to avoid the easy crutch of using Wins Above Replacement statistics in these rankings, for several reasons. The first is that one could too easily turn these awards lists into a list of the bWAR (or fWAR or WARP) leaders without bothering to consider the dynamics of the performance from which those totals were assembled. Though I think there is value in those figures, I prefer to get my hands dirty with the actual things the players are doing (how often they are reaching base, giving up a run, etc.), to figure out not just how valuable the player was according to one particular formula or another, but to understand what they're doing that makes them that valuable (as well as what they're doing that might be undermining that value).

Second, though they were conceived by some brilliant minds whose facility with advanced statistics greatly surpasses mine, no all-in-one statistics is perfect, in part because there are still aspects of the game (fielding being the most obvious) that the numbers don't fully capture and that, on some level, we don't fully understand (such as, say, the relationship between fielding and pitching).

Lastly, over small samples, such as the fractions of a season being considered for these lists, those imperfections are magnified (the reverse of which is why I'm more comfortable using something like bWAR to compare players' entire careers).

All of which is my big disclaimer for the fact that, with the top three men in the National League Rookie of the Year race impossibly close after Wednesday night's action, I ultimately just threw up my hands and went to WAR. What I found is that Baseball-Reference and FanGraphs are largely in agreement on these three and that, despite his recent rough patch, Miley, who has been my leader on this list since my first look at it in mid-May, hasn't fallen back into the



pack as much as it might seem:

Player	bWAR	fWAR
Miley	2.3	2.2
Harper	1.6	1.6
Aoki	1.3	1.3

Neither version of WAR fully supports the other rankings on these lists, save for Trout's, of course, but for these, I'm happy to let it be the tie-breaker.

#### 4. Todd Frazier, UT, Reds (4)

**Season Stats:** .277/.343/.554, 10 HR, 30 RBI

**Last Three Weeks:** .319/.385/.596, 3 HR, 8 RBI

Three weeks ago I was lobbying for Frazier to remain an everyday player in Cincinnati at the expense of either Scott Rolen or Ryan Ludwick (or some combination thereof). I'd still prefer that solution to the current one, which has him filling in for an injured Joey Votto at first base. Still, if there's an upside to one of the game's best players missing a month due to knee surgery it's that a deserving rookie like Frazier will get more time to prove to his somewhat rookie-phobic manager that he's for real and deserves to play, and his doing so will make the Reds a better team in the postseason.

Frazier hit .280/.353/.475 in the minors and while, at 26, he doesn't have a future that's much brighter than his present in terms of production, what he's doing right now is plenty. Besides, his future is much brighter than that of the 37-year-old Rolen, who will be a free agent this fall and should yield third base to Frazier sooner than that.

#### 5. Wilin Rosario, C, Rockies (5)

**Season Stats:** .255/.291/.535, 15 HR, 39 RBI

**Last Three Weeks:** .333/.389/.727, 4 HR, 7 RBI

Rosario has made the most of his playing time of late, but that playing time is now being constricted by the return of Ramon Hernandez from the disabled list. Between that restriction on his opportunities and his lousy on-base percentage, it seems likely that there will be someone else in this final spot three weeks from now, with 27-year-old Brewers starter Michael Fiers the leading candidate at the moment.

# Phil Mushnick

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EQUAL TIME

## LINFURIATING

### Team concept lost on NBA experts



**A**s if to prove the Garden's Jim Dolan/Cablevision Era is one of wonder and blunder — using \$100 bills to light exploding cigars — Monday with Jeremy Lin just about gone, Dolan's MSG Network aired this year's Leap Day Cavs-Knicks game from Dolan's Garden.

On a strange date, Feb. 29, the Knicks were in a strange place: Still in their extended, unintended Lin-led fun-run. But it seemed it would end with a pfft. The Cavs were up 16, late first half, and the Knicks, with Carmelo Anthony and Amar'e Stoudemire both returned from injury, had reverted to "put it in the hands of the stars, clear-out ball."

In fact, Anthony and Stoudemire combined to miss their first six shots, five of them jump shots. But in the second half, Lin, as if defying the NBA's caste system, played the way he had the previous 12 games, which included a win over the Lakers

without Anthony and Stoudemire.

With Lin pushing the ball, always looking inside, always dropping the clear hint to teammates not to run at, then stop in front of defenders; but to make them chase you, the Knicks' exhausted Cleveland, ran them goofy.

And the Knicks jumpshooter who most benefitted was Steve Novak, Lin having forced the Cavs to gamble on not guarding Novak in order to try to reclaim the inside because Lin had turned the game into a two- and three-pass layup seminar.

If you must know, Lin played 33:22, shot 6-for-12, scored 19, had 13 assists, five rebounds (two offensive) and one turnover.

But what counted most was that the Knicks won, 120-103. That night, abandoning star-status-basketball, they outscored Cleveland 86-53! And the Garden went nuts.

And so, perhaps, we could view MSG's choice of programming, Monday, as something of a going away present.

By far, the most frustrating part of the debate attached to Lin's departure is that paid basketball experts choose to weigh and measure Lin as a stand-alone, individual act, as if he's a bowler, an archer. The big picture is lost on them.

Lin wasn't, by himself, all that special. There are a lot of Lins. Or could be. But they've been deemed unacceptable in an NBA stuck in no-better-idea, no-braver-idea duplication.

But if we're to view Lin's game as a concept, as a better idea for a team game that has been hijacked by star-headed stars, frightened coaches, signature-model sneaker companies, NBA TV and marketing strategists, then open your eyes! How could you miss it!

In the case of ESPN's Stephen A. Smith, who has been extended national and local NBA expert status — his initials could stand for Star Access Suck-up — he spent this week shouting and hollering faux-slick jive that, if believed, would've made one recall Lin as a feckless, fad,

characterizing him as just "a marginal player."

But even if Smith's expertise is bogus, he still couldn't have missed how this "marginal player" made the Knicks' other marginal players play as a run-the-floor, drive-'em-crazy, unpredictable winning basketball team.

And it's not as if the Knicks now are looking for another Jeremy Lin or even a new one or the next one. The opportunities-knock concept he briefly returned to New York — last seen in the Walt Frazier years — has been deemed unacceptable.

Marginal players, playing as a team, defeating star-stacked one-on-one-reliant teams — badly outplaying them, out-working them, out-thinking them, out-running them — is the kind of thing that simply can't be indulged.

"OK, we tried it. We were forced to try it. It worked. It even worked great. The town went wild, too. Now, get rid of it. Too many wide-open layups."

## YES! Blue Jay star's crash landing made great television

ASKED to describe pornography, Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart famously said that he couldn't, but "I know it when I see it." Same goes for great TV.

On Wednesday, after Blue Jays' third baseman Brett Lawrie fell — and with a thud that could be felt on Jerome Avenue — into a camera well chasing Mark Teixeira's foul ball — YES director Jon Wilson presented a series of tape, audio included, that added to the awe as to how Lawrie didn't break in half.

But the best of the lot was a close-up of Teixeira, standing near the plate and wincing as he watched Lawrie disappear and likely hearing him land. Great TV.

► Have to admire the determination of ESPN's Mike Tirico and Curtis Strange, yesterday, as they repeatedly heard Tiger Woods curse, yet ignored them as if they were the only ones who heard. Made us wonder if they'd ignore

such behavior from others playing in the British Open, except no one else is known to be such an audible cussier. Then again, no one's covered as closely as Woods. Regardless, he's Tiger Woods; he's entitled.

The only ESPN voice to note that Woods played "unsmiling" and "agitated" golf was Peter Alliss, an Englishman-on-one-event-loan, thus not compelled to ignore from Woods what U.S. viewers can't miss.

► Craig Carton, during his WFAN/MSG show, Wednesday, delivered a speech on proper local sports journalism. While one might've forgotten for the moment that Carton has become a Garden shill, it was hard to ignore the fact that as he spoke he was wearing a Knicks' T-shirt.

► YES has rewarded Rafael Soriano's childish, classless yank-his-shirt-out bit by including it in a Yankee telecast promo.

► The Jets are so desperate to sell tickets to their regular season PSL Stadium opener — Sept. 9 vs. Buffalo — they've contacted Bills fans who had been soliciting tickets from Jets season ticket holders on Craigslist.

► Dept. of Can't Make This Stuff Up: ESPN yesterday interrupted its live coverage of the British Open to run promos that reminded viewers to watch the British Open on ESPN.

USA Today 7/20/12

## Deals

### Baseball

#### ► American League

**Boston Red Sox:** Activated 2B Dustin Pedrola from the 15-day disabled list. Optioned IF Mauro Gomez to Pawtucket (International/AAA).

**Chicago White Sox:** Recalled P Donnie Veal from Charlotte (International/AAA). Optioned P Pedro Hernandez to Charlotte.

**Kansas City Royals:** Agreed to terms with C Jason Kendall on a minor league contract. Optioned P Vin Mazzaro to Omaha (Pacific Coast/AAA). Recalled P Will Smith from Omaha.

**Toronto Blue Jays:** Optioned P Sam Dyson to New Hampshire (Eastern/AA).

#### ► National League

**Chicago Cubs:** Acquired P Justin Germano from the **Boston Red Sox** for cash considerations. Designated P Jairo Asencio for assignment.

**Los Angeles Dodgers:** Assigned P Erick Threets to Albuquerque (Pacific Coast/AAA).

**Miami Marlins:** Activated P Edward Mujica from the 15-day disabled list.

**San Diego Padres:** Reinstated OF Jeremy Hermida from the 60-day disabled list and optioned him to Tucson (Pacific Coast/AAA). Designated P Mark Hamburger for assignment.

**Washington Nationals:** Activated P Drew Storen from the 15-day disabled list. Recalled C Sandy Leon from Harrisburg (Eastern/AAA). Placed C Jhonatan Solano on the 15-day disabled list. Designated OF Rick Ankiel for assignment.