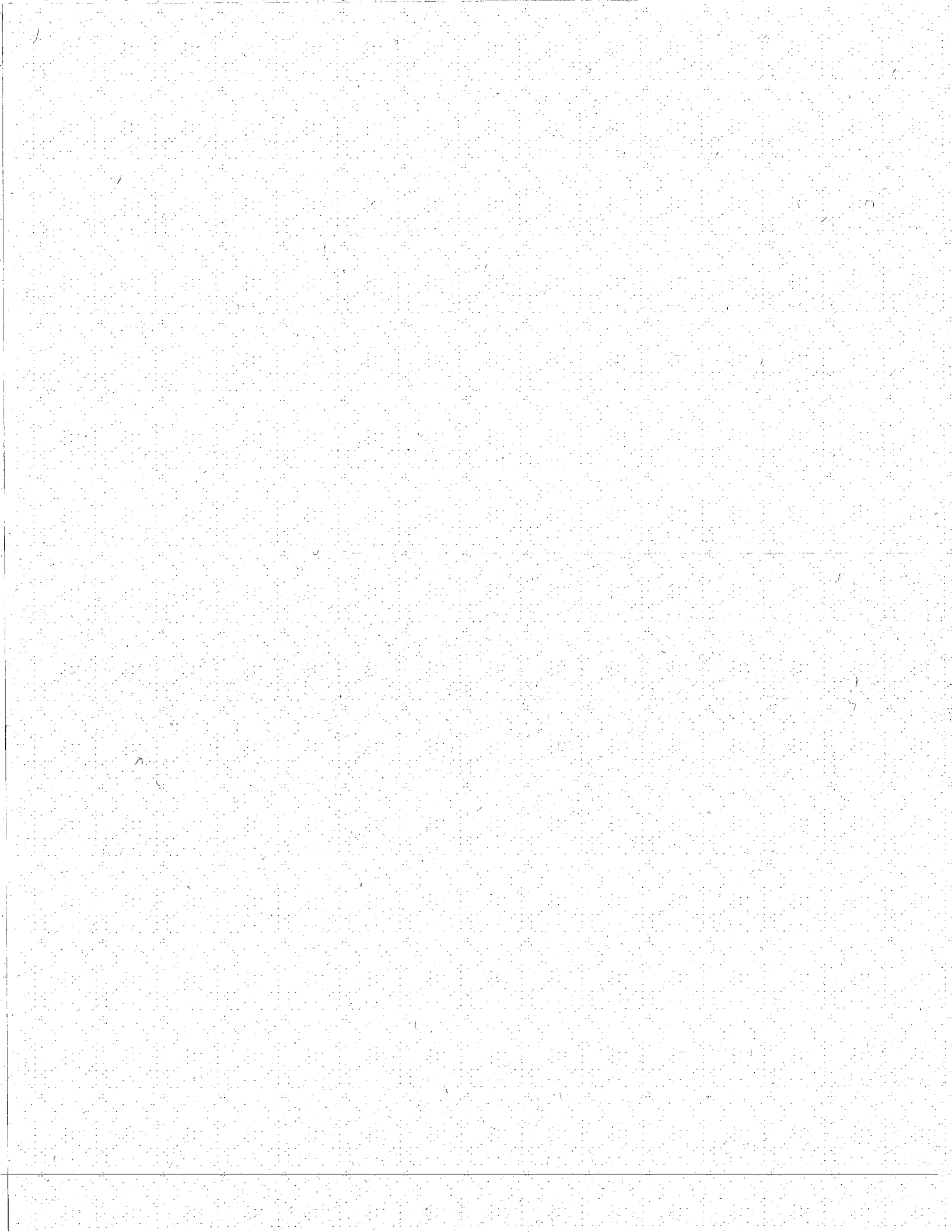
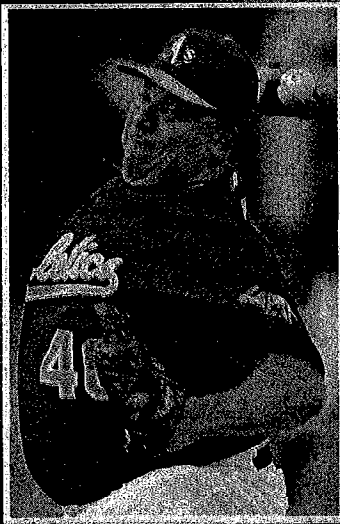




New York Yankees Clips
Wednesday, June 12, 2013





BELLY FLOP

Colon tops Yankees in heavyweight battle

By GEORGE A. KING III

OAKLAND — The Yankees returned to the varsity portion of the schedule last night and watched their ace get spanked by the A's.

After taking three of four from the lowly Mariners in Seattle, the Yankees pulled into the Coliseum having won six of seven and CC Sabathia riding a two-game winning streak that included a complete-game victory **AS 6** in his last start. **YANKEES 4**

A leadoff solo homer in the first by Coco Crisp and a three-run shot from Derek Norris in the fourth sandwiched around a bad play in right field by Lyle Overbay that led to a run was more than enough for A's starter Bartolo Colon to hurl the hosts to a 6-4 win in front of 27,118.

After Colon worked out of a one-out, bases loaded jam in the first without giving up a run, the 40-year-old with a body that looks like a badly stuffed duffel bag breezed through a limp Yankees order.

In six shutout innings Colon, who hit 95 mph with the fastball to strike out Travis Hafner in the third, allowed three hits and won for the fourth straight time to hike his record to 8-2.

Sabathia, who wild-pitched the A's sixth run home in the sixth, fell to 6-5. In six innings he gave up six runs and eight hits.


Foolishly, Sabathia attempted to grab Nate Frieman's chopper up the middle in the sixth inning with his pitching hand. The ball glanced off his fingers to Robinson Cano and he turned it into an out.

Pitching coach Larry Rothschild and trainer Mark Littlefield briefly visited Sabathia on the mound and returned to the dug-out.

Because the Red Sox lost to the Rays the Yankees remained two lengths back of the AL East leaders in second place.

The victory was the A's 21st in 29 games and

ON DECK



TONIGHT — 10:05
RHP Phil Hughes (3-4, 4.80) vs. RHP Dan Straily (3-2, 4.67)

TOMORROW — 3:35 p.m.
RHP Hiroki Kuroda (6-5, 2.84) vs. RHP Jarrod Parker (6-6, 4.58)

Both games on YES, WCBS (880 AM)

INSIDE THE MATCHUPS

YANKEES: Current A's hitters have struggled against Hughes. Oakland batters are hitting a paltry 17-for-88 (.193) against him, with only four extra-base hits (one home run).

ATHLETICS: The A's have won the past four games Straily has started, and with good reason — the righty has allowed just six earned runs in his last 26 innings (2.08 ERA), with just 18 hits and three walks.

STAT SO?

YANKEES: The Bombers have stepped up their small ball game; they're 7/15 in games in which they haven't hit a home run, matching their wins from last season in games they didn't hit a home run.

ATHLETICS: Closer Grant Balfour hasn't blown a save in more than a year. The hard-throwing reliever is a perfect 16-for-16 this season and has converted his last 14 chances.

moved them into a tie with the Rangers for first place in the AL West.

Brett Gardner's wood continued to smoke, going 2-for-5. Gardner is riding a 15-for-30 hot streak.

Making his fourth major-league start in right field, Overbay had a bad game. In addition to turning Norris' two-out pop to short right into a two-run double in the second, Overbay fouled out to end the first with the bases loaded, struck out looking in the fourth and hit into a double play in the sixth.

The Yankees rallied in the eighth against lefty Jeremy Blevins but a running catch by right fielder Josh Reddick on Travis Hafner's line drive with runners on first and second and no outs limited the Yankees to the two runs driven in by singles from Mark Teixeira and pinch-hitter Vernon Wells.

After scoring six runs in the previous three

games the Yankees had a solid chance to hurt Colon early.

Gardner greeted the former Yankee with a single to right in front of Cano walking. Teixeira moved the runners to third and second with a fly to the center field warning track and Hafner walked to load the bases for Kevin Youkilis.

He fouled out to Frieman and Overbay fouled out to left fielder Yoenis Cespedes to strand three runners.

The Yankees rallied for two runs in the ninth off A's relievers Ryan Cook and Grant Balfour, but Hafner just missed a game-tying home run, flying out to deep left-center.

george.king@nypost.com

UNSAFE

EXTRA INNINGS

STAT OF THE DAY

5 The Yankees entered the week with a perfect 20-0 record this season when scoring at least five runs in a game.

TEST YOUR YANK IQ

Who became the first Yankees player to hit a

grand slam on his birthday on this date in 2008?

NEXT GAME



Tonight, 10:10 p.m. at Oakland, Phil Hughes (3-4, 4.80) vs. Dan Straily (3-2, 4.67). TV: YES

INSIDER MARK FEINSAND

Cano & Wright pair of homers

OAKLAND — Last summer, Robinson Cano took plenty of heat from fans in Kansas City for his omission of hometown hero Billy Butler on the American League's Home Run Derby team.

Cano, who went 2-for-3 with two runs scored Tuesday, has accepted the captaincy for the AL squad for a second year in a row, but with the event taking place in New York this year, the Yankees' second baseman isn't worried about a repeat of last year's jeers.

"Now that you're in New York, you get to pick whoever you want," Cano said. "Now I don't have to pick David Wright because he's on the other side."

Wright will serve as the captain for the NL team.

"I think that it's a once-in-a-career type of opportunity to be able to captain the home run derby team at home," Wright said. "To have Robbie on one side and me on another a tremendous opportunity."

"There is probably more deserving home run hitters, but I am glad (MLB) thought of me. With the game being at home, that's cool and with them doing a kind of Mets-Yankees thing, that's pretty cool."

While the event will be held at Citi Field, plenty of Yankees fans figure to be in attendance to support Cano and his squad.

Kansas City fans gave Cano a

hard time for leaving Butler off the team last year, even harassing members of his family during All-Star events on Monday and Tuesday. Cano, who was booed loudly again in Kansas City last month, admitted on Tuesday that the entire situation took some of the fun out of last year's Derby.

Cano's team of Prince Fielder, Jose Bautista and Mark Trumbo won the event despite the fact that Cano was knocked out after a homerless first round.

"You know everywhere you go, you get booed, because fans, they don't understand," said Cano, who

will have his father throw to him for a third straight year. "Even the guys I picked, it's not that I picked anybody because he's Dominican or he's doing this or that. Everybody was swinging good. It was tough, but now this year I've got the advantage that it's in New York."

Cano has another month before deciding whom to invite, but he seems to have made up his mind about one player. Asked if he would be choosing Butler and his five home runs, Cano quickly replied, "No chance."

YOU'K THE MAN

Kevin Youkilis (1-for-4) was back in the lineup after sitting out Sunday's game with minor back stiffness. "He feels great today," Joe Girardi said. "It's probably good that he got the extra day built in on Monday."



AT HOME

CC flops again in Oakland

BY MARK FEINSAND
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

OAKLAND — Having grown up in nearby Vallejo, CC Sabathia has plenty of good memories of the Coliseum. They just don't involve pitching against the A's.

Sabathia was roughed up once again by the team he rooted for as a child, giving up six runs over six innings as the Yankees dropped a 6-4 decision to the A's to open the three-game series.

Derek Norris homered and drove in four runs against Sabathia, who allowed eight hits and a walk, striking out three in the loss.

That he got knocked around in Oakland is hardly a surprise; he fell to 4-6 with a 5.30 ERA in 14 career starts at the Coliseum.

Sabathia fell to 6-5, while his ERA rose to 4.07, the first time since Opening Day that it has stood above 4.00.

The Yankees didn't do much to help their starter, wasting a bases-loaded opportunity against Bartolo Colon in the opening frame and never threatening against him again.

Colon held his former team scoreless over six innings, giving up three hits and walking four while striking out three.

The Yankees made things interesting with a ninth-inning rally, scoring a pair of runs on Mark Teixeira's two-run single that pulled them within two. But closer Grant Balfour got Travis Hafner on a fly ball at the left-center field wall, locking up the win for the A's.

After scoring 23 runs during their

four-game winning streak last week, the Yankees have tallied only 10 runs in their last four games, managing to go 2-2 during that stretch.

Sabathia was looking to build on his last two starts, a 7.1-inning, one-run win over the Red Sox on May 31 and a complete-game victory on June 5 against the Indians that made his seven-inning, seven-run shelling by the Rays feel like a thing of the past. "I just think it's location," Joe Girardi said when asked what the difference had been the past two outings. "As we've talked

about, a lot of times in the first two months he has one that's not so good. He's through that. The last two times he's thrown the ball very well."

The Yankees tried to stake their ace to an early lead, loading the bases with one out in the first inning against Colon. Kevin Youkilis hit a foul pop-up for the second out, then Lyle Overbay hit a fly ball to left field that Yoanis Cespedes caught in foul territory, stranding all three runners.

It took the A's only two pitches to get to Sabathia, whose struggles at the Coliseum have been well-documented: Coco Crisp launched Sabathia's second pitch over the left-field wall for a quick 1-0 A's lead, then Norris pushed the lead to two runs in the second with an RBI double.

The Yankees never posed a serious threat to Colon after the first, putting one runner on in the second, fourth, fifth and sixth without ever advancing any of them beyond first base.

Nate Freiman and Chris Young hit back-to-back one-out singles in the fourth against Sabathia, but Josh Reddick popped out to bring Sabathia one out away from an escape.

That escape never took place.

Sabathia hung a first-pitch curveball to Norris, who drilled it over the wall in left-center for a three-run homer and a 5-0 A's lead.

The two home runs allowed by Sabathia were the 13th and 14th he's given up this season, moving him past Phil Hughes for the most on the Yankees' staff and tying him for the third-most allowed by any pitcher in the American League.

Oakland added a run in the sixth as Josh Donaldson doubled, moved to third on a chopper that clipped Sabathia's left hand, then scored on a wild pitch to stretch the lead to 6-0.

Colon blanked the Yankees through six innings, handing the comfortable lead to the Oakland bullpen. The Yankees got on the board with a pair of runs against Jerry Blevins in the eighth, but it wasn't enough to overcome another unhappy homecoming for Sabathia.

ATHLETICS 6
YANKEES 4

CC Sabathia walks off after another rough outing, this time in front of home audience in the Bay Area, allowing six runs in six innings against Oakland. Photo by Reuters

MLB.com

CC roughed up by A's in old stompin' grounds

Yankees' late-inning comeback falls short in Oakland

By Bryan Hoch / MLB.com | 6/12/2013 2:18 AM ET

OAKLAND -- CC Sabathia should feel more at home in the O.co Coliseum. He attended ballgames here as a kid growing up in nearby Vallejo, still pays his way in to see the Raiders play on winter Sundays, and always has a local cheering contingent on hand for his starts.

For whatever reason, Sabathia's level of comfort does not seem to extend to the mound. The Athletics knocked the left-hander around for six runs on eight hits, including a pair of homers, as the Yankees suffered a 6-4 defeat on Tuesday night in Oakland.

"I just felt like everything was flat; no real life on the fastball," Sabathia said. "It's up to me to go out there and battle, try to keep us in the game. I couldn't do that today."

Sabathia was finished after six innings as his career ERA at O.co Coliseum swelled to 5.29, his highest at any current American League park.

More troubling for the Yankees, the outing represented another stumble for their ace, just when Sabathia had seemed to figure something out by stringing two good starts together against the Red Sox and Indians.

"He made mistakes," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "You can't make mistakes at this level. If you do, sometimes you're going to get away with them, but most of the time you're not."

Coco Crisp slugged Sabathia's second pitch of the evening over the left-field fence, and the A's cruised the rest of the way. Derek Norris delivered the big blow, a three-run blast with two outs in the fourth inning, as part of a four-RBI night for the Athletics catcher -- the first of his career.

"I think [Sabathia's] numbers show that maybe here he hasn't pitched as well as everywhere else," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "I know this is home for him, but you try to get to a good starter like him early in the game, and we were able to."

Sabathia said that he didn't question the pitch selection to Norris, a first-pitch curveball that was hammered, but catcher Chris Stewart accepted responsibility.

"That was my call. That's my fault," Stewart said. "We threw him a lot of fastballs his first at-bat and figured he was going to try to go up there and look for the same thing. We're just trying to get ahead with the curveball, and he hit it out of the park."

Norris also had a soft second-inning RBI double that plopped in front of right fielder Lyle Overbay, also with two outs, and Sabathia uncorked a full-count wild pitch that allowed Josh Donaldson to score Oakland's sixth run in the sixth inning.

"It's disappointing. It's definitely frustrating," Sabathia said. "After having two good ones and feeling really good, just not having it today is frustrating. I'll be ready to go in five days."

The Yankees were blanked for six innings by right-hander Bartolo Colon, who permitted just three hits while striking out three and uncharacteristically walking four batters; Colon had allowed just six free passes over his first 12 starts of the season.

Overbay said that the Yankees wasted a prime opportunity in the first inning, as New York loaded the bases with one out thanks in part to two of Colon's walks. Kevin Youkilis and Overbay both popped up into the Coliseum's generous foul ground, allowing Colon to wriggle free.

"I think we lost the game when we couldn't score in the first inning," Overbay said. "That kind of set us up and it gave Colon some momentum."

New York finally pushed onto the board in the eighth inning against reliever Jerry Blevins, as Mark Teixeira and pinch-hitter Vernon Wells connected for run-scoring singles.

The Yankees added two more runs with two outs in the ninth on another Teixeira single, but A's closer Grant Balfour got Travis Hafner to fly out to the wall in left-center field to end the game.

"I hit it good," Hafner said. "You know that in Oakland at night it doesn't carry well, but I was hoping it'd at least be off the wall. You just want to win the game. We had a good comeback going and I was hoping it'd continue there."

The same can be said for Sabathia, who has had a very up-and-down season at the helm of New York's rotation. His decrease in fastball velocity has been a hot topic, but it should also be noted that Sabathia has now permitted a team-leading 14 home runs, which ranks third in the American League.

Stewart said that statistic might stem from Sabathia's willingness to challenge hitters by firing strikes, which generally is a positive trait. It didn't seem so on Tuesday, however, as Sabathia was unable to miss too many of the bats he was trying to throw past.

"I'm not ready to give up on him. I expect his next start to be a good one," Girardi said. "He still has the same repertoire, he just doesn't have the same velocity. I just think he had an off night."



CC Sabathia gets pounded as Yankees fall to Oakland, 6-4

By Andy McCullough/The Star-Ledger

on June 12, 2013 at 2:59 AM

OAKLAND – The pitch that doomed the Yankees in a 6-4 loss Tuesday – on a night when their bats resembled pop-guns for seven innings and their novice outfielder committed a run-scoring gaffe – was a 76-mph curveball.

CC Sabathia threw it in the fourth inning. At that point, he already trailed by two runs. He likely regretted the execution as soon as the baseball left his hand. Athletics catcher Derek Norris gave it the treatment it deserved. He unloaded a three-run blast.

“I think the big mistake was the one he made to Norris,” manager Joe Girardi said. “It was a breaking ball he left over the middle of the plate and up.”

The pitch that embarrassed the team came two innings later. Sabathia flung a changeup in the dirt with a runner on third. The ball bounced off catcher Chris Stewart’s chest and skittered away. Oakland third baseman Josh Donaldson jetted home on the wild pitch.

The Yankees brought the tying run to the plate in the ninth, after a pair of two-run rallies in the final two innings. But Travis Hafner flied out at the warning track to let Oakland off the hook.

“I thought it at least had a chance to go off the wall, and we were going to have a double,” Girardi said. “But the heavy air can knock some balls down here.”

Thus it was an ugly night for Sabathia (6-5, 4.07 ERA), and a disconcerting one for his team (37-27). The Athletics pushed around Sabathia, Lyle Overbay misplayed a ball in the outfield and former Yankee Bartolo Colon stymied his old mates for six scoreless innings.

Pitching in front of hundreds of friends from his hometown in nearby Vallejo, Sabathia allowed eight hits. He's given up at least that many in eight of his 14 starts. Sabathia cited a dulled arsenal and "just not having it today."

"The changeup was up, flat," Sabathia said. "The two-seamer, I was yanking down the middle. It was just a combination of everything not being sharp."

Each week appears to provide a new referendum on Sabathia. In late May, he appeared so vulnerable: Baltimore rapped 11 hits off him on May 20; Tampa Bay tagged him for seven runs on May 26. Then Sabathia rebounded. He authored a gem against Boston in his next start, giving up one run in 7 1/3 innings. On the day before this trip began, Sabathia lugged himself through a complete-game victory over Cleveland.

Thus, for a week, questions about Sabathia's viability ceased. They are likely to resurface now. This is his lot in life. He is the staff's ace, even if Hiroki Kuroda has out-performed him the past two seasons. His contract and his resume demand high scrutiny. He'll receive that once again.

Girardi brushed aside a question about Sabathia's health.

"He wouldn't be going out there if he wasn't healthy," he said.

Oakland started Colon, the bulbous former Cy Young winner who helped the Yankees in 2011. The Yankees loaded the bases against him in the first inning. Brett Gardner grounded a single. Robinson Cano and Mark Teixeira each walked.

But neither Kevin Youkilis nor Lyle Overbay came through. Youkilis conducted an unproductive at-bat, popping out to first base. Overbay flied out to left.

"We lost the game when we couldn't score in the first inning," Overbay said. "That set up us, and gave Colon some momentum."

In the bottom of the frame, Oakland was far more efficient. Coco Crisp pounced on Sabathia's second pitch, a 90-mph fastball on the inner half. Crisp pulled a drive over the fence in left. When Sabathia faced the A's on May 3 at Yankee Stadium, infielder Adam Rosales also hit a leadoff homer. The Yankees lost that night, 2-0.

"He struggled to be consistent throwing strikes," Stewart said. "Right from the get-go . . . We tried to find the corners, and it was tough for him tonight. His other stuff wasn't as sharp as it normally is, too."

Overbay's gaffe occurred in the next inning. With two outs and Josh Reddick at second base, Sabathia jammed catcher Derek Norris with a fastball. A soft flyball floated toward the right-field line. Cano and Overbay sprinted, but could not prevent the descent of a double.

Here, Overbay showed his inexperience. This was his fourth career start in the outfield. He likes to visualize events in the field to prepare. But his memory bank as an outfielder is razor-thin. At first base, little can surprise him. In the outfield, almost every scenario is new.

"Guys who have played in the outfield in the outfield enough, they can kind of react," Overbay said over the weekend in Seattle. "Just like me at first."

Overbay reached to snag the ball. He mishandled the exchange. On the bases, Reddick kept chugging. Once Overbay had a handle on the ball, he uncorked a wide throw home. Chris Stewart had to step off the plate to receive it. Reddick scored without incident.

Two innings later, Sabathia threw that curveball. He'll have four days to stew about it.

"It was disappointing," Sabathia said. "It was definitely frustrating after having two good [starts], and feeling pretty good. Just not having it today, it's frustrating. But I'll be ready to go in five days."

NorthJersey.com

Yankees' rally falls short in 6-4 loss to A's in Oakland

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2013 LAST UPDATED: WEDNESDAY JUNE 12, 2013, 3:02 AM

BY JOSH DUBOW
ASSOCIATED PRESS
THE RECORD

OAKLAND, Calif. — As soon as Coco Crisp sent the second pitch of the game from CC Sabathia over the left-field wall it was clear the New York Yankees' ace didn't have his best stuff.

Derek Norris also homered and drove in four runs and Bartolo Colon pitched six scoreless innings to lead the Oakland Athletics to a 6-4 victory over the New York Yankees on Tuesday night.

"It was disappointing," Sabathia said. "Just not having it today was frustrating but I'll be ready to go in five days. I just thought the stuff wasn't as sharp, wasn't as good tonight. They did a good job tonight of fouling off pitches and making me throw the ball over the plate."

Sabathia (6-5) allowed six runs and eight hits in six innings in his homecoming start in front of many fans that came from his hometown of nearby Vallejo to watch him pitch.

The poor outing left Sabathia with a 5.30 ERA in 14 career starts in Oakland. That's his highest ERA in any active American League park.

"He made mistakes, and you can't make mistakes at this level," manager Joe Girardi said. "If you do, sometimes you're going to get away with them but most of the time you're not."

The Yankees almost overcame the rough start by scoring two runs in the eighth and two more in the ninth to bring Travis Hafner up as the potential tying run. But Seth Smith jumped right at the wall to catch his drive to left-center to end the game and give the A's the win.

"With the career he's had, anytime he connects with the barrel it's obviously going to be a scary moment," Norris said. "He's got tremendous power and he's a monster, he's huge. Anytime a guy like that you hear a barrel you know it could be scary. Fortunately for us Seth made a great play and that good old marine layer made the ball go down a little bit."

The A's did get some bad news when star outfielder Yoenis Cespedes had to leave the game after the second inning with tightness in his left hamstring. He is day to day. Cespedes appeared to hurt himself running out a groundout in the first inning. Crisp also played through a sore right heel.

Colon (8-2) pitched out of a bases-loaded, one-out jam in the first inning and then didn't allow another runner to reach second base. He allowed three hits and a season-high four walks to improve to 5-0 with a 0.75 ERA over his past five starts.

Norris was coming off an 0-for-13 road trip and was hitless in 14 straight at-bats before delivering the most productive game of his career. He blooped a two-out RBI double down the right-field line in the second that scored Josh Reddick from first when Lyle Overbay misplayed the ball in his fourth career game in right field.

Norris then added the big blow in the fourth inning when he drove a first pitch from Sabathia over the wall in left-center for a three-run homer that made it 5-0 and gave Norris a career-high four RBIs.

The A's added a run in the sixth when Josh Donaldson doubled and scored on a wild pitch and the A's ended the New York's streak of allowing four runs or fewer in eight straight games.

"The changeup was up and flat, the two-seamer I was yanking down the middle," Sabathia said. "It was just a combination of everything not being sharp."

New York scored twice in the eighth off Jerry Blevins and could have had more except right fielder Josh Reddick made a nice running catch to track down a liner toward the line by Travis Hafner.

Mark Teixeira added a two-run single in the ninth before Smith jumped to make the catch to end the game and give Grant Balfour his 16th save in as many chances.

The Yankees threatened in the first inning when they took advantage of two rare walks by Colon to load the bases with one out. But Colon escaped the threat with no damage when he got Kevin Youkilis to foul out to first base and Lyle Overbay to foul out to left field.

"We got to make him pay," Overbay said. "We let him off the hook and that kind of gave him some momentum and we couldn't get it back."

New York then found itself trailing two pitches into the bottom half when Crisp his third leadoff homer of the season and 11th in his career to make it 1-0.

NOTES: The national anthem was played by the marching band from Solano Middle School, the school Sabathia attended for junior high. ... Girardi said he hopes SS Derek Jeter will be cleared Thursday by doctors to begin full rehab of his injured ankle. ... Dan Straily (3-2, 4.67 ERA) pitches for Oakland in the second game of the series against Phil Hughes (3-4, 4.80). ... Golden State Warriors F Harrison Barnes threw out the first pitch.

Sports Illustrated

Norris, Colon lead Athletics past Yankees 6-4

June 11, 2013

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) -- As Travis Hafner's drive carried toward the high wall in left-center what had been a six-run lead for Oakland no longer seemed so safe anymore.

The Athletics were able to catch their breath once Seth Smith jumped to make the catch to seal a 6-4 win over CC Sabathia and the New York Yankees on Tuesday night.

"With the career he's had anytime he connects with the barrel it's obviously going to be a scary moment," catcher Derek Norris said. "He's got tremendous power and he's a monster, he's huge. Anytime a guy like that you hear a barrel you know it could be scary. Fortunately for us Seth made a great play and that good old marine layer made the ball go down a little bit."

Norris homered and drove in four runs, Coco Crisp hit a leadoff homer and Bartolo Colon (8-2) pitched six scoreless innings to lead the A's to their eighth win in 11 games. Oakland (39-27) has its best record after 66 games since 1992.

It didn't come easy after the Yankees scored twice in the eighth and twice in the ninth to bring up Hafner as the tying run with a man on first. His drive off Grant Balfour through the thick night air in Oakland died at the fence.

"To me it was never going out," said Balfour, who recorded his 16th save in as many chances. "It was just a matter of does it go off the wall a little too high and then it's a double. That was the only thing I was worried about. I was never worried about it going out."

Sabathia (6-5) allowed six runs and eight hits in six innings in his homecoming start in front of many fans that came from his hometown of nearby Vallejo to watch him pitch.

"He made mistakes, and you can't make mistakes at this level," manager Joe Girardi said. "If you do, sometimes you're going to get away with them but most of the time you're not."

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"He's been unbelievable really for us," Balfour said. "He's a veteran guy and he's leading the way for us. He's showing the younger guys, 'Hey I'm out here and I'm still doing it.' Just watching the way he goes about his business he's a true professional. He's been doing it a long time and is very successful at doing it. We're lucky to have him."

Norris was coming off an 0-for-13 road trip and was hitless in 14 straight at-bats before delivering the most productive game of his career. He blooped a two-out RBI double down the right-field line in the second that scored Josh Reddick from first when Lyle Overbay misplayed the ball in his fourth career game in right field.

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Wednesday, June 12, 2013

Rapid Reaction: Athletics 6, Yankees 4

By Wallace Matthews

OAKLAND -- Toto, I don't think we're in Seattle anymore. The two cities bear no resemblance to one another, nor do their baseball teams. Seattle is picturesque and charming, Oakland industrial and homely. But while the Seattle Mariners are essentially harmless, the Oakland Athletics are anything but, and Tuesday night they put a whopping on the New York Yankees, 6-4, in the opener of this three-game series.

What it means: Just when you thought [CC Sabathia](#) had gotten over his early-season problems, he comes up ineffective again against the Athletics. With the Yankees' anemic offense, it takes them out of the game early.

Ace low: After two consecutive outstanding outings, a worrisome performance by Sabathia, who was hit hard and often Tuesday night, allowing six runs on eight hits in six innings. And once again, Sabathia lived in the 899091 zip code, his fastball loitering from 89 to 91 mph all game. Sabathia is now 6-5 with a 4.07 ERA, second-highest among Yankee starters (Hughes 4.80).

Missed opportunity: The Yankees loaded the bases in the first innings with a single and two uncharacteristic walks by Colon, but [Kevin Youkilis](#) fouled out to the infield and [Lyle Overbay](#) fouled out to left to strand the baserunners. Despite two more walks -- Colon had walked just six in all his previous starts this season -- the Yankees never got another runner to second base off him before Bartolo exited in the seventh, having shut them out on three hits.

Coco Pops: It took only two pitches for the A's to take the lead, when [Coco Crisp](#) lined Sabathia's second offering of the game into the left-field seats.

Lyl-E: Playing just the fourth game in the outfield of his major league career, Lyle Overbay looked quite professional tracking [Josh Donaldson](#)'s fly to deep right to end the first. And he looked positively amateurish allowing [Derek Norris](#)' pop fly inside the right-field line to drop in front of him. He then kicked it away, enabling [Josh Reddick](#) to score from first for the A's second run of the game. Somehow, the play was scored a double and an RBI, but should have been an E-9.

Hanger steak: Sabathia hung a first-pitch curve to Norris with two on and two out in the fourth, and the ball wound up well beyond the left-field fence. The three-run bomb made it 5-0 Oakland and gave Norris the first four-RBI game of his career. Sabathia not only leads the Yankees in home runs allowed, he is tied with four others for third-most homers allowed in the AL with 14.

Into the Frei-ing pan: A's first baseman Nate Freinam has become a Sabathia nemesis, getting hits in each of his first five at-bats off the Yankees ace.

Make 'em sweat: The Yankees got runners to second and third with two out and Teixeira coming up in the ninth, forcing Bob Melvin to go to his closer, Grant Balfour. On a 1-2 pitch, Tex singled in both runners to cut the margin to two runs, but Balfour got Travis Hafner to fly out to the wall in center, just missing a game-tying home run, to earn his 16th save in as many opportunities this season.

What's next: Game 2 of this three-game series, Phil Hughes (3-4, 4.80) vs. RHP Dan Straily (3-2, 4.67), first pitch at 10:05 p.m.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WSJ.com

June 12, 2013, 2:01 a.m. ET

Sabathia Shelled as Yankees Fall

By DANIEL BARBARISI

OAKLAND, Calif.—The Yankees have reached the point in their season when positional jockeying starts to matter, if only a little. By the beginning of June, the haves and the have-nots have sorted themselves out, and both the Yankees and their Tuesday foes, the Oakland Athletics, were squarely in the have group.

The two teams entered Tuesday's game fighting for the lead in their respective divisions, and neck-and-neck in the wildcard chase. So even with more than half the season to go, losses like Tuesday's 6-4 defeat to competitive teams like Oakland matter.

The Yankees felt confident in trotting out their purported ace, CC Sabathia, only to watch him get shelled for six runs in six innings. The outing continued Sabathia's erratic season—he had notched two strong starts before this stinker—and raised his ERA to 4.07, the worst mark he's had this late in the season since 2008.

Sabathia wasn't the only problem; the Yankees did nothing against Oakland's 40-year-old starting pitcher, the surprising Bartolo Colon.

Colon, who pitched for the Yankees two seasons ago, bent but never broke. He walked four Yankees—having previously walked only six batters all season—but none of them came around to score. Colon was adept at racking up pop-ups and ground-outs to end any threat.

The Yankees tried to rally late against the Oakland bullpen, scoring two runs in the eighth and two in the ninth, but Yankee DH Travis Hafner's potential game-tying hit was caught at the wall to end the game, and the Yankees fell further behind Boston in the American League East, and behind Oakland in the wildcard standings.

LoHud Yankees Blog

Postgame notes: "Just not having it today is frustrating"

Posted by: Chad Jennings - Posted in Misc on Jun 12, 2013

In the end, Travis Hafner drove a ball to deep left-center field. If it had hung in the air for just a moment longer, if it had been hit just a touch harder, it might have been a two-out, game-tying home run. It was, instead, the final out of a two-run loss.

"I thought it at least had a chance to go off the wall and we were going to have a double," Joe Girardi said. "But the heavy air can knock some balls down here. We've seen that before. It's not really a home run hitter's park, even though there were some given up tonight."

There were some home runs given up tonight, and that opens a different subject entirely.

CC Sabathia has allowed 14 home runs this season, the most on the team — two more than Phil Hughes — and tied for the third-most in the American League. He's never allowed more than 22 home runs in a season, and he's only once allowed more than 20.

"I just think that he goes out and he throws strikes," Chris Stewart said. "Sometimes if you miss with those strikes and guys are ultra-aggressive, they're going to hit them out of the park. Normally when he's on, his ball is moving and it's to location, so it takes advantage of that aggressiveness. If it's not, then he gets in trouble."

There's a lot about Sabathia that seems unusual this season. It started with his velocity, which is still a few notches lower than it's been in the past. It's easy to draw a connection between that diminished arm strength and an inability to get away with mistakes. And it's easy to connect those mistakes to the home runs. And it's easy to connect the home runs to the fact that Sabathia's had a hard time getting on a sustain roll this season, something we've seen him do several times since he came to the Yankees.

"It's disappointing," he said. "It's definitely frustrating. After having two good ones and feeling really good, just not having it today is frustrating. . . . You're always (hopeful) after a couple good starts. The last two, I was feeling pretty good. You just want to keep it rolling. I wasn't able to do that tonight, but hopefully I can do it again in five days."

Said Girardi: "I'm not ready to give up on him. I expect his next start to be a good one."

- Lyle Overbay on the play in right field, when the ball dropped between him and Robinson Cano: "I didn't think I could catch it, so I figured let Robbie try. If I had it all over again, I'd make sure of where he was playing. He was playing up the middle, so I should have known he wasn't going to have a chance to get it, so maybe I could lay out or something. But I knew I couldn't get it, so I was hoping maybe he would have a chance."

- After explaining one play that led to a run, Overbay brought us back to the big picture: "I think we lost the game when we couldn't score in the first inning. That kind of set us up and gave Colon some momentum." Bases loaded with one out in the first, Kevin Youkilis and Overbay each hit a weak fly ball to end the threat.

- Brett Gardner stayed hot with two hits and has hit safely in 16 of 18 games. His leadoff single got the offense going in the eighth, sparking four runs in the final two innings. Mark Teixeira had three RBI in those innings. Chris Stewart finished with two hits and his hitting .357 this road trip. "I expect our guys to put up good at-bats and give us an opportunity," Girardi said. "They did it, and they did it against a bullpen that's pretty good."

- Robinson Cano had been brutal lately, but he took two early walks then had two late hits, including a double in the ninth.

- Hafner on his game-ending fly ball: "The ball doesn't travel here at night. I was hoping it would at least be off the wall."

- Sabathia's big mistake was a first-pitch curveball that Norris hit for a three-run homer. "That was my call," Stewart said. "That's my fault. We threw him a lot of fastballs his first at-bat and figured he was going to try to go up there and look for the same thing. Just trying to get ahead with the curveball and he hit it out of the park."

- Sabathia on the Norris homer: "I was going to get to (the fastball), I was just trying — the at-bat before I threw him all fastballs, so I was just trying to throw him off a little bit. He put a good swing on that one."

- Once again, is everyone sure Sabathia's not pitching hurt? "Yeah," Girardi said. "He wouldn't be going out there if he wasn't healthy."

- By the way, Sabathia's left hand was fine after the comebacker.

- Athletics outfielder Yoenis Cespedes is day-to-day with a tight left hamstring. That's why he left tonight's game in the third inning.

- Final word goes to Sabathia, one evaluation of his night: "I just thought the stuff wasn't as sharp, wasn't as good tonight. They did a good job of fouling off pitches and making me throw the ball over the plate. They put some good swings on some balls. ... The changeup was up and flat, the two-seamer, I was yanking it down the middle. It was just a combination of everything not being sharp."

He's in a groove

Gardner keeps swinging hot bat

BY ERIK BOLAND

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6/12/13

OAKLAND, Calif. — Brett Gardner said his approach at the plate this season hasn't changed drastically.

But it is a change nonetheless, one that has the outfielder on a torrid stretch.

"Just be ready to hit," said Gardner, the AL's reigning Player of the Week for the period ending June 9 (he went 13-for-25 with five doubles, a homer and six RBIs). "If I'm feeling good, if I'm swinging the bat well, there's no need to wait around for a 0-2 changeup when you get a fastball early in the count over the middle of the plate."

Hitting coach Kevin Long put it another way: coming to the plate with the intent to "do damage," something Gardner, who had hit safely in 15 of his last 17 games entering last night, has done. He's accumulated 24 extra-base hits, including six homers. Gardner's season-best in homers is seven, accomplished in 2011.

"He's been much more aggressive," Long said before last night's game. "He's been real good about attacking the strike zone and actually doing damage earlier in the count. What you're seeing is a guy who's been in swing-mode right from the time he steps in the box."

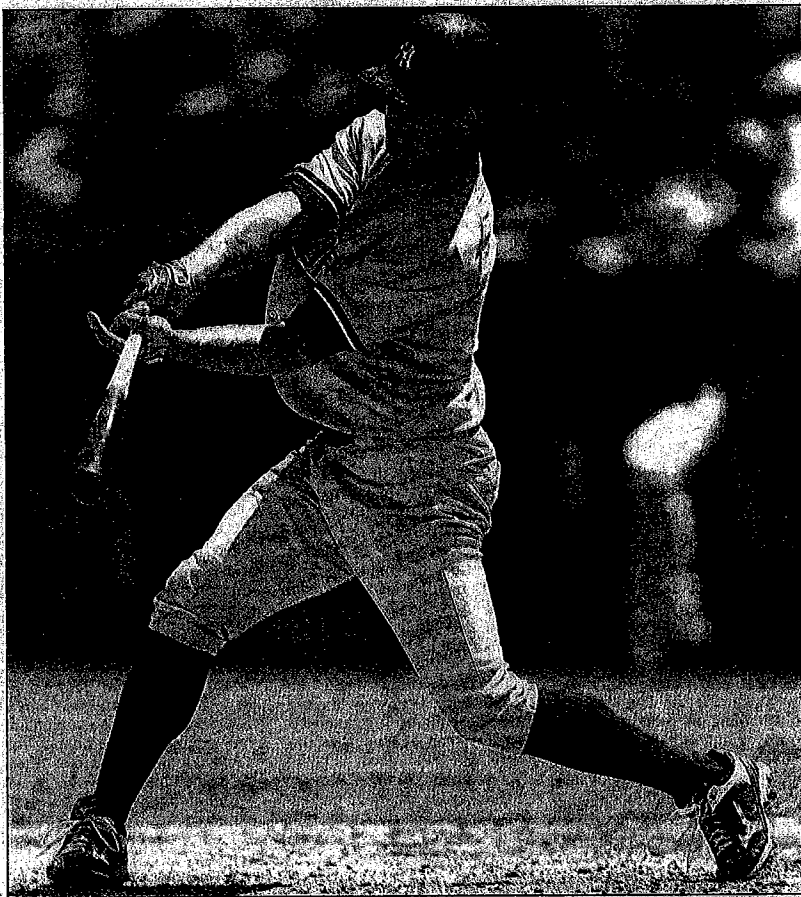
Long said it has been an adjustment because Gardner, 29, had "done it the other way so long," meaning seeing a lot of pitches, which in and of itself isn't a bad thing. However, Long said if a pitcher was locked in, the outfielder constantly hit from behind.

"He used to hit with two strikes a lot," Long said. "He was notorious for taking until he got to two strikes."

Long said that was OK, but only to a point.

"He's got a good eye and part of what he did well was get on base, but he was also giving the pitcher, it seemed, like two strikes every at-bat," he said.

Gardner, hitting .284 with a .349 OBP, characterized the approach as "taking my A-swing."



Brett Gardner went 13-for-25 during a recent stretch and was named AL player of the week.

YANKS RESULT

Read about last night's late Yanks-A's game at newsday.com/yankees

Tonight

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



"It's always been a work in progress," he said. "I'm still trying to make improvements with it. Maybe a little bit of that's paying off."

Like any player in a hot streak, Gardner wasn't much for overanalyzing.

"It's like my spring training started," Gardner said. "I was swinging the bat well for a couple of weeks. It's baseball. When you're going good, don't

forget about when you're struggling. And when you're struggling, try to get back to how you were doing when you're doing good."

Joe Girardi called Gardner "locked in," and joked, though there was some seriousness to it, about Monday's off day possibly disrupting his rhythm.

"What you don't want is that off day to get in the way of that," Girardi said.

Gardner who, counting last night, has appeared in all 64 games, smiled about the notion.

"I'm not ever going to complain about an off day," he said. "We don't get many, so it's a much needed off day. For me, for everybody!"

Gardner was limited to 16 games last season because of a right elbow strain that required surgery and he's happy with how it's responded.

"My elbow has felt great the whole year," Gardner said. "I was a little concerned about that coming in, just because at the end of the season last year I didn't get any at-bats . . . but it's felt great. I've been healthy so I can't complain."

Healthy Gardner provides big lift

Leadoff role lets CF lead Yanks in hitting

By Chad Jennings
cjennings@lohud.com

OAKLAND — For four years, the Yankees had easy alternatives to Brett Gardner. They had Curtis Granderson to play center field, Derek Jeter to hit leadoff and guys like Marcus Thames and Andruw Jones to play against lefties.

Gardner has been a streaky hitter since the minors, and when he fell into slumps, it was easy to move him to the bottom of the order or dump him into a left-field platoon.

There haven't been many alternatives this season. Forced to stick with Gardner as an everyday leadoff hitter, Joe Girardi has reaped the benefits of the team's highest batting average.

"When Jeter started the year on the DL, we just said (Gardner) was going to be our leadoff hitter," Girardi said. "I've always liked him up there. He's swung the bat well against lefthanders and worked pitchers. We like that. I think that's important."

On Monday, Gardner was named the American League's Player of the Week, and, on Tuesday he was right back in center field and batting leadoff. For the Yankees, only Robinson Cano has played in as many games or

YANKS: Gardner steps up

Continued from Page 1C

gotten more at-bats, and that's just one year after Gardner missed nearly an entire season with a lingering elbow injury.

"I don't really worry about the results as much, just being able to stay healthy and stay on the field," Gardner said. "My elbow has felt great the whole year. I was a little concerned about that just because at the end of the season last year I didn't get many at-bats with it. Always wondered in the offseason how it's going to feel, but it's felt great. I've been healthy so I can't complain."

Neither can the Yankees. Gardner's six home runs are one away from matching a career high, and he entered Tuesday with a .349 on-base percentage that was second highest on the team. Put into his natural center field position, he could be a Gold Glove candidate.

"When you're going good, you don't forget about when you were struggling," Gardner said. "It's just a matter of being in a groove and seeing the ball well. ... But it's been good to be able to come to the field



Yankees center fielder Brett Gardner hits an RBI single Sunday against the Mariners in Seattle. TED S. WARREN/AP

knowing you're going to be leading off and playing center field. I guess it makes things a little easier maybe."

Captain Cano: Second baseman Robinson Cano once again has been named American League captain for the Home Run Derby. He took the job for a second year in a row, after taking heat for not selecting Royals DH Billy Butler when the All-Star Game was in Kansas City last year. "Now that you're in New York, you get to pick whoever you want," Cano said.

This year's All-Star Game is at Citi Field, and Mets third baseman David Wright will be the

Home Run Derby captain for the National League.

Yankee clippings: Held out of Sunday's lineup because of a sore back, Kevin Youkilis was back at third base Tuesday. "He feels great," Girardi said. ... Lyle Overbay was also back in the lineup Tuesday, playing right field for the fourth time in his career. ... First-round draft pick Aaron Judge, who's from northern California, took batting practice with the Yankees before Tuesday's game. He said he's fully expecting to sign. "The ball really jumps off his bat," Girardi said.

See YANKS, Page 3C

6/11/2013 10:11 P.M. ET

Gardner earns AL Player of the Week honors

By Bryan Hoch / MLB.com

OAKLAND -- When shortstop Derek Jeter went down due to injury this spring, manager Joe Girardi decided to slot outfielder Brett Gardner in as the Yankees' everyday leadoff hitter. Gardner has made it an easy call to keep writing his name atop the lineup, day after day.

Gardner has played in all of the Yankees' 64 games this season and is swinging a red-hot bat, earning American League Player of the Week honors last week after batting .520 (13-for-25) with a .556 on-base percentage, five doubles, one home run, six RBIs and five runs scored.

"He's really swinging the bat," Girardi said. "He's been a force at the top of our order, he's playing very good defense and running the bases. He's been locked in."

Gardner missed nearly all of last season with a right elbow injury suffered in April, but playing every day -- and batting leadoff -- has agreed with the speedster. He has hit in 15 of his last 17 games and entered play Tuesday batting .284 with six homers and 27 RBIs.

"It's just been good to be healthy and be out there," Gardner said. "I haven't really thought about it like that, but it's been good to be able to come to the field knowing you're going to be leading off and playing center field. I guess it makes things a little easier, maybe."

Gardner said that he has tried to be more aggressive early in the count at the plate, and though he has stolen 10 bases in 15 tries, Gardner said that having Robinson Cano batting second has made him think twice about running on the basepaths.

"I know that's a big part of my game and I know I want to get into scoring position for Robbie, but early in the season I got thrown out with Robbie Cano at the plate and that's not something that I want to do," Gardner said.

Gardner has also done a nice job of barreling up the pitches he has seen, which accounts in part for his relative power surge -- his six homers are one shy of a career high, set in 2011, but he doesn't expect to be grouped with the Yanks' power hitters.

"I don't really worry about that. I might end up with six or seven home runs," Gardner said. "I might end up with 15 or something. My job is to get on base. If I turn on one and hit it good, then great, but I'm happier hitting line drives up the middle."

First-rounder Judge takes BP with Yanks in Oakland

OAKLAND -- The Yankees got an up-close look at outfielder Aaron Judge, one of their first-round selections in the First-Year Player Draft, as the slugger taken 32nd overall took batting practice on Tuesday at O.co Coliseum.

"He can hit some homers," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "The ball really jumps off his bat. Strong kid. He can hit line drives out of the ballpark. You think that they're good line drives in the gap, and they just keep going. He was pretty impressive today."

Judge, who stands a towering 6-foot-7 and 255 pounds, spent time in the clubhouse with the Yankees before Tuesday's series opener against the A's and said he is feeling "real confident" about signing with New York.

He also said that hitting on a big league diamond with the rest of the Yankees was a bit nerve-racking, and he hopes to be able to repeat the experience at Yankee Stadium.

"The first few rounds are kind of tough. Everybody's watching you, but after you take a few rounds and get loose and relax, it's pretty fun," Judge said.

Judge hails from nearby Linden, Calif., and attended Fresno State. He said the player he was most looking forward to meeting was Yankees second baseman Robinson Cano.

"I've always loved watching him play. He's a great guy," Judge said. "I always wanted to meet him. I talked to him on the phone a couple of days ago; he called me. I was shocked. At first, I was sitting there and looked at my dad, 'This guy says he's Robinson Cano. I don't believe him.' It was unreal."

Pineda working toward big league return

OAKLAND -- The Yankees received another good report on right-hander Michael Pineda, who is progressing in his return from labrum surgery and could make his first big league start for the club this summer.

Pineda allowed an unearned run over 4 2/3 innings on Sunday for Class A Tampa at Lakeland. He is scheduled to make his next Minor League outing on Friday, either for Class A Charleston or Double-A Trenton.

"He was pretty good [Sunday]; threw some good changeups and was pretty good," manager Joe Girardi said. "You want to build from his last start, continue to build this kid up."

"I'm very happy with his progress so far and the way he's went about it. It's been a long time since he's pitched in the big leagues but he's went at it the right way."

Pineda, 24, was 9-10 with a 3.74 ERA in 28 starts for the Mariners in 2011. He missed all of last season due to the labrum injury, which he suffered in Spring Training with the Yankees.

Yankees announce 'Tribute to Heroes' hopefuls

OAKLAND -- Three Yankees fans have been announced as part of a "Tribute for Heroes" campaign organized by Major League Baseball and People Magazine, honoring the nation's veterans and military service members.

The candidates selected to represent the Yankees are:

Kalynn Casey of Phelan, Calif., a member of the 82nd Airborne Division and now an Airborne Army medic who has served tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and was among some of the first-ever female cultural support team members for special forces. While in Afghanistan, Kalynn ran a local medical facility for women and children. She is also an athlete and has been a member of the Army 10-miler team, winning the Army 10-mile race with the Fort Bragg team in Washington, D.C.

JW Cortes of Jersey City, N.J., who has had a 10-year career in the New York City MTA Police Department after serving in the Marine Corps from 1994 to 2007. He was twice awarded the Navy Marine Corps Achievement medal and has been named Marine of the Year. His 4-year-old son was diagnosed with autism and Cortes is a self-proclaimed warrior for Autism Speaks, as well as the Wounded Warrior Project.

Jonathan Popovich of Pompton Lakes, N.J., who served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq in 2003 as part of the initial invasion force. He has received many military honors including a Combat Action Badge, the Bronze Star Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation and the Ranger Tab. He is now a readjustment counselor at a local Vet Center and has organized dozens of programs and outreach events while providing counseling to returning veterans and their families.

Voting will be conducted at TributeForHeroes.com through June 30, with 30 winners to be recognized before the All-Star Game on July 16 at Citi Field.

Bombers bits

- Jeter is continuing to hit off a tee at the club's complex in Tampa, Fla., as well as fielding ground balls on the grass. He is scheduled to be seen on Thursday by Dr. Robert Anderson in Charlotte, N.C., and could be cleared for full baseball activities after that visit.

- Kevin Youkilis returned to the Yankees' lineup on Tuesday after lower back tightness kept him out of Sunday's series finale against the Mariners in Seattle. Youkilis said his back felt a little stiff after sliding into first base on a defensive play, and Girardi said having two full days off probably helped.

- On this date in 2003, six Astros pitchers combined to no-hit the Yankees, 8-0, at the original Yankee Stadium. The feat set a record for most pitchers to combine in a no-hitter and marked the first time the Yankees had been no-hit at home since 1952.



Yankees Brett Gardner makes changes and hits keep coming

By Andy McCullough/The Star-Ledger

on June 11, 2013 at 11:45 PM, updated June 11, 2013 at 11:53 PM

OAKLAND, Calif. — The evolution of Yankees outfielder Brett Gardner did not occur in an instant. It involved the gentle prodding of hitting coach Kevin Long and the receptive ear of Gardner, a player looking to rebound from what he called "pretty much a wasted year" in 2012.

During spring training, Long discussed with Gardner a way to better maximize his greatest skill at the plate, his understanding of the strike zone. Long often raves about Gardner's eye, how "he knows if a ball is half an inch outside" the zone. Long wanted to maximize that tool. Don't be afraid to swing early in the count, Long counseled.

"He's been more aggressive," Long said before last night's game against the Athletics. "But he's been more aggressive in the strike zone. That's the key."

Gardner reaped a small reward on Monday. He received the American League's Player of the Week award, after hitting .520 (13-for-25) with five doubles and a homer. That capped a torrid three-week stretch.

From May 17 to Sunday, Gardner posted a 1.003 on-base plus slugging percentage.

He has cemented himself as the leadoff hitter, while also swatting six homers thus far. His career-best mark for homers was seven in 2011. Gardner credits his refined approach for some of his success.

"There's no need to wait around for an 0-2 changeup," Gardner said, "when you can get a fastball early in the count, over the plate. I'm just trying to get good pitches to hit. Swing at the pitches you're supposed to swing at, and take pitches you should be taking."

This approach is not revolutionary. The difference for Gardner? He used to take plenty of pitches he could swing at. During 2010, Gardner swung at strikes just 44.7 percent of the time, by far the lowest rate in baseball, according to Baseball Info Solutions.

In 2011, he upped his aggressiveness, offering at strikes 50.6 percent of the time — and he still held title as the most passive hitter in baseball.

This philosophy allowed Gardner to develop into a useful player, a pesky hitter who fouled off plenty of pitches and drew a good amount of walks. But he also allowed pitchers to grow comfortable. They could pound the strike zone early in the count without fear. Gardner wouldn't be swinging...

This year is different. Gardner downplays his recent stylistic change. But there is some evidence of a shift.

He entered last night's game swinging at strikes 56.8 percent of the time. He is also swinging at pitches outside the zone a career-high 30.9 percent (his career average is 21.5 percent).

"It was hard for him," Long said. "I will say that. It was an adjustment. ... He hadn't done that in so long. I'm sure there was some hesitation, like, 'I've made some pretty good money, and I'm a pretty good player where I'm at. Is this something I want to do?'"

But Long trusted that Gardner could handle the advice. His pitch-recognition skills would not erode.

As a senior at the College of Charleston, Gardner batted .447. But he made wholesale changes to his approach once he signed with the Yankees.

Gardner morphed into a unique hitter, utilizing his superior strike-zone judgment in a passive manner. Now, he's adjusting once more.

"I haven't really tried to change my approach up too much," Gardner said. "Just be ready to hit. Get good pitches to hit. If I'm feeling good, I'm swinging the bat well."



Tuesday, June 11, 2013

Gardner: All hit, no run?

By Wallace Matthews

OAKLAND -- Brett Gardner was deservedly named the AL Player of the Week last week, and his stats in the seven games were truly remarkable: 13-for-25 (.520), five doubles, a home run, six RBI, five runs scored and an on-base percentage of .556. Not coincidentally, the Yankees won six of those seven games with their leadoff hitter on a tear.

But there is also one statistic from Gardner's terrific week that is remarkable in another respect: Over that stretch, he stole just one base, and not until the last game, Sunday's 2-1 win over the Mariners in Seattle.

For a player whose entire game once seemed predicated on speed, it was an indication of how far Gardner's offensive game has developed. Then again, it might also be an indication that while Gardner has certainly gained confidence in his abilities at the plate, he may be lacking a little on the basepaths.

"I know that's a big part of my game and I know I want to get into scoring position for [Robinson Cano]," he said. "But early in the season I got thrown out with Robbie at the plate and that's not something that I want to do."

As a result, Gardner has taken off just 15 times this season, and while he leads the team in steals with 10, he has also been thrown out five times. The theory was that Gardner, the Yankees' everyday leadoff hitter with Derek Jeter on the DL, has been reluctant to run with Cano hitting behind him, fearful that if successful, he might cause the other team to walk Cano, taking the bat out of the hands of the Yankees' best hitter.

Gardner says that is not that case, that in fact his success at the plate this season has in fact limited the number of opportunities he has had to run.

"I've had a few more extra-base hits year," he said. "So that takes away some of my opportunities to run."

Indeed, Gardner has had 14 doubles, four triples and six home runs, one shy of his career high for a season, and his slugging percentage of .453 trails only Cano, Travis Hafner and Lyle Overbay, among Yankees regulars.

Gardner said he and Cano have discussed whether he should take off with Cano at the plate, and said that Cano has endorsed him trying to steal as often as possible.

"I'm not using him hitting behind me as an excuse for not running more, that's for sure. He wants me to run whenever I can run," Gardner said. "And just because I'm over there at first base, even if I'm not running, it's changing the way he's getting pitched. He should be getting

more fastballs to hit."

Gardner's strong start this season is especially rewarding considering he missed virtually all of last season with an elbow injury that eventually required surgery, going down after just nine games of the season and not returning until late September.

"Last year was pretty much a wasted year for me," he said. "But my elbow has felt great the whole year. I was a little concerned about that just because last year I didn't get many at-bats with it. I always wondered in the offseason how it was going to feel but it's felt great. I'm not all that much concerned with my results so much as being able to stay healthy and stay on the field and so far, I been healthy so I can't complain."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WSJ.com

Updated June 11, 2013, 11:07 p.m. ET

Brett Gardner, Home-Run Hitter?

By DANIEL BARBARISI

OAKLAND, Calif.—On Monday, Major League Baseball announced that Yankees center fielder Brett Gardner, a speedy defensive whiz and past base-stealing champion, had won its American League player-of-the-week award for the first time.

Gardner is known for using his speed—whacking out singles, drawing walks and displaying little power. But the Gardner who is having so much success so far this season isn't doing much with his legs. He is displaying surprising power.

Entering Tuesday night's series opener here against the A's, Gardner had hit six home runs this season—more than he hit in 150 games in 2010, and only one fewer than the career-high seven he hit in 2011. He has 14 doubles in 265 at-bats, after hitting 20 and 19 in his two previous full seasons.

But the power burst has seemingly come at the expense of his speed. Gardner has stolen only 10 bases so far, putting him on pace for just under 30 on the season. That is a significant dropoff from his 2010 and 2011 seasons, when Gardner stole 47 and 49 bases, respectively.

Where has the power come from? And where has the speed gone?

Gardner is fundamentally the same player as before. He isn't any bigger or slower than in years past. But the circumstances around him have changed, as has the way he is approaching at-bats.

In some ways, it is directly connected to why he won his player-of-the-week award. Gardner has become a much more aggressive hitter this season, looking to attack the ball early in the count instead of working deep into at-bats with the intent of drawing a walk.

"He's more aggressive," said hitting coach Kevin Long. "He's swinging earlier in the count than he ever has. He used to always hit with two strikes. You can look at averages with two strikes, and it's hard to hit with two strikes. He's done a real nice job of being aggressive but not expanding the zone."

That doesn't mean he has eschewed the walk completely, Long said, but Gardner has become less passive and more of an attacking player, hitting line drives and using his speed to turn them into doubles.

"He knows that that's a strength of his, and that he's supposed to get on base," Long said, "but he can also hit doubles and do some things that are conducive to being a better all-around player, if he attacks the strike zone a little earlier."

Gardner explained it simply. "There's no need to wait around for an 0-2 changeup when I can get a fastball early in the count over the plate," he said.

Some of those early-count hits have turned into home runs. Gardner wouldn't make a prediction on how many he thought he might hit, although he did offer a range.

"I might end up with six or seven home runs; I might end up with 15 or so," he said. "I don't worry about that. My job is to get on base. If I turn on one, great, but I'd rather hit line drives up the middle."

So far, it's working well. Gardner has almost as many extra-base hits as he did in all of 2011, in half the at-bats. This helps explain the relative absence of stolen bases.

"I've had a few more extra-base hits this year, so that may take away from opportunities to steal a base," Gardner said. "And the first month, month and a half of the season, I wasn't getting on base a lot.

"I've been getting on base more recently, but I feel I can do a better job of getting on base, taking walks, and that leads to more opportunities to run."

But should he be running more?

The Yankees have hit Gardner in the leadoff spot, with the team's best hitter, Robinson Cano, hitting behind him. With Cano at the plate, Gardner has to be certain he won't get thrown out and cost Cano a chance to drive in a run.

"Early in the season, I got thrown out with Robbie Cano at the plate, and that's not something I want to do," Gardner said. "I'm not using him hitting behind me as an excuse for not running more, that's for sure, because I've sat down and talked to him, and he wants me to run whenever I have a chance to run."

So maybe he'll start now.

"OK—maybe I'll go out and have a good week on the bases," Gardner said with a smile.

Cano won't pick Butler for Derby

By GEORGE A. KING III

OAKLAND — If you think Royals fans were displeased at Robinson Cano for not naming Billy Butler to the AL's Home Run Derby team last year, they aren't going to any happier this year.

"No chance," Cano said when asked if he would pick Butler, who had five homers going into last night's action, for this year's competition at Citi Field.

Cano was named AL team captain yesterday for the July 15 Home Run Derby at Citi Field.

YANKEES NOTES

He was roundly booed last year in Kansas City and again this season when the Yankees played three games at Kauffman Stadium.

"You're not going to enjoy getting booed," Cano said. "The fans don't understand, it was tough."

Since Citi Field is hosting the All-Star Game, Cano is looking forward to performing in his baseball hometown.

"It's New York, why not?" Cano said. "I can't wait for that day to happen. I will see who is leading and see who I pick. I have a month left."

Going into last night's action, Chris Davis' 20 homers led the AL. Miguel Cabrera was second with 18 and Edwin Encarnacion third with 17.

Cano, who will appear in the derby for the third straight year, won it in 2011. He said he will have his father, Jose, a former big league pitcher, throw to him again.

► **Manager Joe Girardi** hopes **Derek Jeter** (ankle) gets cleared tomorrow to increase baseball activities. Jeter will be examined by **Dr. Robert Anderson** in Charlotte, N.C.

"I think it will be but you never know," Girardi said of Jeter getting favorable news.

► **Aaron Judge**, whom the Yankees took with the 32nd pick in last week's draft, participated in early batting practice at the Coliseum yesterday afternoon and impressed Girardi and hitting coach **Kevin Long**.

"The ball jumps off his bat, a strong kid," Girardi said of the 6-foot-7, 255-pound outfielder, who played at Fresno State.

► **Michael Pineda** will make a second minor-league rehab start Friday for Trenton (Double-A) in Altoona, Pa.

6/11/2013 8:00 P.M. ET

Wright, Cano named Home Run Derby captains

Slugging event to be held at Citi Field gets even more Empire State flavor

By Anthony DiComo / MLB.com

NEW YORK -- After finishing second in the Home Run Derby seven years ago, Mets third baseman David Wright hinted that he might never take part in the event again.

So much for that. Not only will Wright participate once more, he will be front and center for this year's Derby at Citi Field.

Major League Baseball on Tuesday named Wright and Yankees second baseman Robinson Cano captains for the All-Star Week event, which will feature a decidedly New York flavor. Stars of their respective boroughs, Wright and Cano will shoulder the task of drafting Derby squads for the National and American Leagues.

"This is a once-in-a-career type opportunity to be able to captain the Home Run Derby team at home," Wright said. "To have Robbie on one side and me on the other, that's a tremendous opportunity. I'm thankful that Major League Baseball asked and wanted me."

For Wright, the event should be quite different than in 2006, when he was almost an afterthought despite leading all third basemen with 20 home runs at the break. It was not until Wright launched a Derby-leading 16 home runs in the first round that he announced his presence as a contender, running out of gas late to finish as the runner-up behind Ryan Howard of the Phillies.

In the years since, Wright has shown little interest in an encore performance, despite his popularity in New York City. No Mets player has participated in the Derby since 2006.

"There's probably a lot of more deserving home run hitters," said Wright, whose eight homers are tied for 27th in the NL. "But I'm glad they thought about me. Having the All-Star Game here in New York and doing the Mets-Yankees thing, that's pretty cool. I jumped at it."

Cano, meanwhile, has experienced both ends of the Derby spectrum. In his first year as a participant, Cano clubbed 32 homers over three rounds -- including a final-round record of 12 -- to edge Adrian Gonzalez, then of the Red Sox.

The American League named Cano its Derby captain the following summer, resulting in a bit of controversy. When Cano declined to select hometown favorite Billy Butler for the event in Kansas City, fans at Kauffman Stadium booed the Yankees star throughout the night. Cano finished without a single home run, admitting later that "sometimes you make a decision and it's not the right one."

"Honestly, yeah," Cano said when asked if serving as captain will be easier this year. "Now that you're in New York, you get to pick whoever you want. Now I don't have to pick David Wright because he's on the other side. Now you do it at home, where you have your crowd and the greatest fans in the world get a chance to see you swinging in the Home Run Derby."

In choosing their squads, Wright and Cano will lean on the suggestions of fans, who will once again participate in the Home Run Derby Fan Poll. Fans will have the opportunity to select three players in each league whom they would most like to see participate in the event. The 2013 Home Run Derby -- part of Gatorade All-Star Workout Day -- will

be broadcast live on ESPN, ESPN HD, ESPN Deportes and ESPN Radio in the United States beginning at 8 p.m. ET on Monday, July 15.

All-Star voting is also still ongoing, with Cano leading the way among AL second basemen. Wright ranks second at third base behind San Francisco's Pablo Sandoval, and he'll need a late push to start for the NL team. Fans may submit 25 online ballots during the voting period, but they can also earn a one-time bonus of 10 additional online ballots by being logged into an MLB.com account when submitting any online ballot. Those without an MLB.com account may visit www.mlb.com and register in accordance with the enrollment instructions.

No longer the extreme pitchers' park that it was in its first three seasons, Citi Field should provide some interesting dimensions for the Derby thanks to a series of alterations made last year. Right-handed hitters will find their best opportunities down the left-field line, where the foul pole stands just 335 feet away. Those with natural opposite-field power, like Wright, will also find Citi's new dimensions to their liking; it is now much easier to hit one over the fence in right-center field.

Left-handers will shoot for that target as well, while those with enough pop will be able to reach the Shea Bridge in right-center. Down the line in right, fans sitting in the Pepsi Porch may have the best chance for souvenirs of anyone in the park.

Wright indicated that he will keep those dimensions in mind when he begins the process of choosing his team, which he jokingly referred to as "open tryouts."

"I have to do some scouting, start maybe having some of the number-crunchers crunch some numbers for me, see who swings the ball well here in New York," Wright said. "I'm not sure yet."

Whomever Wright picks will have an opportunity to joke and hang out with his fellow All-Stars along each sideline.

"I love it," said Cano, a two-time participant. "I would say that's one of the fun things in the All-Star Game. That's the only time I get a chance to spend time, not only with your American League players but with both sides. You get a chance to take a photo; those are memories you can take and show your kids later on, when you retire."

This year's Home Run Derby will raise funds for Boys & Girls Clubs of America and MLB's Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities (RBI) program, as well as charities selected by the captains. More than \$3 million has been raised for charity over the past ten years, with an all-time high of \$615,000 donated through the 2012 event.



David Wright and Robinson Cano named captains of the Home Run Derby

Jorge Castillo/The Star-Ledger By Jorge Castillo/The Star-Ledger

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on June 11, 2013 at 7:23 PM, updated June 11, 2013 at 7:31 PM

NEW YORK -- Pitting the two New York franchises against each other, Major League Baseball announced today that Mets third baseman David Wright and Yankees second baseman Robinson Cano have been named the captains of the National League and American League teams for the Home Run Derby.

The Mets will host derby, and the ensuing All-Star Game, at Citi Field. The derby is scheduled for July 15.

Wright will be participating for the first time since he was the runner-up in 2006. Cano won the 2011 competition.

Wright has eight home runs this season and 212 for his career entering Tuesday. Cano has 15 homers this season and 192 for his career.



Tuesday, June 11, 2013

N.Y. players are HR Derby captains

ESPNNewYork.com

The Yankees' [Robinson Cano](#) will be a Home Run Derby captain again this season, but he still won't pick [Billy Butler](#) for his American League team.

"No chance," Cano said with a smile.

In last season's Derby in Kansas City, Royals fans mercilessly booed Cano for leaving Butler off the AL Derby team after he had pledged to include a Royal.

Cano also said Royals fans "crossed the line" by targeting his family last season. But even after last year's unpleasantness, Cano said he was still honored to be selected as captain for this year's event at Citi Field.

"Yes, of course, especially with the things that I went through last year. I would say that's not a good way to end it. It's special that it's in New York," Cano said. "Why not? I can't wait for that day to happen. Now I've just got to wait and see who's doing good around the league and start thinking about who I'm going to pick. I've got a month left, but I'm going to sit down and think about who I'm going to pick and who's going to do it."

[David Wright](#) of the host Mets will captain the National League squad, returning to the Home Run Derby for the first time in seven years.

In his only previous Home Run Derby, Wright finished as the runner-up in Pittsburgh in 2006 to [Philadelphia Phillies](#) first baseman [Ryan Howard](#), with catcher [Paul Lo Duca](#) serving as his pitcher.

This year's event will take place at 8 p.m. ET July 15 at Citi Field and will be televised by ESPN.

[Prince Fielder](#) won last year's Derby in Kansas City and the AL beat the NL, 61-21, in team scoring.

Wright recently told ESPNNewYork.com about participating this season after bypassing it for several years.

"Obviously, under the circumstances, this is a little different," Wright said.

"I don't think it messes too much with your swing. The biggest thing, for me, is I did it once and I enjoyed it. Honestly, I probably don't think I can do much better."

Wright said he "ran out of gas" when he participated in '06 and lost in the finals to Howard.

That year, bullpen catcher Dave Racaniello originally was supposed to throw to Wright at PNC Park, but had a back problem and was unable. Lo Duca stepped in and pitched Wright into the final round.

"He ran out of gas, too," Wright said.

Cano, who won the event in 2011, failed to hit a single homer in the competition last season.

"Yeah, I love it," Cano said. "I would say that's one of the fun things in the All-Star Game. That's the only time I get a chance to spend time, not only with your American League players but with both sides. You get a chance to take a photo; those are memories you can take and show your kids later on when you retire."

Picking a team and hitting in this year's event in New York -- even in Queens -- will be easier than Kansas City, Cano said.

"Now that you're in New York, you get to pick whoever you want. Now I don't have to pick David Wright because he's on the other side. It's fun," Cano said. "I always say I've done it away twice. Now you do it at home where you have your crowd and the greatest fans in the world get a chance to see you swinging in the Home Run Derby."

Cano said he would have his father pitch to him again.

"Oh, yes sir. Why not? We're .500. One for two," Cano said.

LoHud Yankees Blog

Pregame notes: Cano once again serving as Derby captain

Posted by: [Chad Jennings](#) - Posted in [Misc](#) on Jun 11, 2013

Robinson Cano has once again agreed to serve as American League captain for the Home Run Derby, and with the game in a National League park — and in New York — he shouldn't face the same sort of hometown fury that came when he didn't pick Billy Butler for last year's Derby in Kansas City.

"Now that you're in New York, you get to pick whoever you want," Cano said. "Now I don't have to pick David Wright because he's on the other side. It's fun. I always say, I've done it away twice. Now you do it at home where you have your crowd and the greatest fans in the world get a chance to see you swinging in the Home Run Derby."

Did Cano actually enjoy being Home Run Derby captain last year?

"You're not going to enjoy it," he said. "You know everywhere you go, you get booed because fans — they don't understand. Even the guys I picked, it's not that I picked anybody because, oh, he's Dominican or he's doing this or that. Everybody was swinging good. It was tough, but now this year I've got the advantage that it's in New York."

Will Cano have his father pitch to him again?

"Oh, yes sir, why not?" he said. "We're .500. One for two."

Will he be booed this time?

"Well, hopefully not," he said.

Will he pick Billy Butler?

"No chance," he said, with a smile.

- Brett Gardner has been red hot — including AL Player of the Week last week — but even he welcomed yesterday's off day. "I'm not ever going to complain about an off day," he said. "We don't get many. It was a much-needed off-day for me and for everybody."

- Gardner and Cano have each played in 63 games this year (although Gardner hasn't started all of those). "I think you can tell when you play every day," Gardner said. "And then we had a doubleheader, we've had a couple of stretches where we've played 16, 17 days in a row, so at times you feel great and at times you don't feel as great. But we play every day, so nobody's going to wait around for you to get better. So you do things away from the field and in the training room to make you feel healthy."

- Welcome back to right field, Lyle Overbay. Of course, it's a little bit bigger outfield here in Oakland than in New York. This will be Overbay's fourth time in the outfield. "He's three for three," Girardi said. "I have seen him run the right direction every time the ball went up. So far, it's been pretty good."

- As you've seen, Kevin Youkilis is back in the lineup after sitting out Sunday's game because of some lingering soreness in his back. "He feels great today," Girardi said. "It's probably good that he got the extra day built in on Monday. Him and Texy went at it pretty hard because before they got to us, they were playing. I know it wasn't nine-inning games, but they were building up. The two days probably helped him."

- It's been a while since we've heard a "Texy" reference, hasn't it? I don't remember one any time soon.

- Michael Pineda will make his next rehab start on Friday, though no one seems to know whether it will be in Charleston or Trenton. "He was pretty good (on Sunday)," Girardi said. "Threw some good changeups and was pretty good. You want to build from his last start, continue to build this kid up. I'm very happy with his progress so far and the way he's went about it. It's been a long time since he's pitched in the big leagues, but he's went at it the right way."

- Derek Jeter is doing extremely light baseball drills and will see his ankle specialist on Thursday in hopes of getting full clearance. Still early to have a timetable, though. "It's hard to say," Girardi said. "Because you don't know where exactly he is when he is cleared compared to coming in for a normal spring training and saying six weeks. You know they can do everything at that point. We'll just have to see how he moves and go from there."

6/12/13

YANKEES NOTEBOOK

Jeter visiting doctor

BY ERIK BOLAND
erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — Derek Jeter has a doctor's appointment tomorrow, at which point the hope, Joe Girardi said, is the shortstop gets "full clearances" to resume baseball activities.

Jeter was back on the field at the team's minor-league complex in Tampa yesterday, doing tee-and-toss and taking grounders hit directly at him on the infield grass.

Getting the go-ahead from his surgeon would put Jeter, recovering from a broken left ankle, on a path to the second half return the Yankees have predicted. "I think it will be [the case]," Girardi said of Jeter receiving clearance.

Girardi said he's still not at the point of doing a count-down in his head of when Jeter might be ready to rejoin the Yankees. "It's hard to say because you don't know exactly where he is when he is cleared compared to coming in for a normal [six-week] spring training," Girardi said.

■ Big man takes BP

On the field during early BP, as well full team BP later in the afternoon, was Aaron Judge, the 6-7, 255-pound centerfielder the Yankees picked 32nd overall as one of their three first-round picks in the MLB draft. "That type of body, that type of size, you don't see that very often," hitting coach Kevin Long.

Judge, a righthanded hitter from Fresno State, said he was a little intimidated hitting in front of Yankees players and coaches at first.

"Definitely first few rounds it was kind of tough, everyone's watching you," Judge said. "But it was pretty fun."

■ Pineda set for Friday

RHP Michael Pineda, who made his first rehab start Sunday afternoon, is scheduled to make a second start Friday, the continuation of a process the Yankees hope has the pitcher ready for either Triple-A Scranton, or the Bronx if necessary, within a month.



Derek Jeter to see doctor on Thursday, but Yankees unsure when he'll return

By Andy McCullough/The Star-Ledger

on June 11, 2013 at 8:27 PM, updated June 11, 2013 at 8:34 PM

OAKLAND – Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter will visit the surgeon who operated on his twice-fractured ankle on Thursday in Charlotte, N.C. The team hopes afterward he'll be cleared to begin full baseball activity.

What that means, exactly, remains to be seen. Jeter has been swinging off a tee, taking soft toss and fielding grounders struck directly at him at the team's complex in Tampa, Fla. It is unlikely he will jump into the full regimen expected of a player beginning spring training.

"It's hard to say," manager Joe Girardi said before Tuesday's game against the Athletics. "Because you don't know where exactly he is, when he is cleared, compared to coming in for a normal spring training, because you know they can do everything at that point.

"We'll just have to see how he moves and go from there."

The Yankees have given a vague date for Jeter's return: After the All-Star Break, which ends five weeks from now on July 19. The team is wary of repeating the follies of spring training, when Jeter re-injured his ankle in a dogged, doomed quest to be ready for Opening Day.

In a move that relieved to Girardi, Yankees infielder Kevin Youkilis returned to the lineup on Tuesday afternoon. He sat out Sunday after making an awkward slide into first base the day before. Youkilis

had insisted his condition was normal – even if the play replicated one right before he spent a month on the disabled list with a lower lumbar strain and herniated disc.

“You don’t want him to have what happened to him last time,” Girardi said. “The fact that he said he feels really good is good.”

The location of this year’s All-Star Game, at Citi Field, will make life a little easier for Robinson Cano. With David Wright as his counterpart, Cano will captain the American League’s Home Run Derby squad, and he won’t experience a repeat of 2012. Kansas City fans harangued Cano – and still do a year later – for not choosing Royals designated hitter Billy Butler for the event last summer at Kauffman Stadium.

“Now that you’re in New York, you can pick whoever you want,” Cano said. “And I don’t have to pick David Wright, because he’s doing it for the other side.”

Aaron Judge, one of the Yankees’ three first-round picks, drove about an hour from his home in Linden, Calif. to visit his potential employers on Tuesday. Judge, a 6-7 outfielder from Fresno State, impressed Girardi in early batting practice.

“A strong kid,” Girardi said. “Hit line drives out of the ballpark. You think that they’re good line drives in the gap, and they just keep going.”

Judge said he expects to sign quickly with the team. The recommended slot bonus for his selection, the No. 32 pick, is \$1.677 million.

Shortstop Eduardo Nunez (strained oblique) took dry swings at the team’s complex in Tampa, Fla.

“So we’re going in the right direction,” Girardi said. “Again.”

NY Post 6/12/13



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lyle Overbay, right, with Vernon Wells. Overbay started in the outfield again Tuesday night, extending a position switch few expected for him this season.

Overbay Sent Back to Outfield, To the Notice of an Old Friend

By DAVID WALDSTEIN

OAKLAND, Calif. — When the Arizona Diamondbacks selected Lyle Overbay in the 18th round of the 1999 amateur draft, 538th over all, he was an outfielder at the University of Nevada.

Players drafted that low aren't usually afforded a great deal of ceremony from their new teams, and so it went for Overbay. After the draft he received a matter-of-fact phone call telling him to report to Missoula, Mont., where Arizona's rookie league club played in the Pioneer League, and to bring a first baseman's mitt because that would be his new position.

"I said, 'O.K.," Overbay recalled. "But do you guys have a first baseman's glove I can use? Because I don't have one."

The Missoula Osprey, his new team, did have one lying around, which the team was happy to let him use, and so began Overbay's career as a regular first baseman. Fourteen years later, Overbay was moved back to the outfield by the Yankees. He does, however, have some experience there.

He played outfield in high school. He also pitched and played a little first base on the days after he pitched to preserve his tired arm. He played outfield in college, and even played 30 more games there in the minor leagues. But it wasn't until last week that he made his major league debut in the outfield, playing three games in right.

"He was 3 for 3," Manager Joe Girardi said, meaning Overbay had made the right plays on every ball hit to him. "I've seen him run the right direction every time the ball went up. So far, he's been pretty good."

Even a few of his college teammates, including a friend, Donnie Price, sent him texts saying he looked like his old self.

"They said it looked like I never left," Overbay said with a sheepish shrug.

Overbay didn't play the field in any of the Yankees' four games in Seattle, but he was back in the lineup in right Tuesday for their series opener against the Oakland Athletics.

Originally signed by the Yankees with three days left in spring training, Overbay was brought in to play first base — an injury replacement for Mark Teixeira. But when Teixeira came back from his right wrist injury on the last day of May, the Yankees looked to find a spot for Overbay because he had been among the team's best hitters. His batting average was only

.250, but he hit .308 in May with 4 home runs and 17 runs batted in and had several critical late-inning hits.

Teixeira had to play, so Overbay was sent to the outfield. The problem was, once again, he didn't have a glove. Actually, he had an outfielder's glove — the same one he used in college and the minors — but it was at his house in Seattle after spending most of the spring in his locker in Fort Myers, Fla.

When the Boston Red Sox signed Overbay to a minor league contract on Jan. 31, they said they wanted him to work out in the outfield. The Red Sox released him, and he signed with the Yankees, but assuming he would not play the outfield with his new team, he sent the mitt home. So when Overbay found out he would, indeed, be playing in the outfield, he called his wife and told her to send the glove back as fast as possible.

"I told her, 'You're going to have to get that here next-day air,'" Overbay said.

That was June 2, a Sunday. The glove did not arrive in time for his outfield debut Monday, so Overbay used one of Brett Gardner's gloves that night. The next day, his glove arrived, although Overbay said he liked Gardner's and might stick with it.

Now that he has a choice of gloves, Overbay can concentrate on outfield techniques. He is relying heavily on advice from Rob Thomson, the third-base and outfield coach, looking to him in the dugout for positioning before almost every pitch.

"I played so much first base, it was kind of instinctual," he said. "In the outfield, I have to go over everything in my mind. But it's coming back to me."

INSIDE PITCH

AARON JUDGE, the Yankees' strapping first-round draft pick, joined the team from his home an hour east in Linden, Calif., and put on an impressive display in early batting practice, JOE GIRARDI noted. "He can hit some homers," Girardi said. "The ball really jumps off his bat." Judge said he was confident he would eventually sign with the Yankees. "Yeah, real confident," he said. ... ROBINSON CANO was named the captain of the American League's entrant in the Home Run Derby at the All-Star Game. Cano, who was booed last year in Kansas City because he declined to draft the Royals' BILLY BUTLER on his team, said he was pretty sure he would not be booed at Citi Field in New York.

Improvement an internal affair

OAKLAND — If you're shopping for the Yankees right now, where do you even begin?

"Offense," Brian Cashman said yesterday in a telephone interview.

OK, that was a stupid question, one that sounded even dumber after CC Sabathia and the Yankees produced too little, too late last night in a 6-4 loss to old pal Bartolo Colon and the A's at O.co Coliseum.

Let's narrow it down. "I wouldn't want to specify," Cashman said. "It brings too much attention."

The obvious needs can be found at shortstop, catcher and righty-hitting outfielder. And the obvious solutions to those needs can be found internally. Which lead us to project, at this admittedly early juncture, that it's going to be another quiet July in the Bronx.

"We were told we're getting back [Michael] Pineda, [Derek] Jeter, A-Rod, [Francisco] Cervelli and [Curtis] Granderson," Cashman said. "In the meantime, you don't focus on getting a long-term answer that, at some point, you're going to be filling."

Now, you can't assume the rehabilitations of this entire quintet will all go smoothly; Jeter and Alex Rodriguez still have no firm timelines beyond "after the All-Star break," and keep in mind that "never" qualifies as "after the All-Star break." Nor can you naively think the Yankees are done sustaining injuries.

We can look back on recent history, however, and we can look ahead to the Yankees' future. The Yankees' last "big" in-season trade, by my standard, came for Bobby Abreu of the Phillies in 2006, since Abreu had big dollars coming to him in 2006 and 2007. Roger Clemens in 2007 served as a unique case because he was a free agent, therefore costing only money for one year.

And since then, the Yankees have picked up some big names — Ivan Rodriguez in 2008; Jerry Hairston Jr. in 2009; Lance Berkman and Kerry Wood in 2010; and Ichiro Suzuki last year — yet at small costs of a few bucks and some warm bodies, with all of these guys eligible for free agency at season's end.

The Yankees still want to get their 2014 payroll below \$189 million to avoid the luxury tax, which discourages them from dealing for a player with a substantial commitment for next year and beyond. However, Cashman said yesterday, "If we feel [acquiring a player with money owed past this year] is something in that best interests, we'll do it."

Asked about Hal Steinbrenner's sub-\$189 million mandate, Cashman

replied, "It's something that, if we can do, it would be a feather in our cap. Hal's position is, it's a goal, but it's not something we put ahead of winning."

A somewhat functional Jeter and Cervelli, if he can build on the promise he displayed before fracturing his right hand, probably would be better than anyone at these positions available on the trade market. The one area where the Yankees don't have a bona fide reinforcement coming is righty-hitting outfielder. Vernon Wells, after producing a fantastic April, has seven hits and a walk in his last 61 plate appearances, a brutal slash line of .117/.131/.133.



"He has been everything you could have expected. He has slumped lately," Cashman said of Wells. "Our initial interest in him was in a platoon circumstance."

So the return of Granderson, at least a few more weeks away, could help manage Wells' playing time better. Wells owns an acceptable .300/.345/.450 slash line against lefty pitching, including a pinch-hit, RBI single last night against Oakland lefty Jerry Blevins. Of course, the problem with this logic is that Ichiro hasn't hit righties near well enough (.200/.260/.281) to justify everyday work. Lyle Overbay (.279/.324/.515) has, but the brand new right fielder hurt his team on defense last night, tentatively approaching Derek Norris' second-inning flare — with Robinson Cano and Mark Teixeira also pursuing it — and allowing it to fall in front of him for a run-scoring double.

The trade market might be deepest in starting pitchers (Miami's Ricky Nolasco, the Cubs' Matt Garza, Milwaukee's Yovani Gallardo and possibly Philadelphia's Cliff Lee). We're not sure yet how badly the Yankees will want this commodity.

Besides the Dodgers' lefty-hitting Andre Ethier, who has \$71.5 million owed him from 2014 through 2017 and Minnesota's Justin Morneau, also a lefty hitter, the offensive upgrade options look sparse. Morneau's teammate Josh Willingham and Colorado's Michael Cuddyer both are better fits, as righty-hitting outfielders, although both have money coming in 2014 and Cuddyer's Rockies are in contention.

The market obviously will grow clearer as we pass the All-Star break and bubble teams decide which direction to go. For now, though, the Yankees' primary direction will be internal. Don't be surprised if they maintain that course through July.

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Tuesday, June 11, 2013

Less cash, man

By Buster Olney
ESPN The Magazine

This story appears in ESPN The Magazine's June 24 Money issue. [Subscribe today!](#)

OVER THE WINTER, the general manager of the Yankees warned the others in his office that they were in for a trying time, the sort his staff had never experienced while working for the richest franchise in professional sports.

You see, Brian Cashman has decided to learn the guitar, at age 45, and the sounds emanating from his office, well, it's not as if he's Eric Clapton. In fact, it can be excruciating. "My poor staff has to listen to me," Cashman says, sort of laughing, but sort of not.

In many respects these days, he is a yes-man, a guy starting anew: rappelling a 22-story building a couple of years ago, learning to scuba dive and jumping out of a plane for charity. At an age when his habits should be calcified, Cashman is unafraid to break the molding of his life.

Nowhere is this truer than at the ballpark. Yankees ownership asked Cashman before the season to cut payroll from roughly \$230 million to \$189 million by the start of the 2014 campaign. If the Yankees could get below that number -- the threshold at which teams start accruing luxury-tax charges -- it could mean perhaps \$35 million saved for the club's owners, because of rules created under a new labor agreement. But due to the many costly contracts the Yankees have accumulated -- the team had spent a little less than \$2 billion in payroll over the past decade -- Cashman didn't have lots of leeway to trim. If Cashman and his staff were to succeed, which in the Bronx means forever extending the legacy, they would have to become much more creative accountants. They would have to discover ways to cut payroll while finding replacement players who are good enough to keep the Yankees as contenders but not so expensive as to infringe on the effort to re-sign their marquee talent, namely second baseman [Robinson Cano](#), whose contract would be up at the end of 2013.

Cashman's challenge was, in short, that of a juggler keeping a chain saw, machete, stiletto and switchblade aloft at the same time. He was joining a lot of other jugglers too. Baseball began veering strongly toward greater financial efficiency a decade ago, which made GMs focus on all the tricks available to enhance value for the dollars invested in players. The release of Moneyball ratcheted up the front office sabermetric and financial talent exponentially. It wasn't long ago that some teams kept secret the addition of a genius for fear of offending the old members of the industry, but today such analysts are generally holding jobs that former players used to have. Now the organizations perceived to be the best run are built on data.

The Rays, Cardinals and Rangers have all worked under the premise that having less than a Yankees-size budget can actually mean more operative freedom, determining that there isn't that vast a gulf between an average player and a very good one. Over the past few years, these teams have developed replacements internally rather than overpay to keep stars who must always be in the lineup -- like [Albert Pujols](#) or [Josh Hamilton](#) -- and have still found themselves playing in October. And for even more economical teams, like the A's and Orioles, trying to maximize the value of a \$20,000 waiver claim is standard operating procedure. Many have learned how to feast on the mistakes of other clubs, like when the Pirates acquired [A.J. Burnett](#) while compelling the Yankees to ante up a majority of his salary.

When the industry started down this road, Cashman lobbied for a more efficient payroll in his conversations with aging Yankees owner George Steinbrenner. There was no reason for the Yankees to overpay constantly in trades or in contracts, he said then. It stretches credulity that as the longest-serving GM in the game, Cashman had piled up many contracts on his books that he hadn't been in favor of. But that's been life under the Steinbrenners, specifically George, who often pushed deals on him in which the team unnecessarily squandered either money or prospects.

In 2013 it was Cashman's responsibility to squander neither.

"**THIS IS WHAT** you train for," Cashman says. "This is why you hire people." His job, he often told his staff, would be to do more than survive the season but also to thrive in it.

The headwinds were formidable. [Alex Rodriguez](#) owes Joe Torre dinner for life in spite of their personal differences, because it was in the ugly aftermath of Torre's exit in the fall of 2007 that George Steinbrenner's sons and daughters -- facing enormous criticism for Torre's departure -- arranged to pay the then-32-year-old Rodriguez \$275 million in base salary in a 10-year deal, with another \$30 million in incentive clauses. Not long after, Rodriguez acknowledged his past use of performance-enhancing drugs, badly damaging his marquee value. Now at 37 and coming off two hip surgeries and more allegations of PED use that may result in a 100-game suspension, he owns the current industry standard for a bad deal. The Yankees owe him about \$100 million over the next four and a half seasons, and his salary absorbs 15 percent of the space under the luxury-tax threshold. The contract hangs from the team like an anchor, affecting all the choices it makes.

To be sure, the Yankees also are paying [Mark Teixeira](#) \$22.5 million and [CC Sabathia](#) about \$24 million annually through 2016. Then there's [Derek Jeter](#), who is making nearly \$17 million this year and holds a player option for 2014; [Mariano Rivera](#), who is making \$10 million in the last year of his career; Cano, who is earning \$15 million; and [Curtis Granderson](#) another \$15 million. With an uncapped budget, it all works. With strict caps, however, an organization suddenly has choices to make, like Donald Trump fretting the electric bill.

In 2012 the Yankees loved the work of catcher [Russell Martin](#), who clubbed 21 homers, and rightfielder [Nick Swisher](#), who got on base all the time, but over the winter the team prioritized pitching -- in particular short-term pitching contracts -- and re-signed [Hiroki Kuroda](#) and [Andy](#)

[Petitte](#) to conservative one-year deals. The Yankees decided to pass on Martin and Swisher, who both accepted fat multiyear offers elsewhere. Cashman then signed [Kevin Youkilis](#), an aging but still viable third baseman, to a 2013 contract that would, like the pitchers, not hurt the Yankees' effort to cut their payroll in 2014.

After those decisions, the Yankees arrived at spring training with significant questions at catcher, rightfield and designated hitter. The team's scouts held a conference call on March 7 to review who might become available. They were looking for value deals. Veteran first baseman [Lyle Overbay](#) came up -- he was in camp with the Red Sox, with good defensive skills but a swing that, according to one evaluator, made it look as if he stood at the plate with a "wet noodle." Somebody mentioned the Tigers' [Brennan Boesch](#), a cheap outfielder who, if he didn't work out, carried an option to send him to the minors. Then the scouts talked about [Vernon Wells](#), a 34-year-old three-time All-Star and two-time Gold Glove winner. Everyone in baseball assumed Wells' best days were behind him; he hit .218 for the Angels in 2011 and dealt with a thumb injury in 2012, losing his job to [Mike Trout](#). But what Yankees scouts saw in Wells during Angels camp was something different. "He looks healthy again," said one scout. "He has his bat speed back."

Before the Yankees could make decisions on Wells or anyone else, though, injuries derailed them. Granderson was hit by a pitch during his first at-bat of spring training and broke a bone in his hand; he wouldn't be back until May. Teixeira hurt his wrist preparing for the World Baseball Classic, and the Yankees medical staff estimated that he had a 70 percent chance of returning sometime before June but with any setback would need season-ending surgery. Derek Jeter had broken his leg in the 2012 playoffs, and it was not long after Teixeira's injury that the team learned Jeter had suffered a nearby fracture and would be out until at least the All-Star break. Even Cashman was hurt: On March 4, he parachuted out of a plane in Florida to raise awareness for the Wounded Warrior Project and dislocated his ankle and shattered his leg.

As Cashman sat in his cast some two weeks from Opening Day, he knew his team would be without players who were responsible for 201 of the 245 homers New York hit in 2012. Privately, in conversation with a rival official, Cashman mentioned there was a chance the Yankees' everyday lineup could be awful.

CASHMAN NEVER PLAYED baseball professionally; he was a good small-market college player at The Catholic University of America in DC. But an underrated side of Cashman and many of his front office peers is how competitive they are. At the same time that the media questioned whether the Yankees could contend this year -- heck, I picked them to finish last in the American League East -- Cashman tackled the challenge like a pitcher trying to retire [Miguel Cabrera](#). "We will solve this," he said to one of his staffers during spring training.

They started the process by signing Boesch, who had been cut by the Tigers, to a \$1.5 million deal. Then came Wells. Yes, he made \$21 million a year for his past stardom. But Michael Fishman, the Yankees director of quantitative analysis, had reviewed the terms of Wells' contract with the Angels and found that the deal was backloaded so heavily that the outfielder would

count nothing -- zero dollars -- toward the luxury-tax threshold in 2014. Just the kind of contract the Yankees needed.

After Teixeira got hurt and the Yankees were assured they'd receive about \$8 million in insurance money from the WBC, the club approached the Angels. By March 24, the two sides had reached an agreement: LA would pay \$28 million of the remaining \$42 million on Wells' contract, and New York would give Wells a two-year, \$14 million deal -- a gamble, sure, but for a relatively inexpensive veteran whom the Yankees scouts and metrics favored, one the club was willing to make.

Meanwhile, Overbay, he of the wet-noodled bat, was released by the Red Sox on the morning of March 26. I emailed a member of the Yankees staff and asked whether the team might be interested. Probably not, was the response. He looks awful.

But as the Yankees formally assessed Overbay, they talked about his defensive skill. At that moment, the replacement for Teixeira at first base appeared to be Juan Rivera, who had performed well offensively in spring training but had almost no defensive experience. Cashman talked to Overbay's agent about a limited tryout: 72 hours. It'd cost the Yankees nothing other than meal money to bring him to camp and assess his swing for a couple of days. If he still looked awful, they could cut him.

Well, at the end of the tryout, he still looked awful at the plate, but Cashman now had greater confidence in Overbay's ability to field than Rivera's ability to hit. Cashman told his staff to put Overbay on the roster. When it came down to a decent bat or a very good glove, the Yankees chose defense. It was a straight value buy and emblematic of the new, frugal Bronx Bombers, constructed as ruthlessly as their poorer but more pliable division rivals in, say, Baltimore or Tampa.

SINCE THE START of the season, Cashman has only continued his mad scramble for talent. Eduardo Nunez was supposed to fill in for Jeter, but when he got hurt in early May, the Yankees needed infield depth and claimed Chris Nelson from the Rockies -- only Toronto has more waiver claims since the beginning of last season than the Yankees -- and then replaced Nelson with another castoff, Reid Brignac, who was hitting .136 through June 5 but has been a reliable defender. As for the other acquisitions, Wells was second on the team in home runs, Boesch has hit for some power but returned to the minors (part of his perceived value) and Overbay ranked among the top dozen first basemen in UZR/150, a metric for defensive efficiency. In fact, through mid-May, Overbay had as many homers (six) and more RBIs (24) than Albert Pujols -- Lyle Overbay!

Cashman bumped into Red Sox president Larry Lucchino at a roast and jokingly thanked him for releasing Overbay. "Our reports on him were terrible," Cashman said to Lucchino with a smile.

As June began, the Yankees were near the top of the AL East, a huge surprise, not least because they ranked in the bottom half of baseball in runs scored. "In some respects, I think Cash has

done his best job," says Oakland GM Billy Beane, who himself added 10 players through trades this offseason and has made the A's playoff contenders again. Says Cashman, with some satisfaction, "You find a way."

The Yankees have started to get back some of their injured players. Granderson came back briefly in May before again being hit by a pitch -- he won't return until sometime in June -- but Teixeira, Youkilis and Pettitte are all back, and Jeter was expected to return sometime after the All-Star break. In baseball's new management model, however, big-name reinforcements aren't always a good thing.

Injuries had forced the 2012 Dodgers to rely on a lineup comprising mostly part-time players and minor leaguers pressed into major roles, and LA started the year, incredibly enough, 32-15. When injured regulars came back and the front office traded for stars like Hanley Ramirez, the Dodgers again had recognizable, proven names -- but something had also been lost. GM Ned Colletti and manager Don Mattingly, who had been able to write out the lineup card with complete flexibility and without regard to stature, salary or ego, suddenly had a pricey group of players to use daily. The Dodgers collapsed.

Now Cashman and manager Joe Girardi will face the same dynamic. With Teixeira (340 career homers through June 5) and Youkilis (.383 career on-base percentage) back in the lineup and Jeter to follow, Girardi will have more star power at his disposal -- and much less flexibility, and maybe less desperation, which served the Yankees well in April and May.

Cashman will continue to adjust as needed, and the Yankees are expected to be active before the July 31 trade deadline and beyond. Cashman has said he wants to sign Cano after the season, but because of the new frugality, he will do it only for the right price. Agents say Cano should be in line for roughly a seven-year, \$175 million deal, which could fit the Yankees' budget. But if Cano's demands fall outside that, Cashman says he'll let Cano walk. "The two most important attributes," Cashman says, "are what we think of the player and how that's relative to our current financial commitments."

Until then, Cashman will spend the end of his workdays shooshing his staff out of his office, closing his door and practicing his guitar.

The song he loves to play the most? "Knockin' on Heaven's Door."

ESPN.com

Tuesday, June 11, 2013

One Mo Time: Rivera vs. Athletics

By Katie Sharp and Mark Simon

For the remainder of the 2013 season, we will look ahead to [Mariano Rivera](#)'s matchups against teams he will be facing for the final time in the regular season. We missed out on the Diamondbacks, but we'll circle back and play catch-up with that one eventually.

Next up in our series, a look at Rivera's history against the [Oakland Athletics](#).

By the Numbers

Mariano Rivera's career stats vs Athletics

Regular Season

2.27 ERA

35 saves

87 1/3 IP

68 hits allowed

70 strikeouts

25 walks

Postseason (2000 ALDS, 2001 ALDS)

0.00 ERA

5 saves

10 IP

6 hits allowed

6 strikeouts

0 walks

Did you know?

- Rivera's first career major-league win came against the Athletics on May 28, 1995. Rivera pitched 5 1/3 innings, allowing one run. The losing pitcher for the Athletics that day was the Yankees bullpen coach Mike Harkey.
- Mariano has five career wins vs Oakland. He has more wins vs only two other teams -- Baltimore (8) and Toronto (7).
- Mariano has 35 saves vs the A's, the most by any pitcher in history (and one more than [Troy Percival](#)).
- Rivera has saved his last 12 opportunities against the Athletics. That is tied with [Joakim Soria](#) and [David Aardsma](#) for the longest active save streak vs the A's.

- Rivera pitched 3 2/3 innings in relief without allowing a hit vs the Athletics on September 1, 1995. It was not only his first career no-hit appearance in the majors, it was also his most innings pitched in his career without giving up a hit.
- From August 23, 1996 to April 27, 2001, Rivera pitched against the Athletics 23 times (including postseason) and allowed a run in only one game. That span encompassed 29 innings in which Rivera allowed only one run.
- All five of Rivera's postseason saves against the Athletics were at least four outs. The only other team he has five postseason saves of at least four outs against is the Red Sox.
- Rivera is 5-for-5 in save chances in the postseason against the A's. That matches his most postseason saves without a blown save against any team (he is also 5-for-5 vs the Angels and Rangers).
- Rivera has allowed five walk-off home runs in his career, but arguably the most shocking came against the Athletics on April 15, 2007: a three-run, two-out homer by [Marco Scutaro](#) on an 0-2 count with the Athletics trailing by two runs.

That is the only one of the walk-off hits against Rivera to come on an 0-2 count.

- Mariano has hit six of the 357 A's batters he has faced. The only team he has hit more times is the Red Sox (10 of 524 batters).
- Rivera allowed seven runs in four innings in a start against the A's on June 6, 1995. That's the most runs he's allowed in any game in his career.

They said it

"The best way for me to describe him is to describe watching our hitters if we were trailing the Yankees and didn't score in the eighth inning ... to see how dejected they were knowing that they would have to face him in the ninth inning. It was like 'Game Over.'"

-- former Oakland Athletics pitcher and current ESPN analyst [Mark Mulder](#)

Magic 'Mo'ments

- Rivera became the full-time closer for the Yankees at the start of the 1997 season after the Yankees let John Wetteland leave as a free agent in the offseason. Rivera's first save as the team's closer that year came against the A's on April 5, pitching 1 1/3 scoreless innings.
- When the Yankees came back from a 2-0 series deficit to beat the Athletics in the 2001 ALDS, it was Rivera who was on the mound at the end, striking out [Greg Myers](#) and [Eric Byrnes](#) to end Game 5 and cap the remarkable comeback.



Tuesday, June 11, 2013

Pregame notes: Youkilis, Jeter, Pineda

By Wallace Matthews

OAKLAND -- A rare day of all good news on the injury front for the Yankees.

-- Kevin Youkilis, who sat out on Sunday after experiencing some "stiffness" in his lower back after sliding to make a play at first in Saturday's game in Seattle, is back in the lineup tonight, batting fifth and playing third against the Athletics and [Bartolo Colon](#). "He feels great today," Joe Girardi said. "It's probably good that he got the extra day built in on Monday. The two days off probably helped him."

-- [Derek Jeter](#) had another day of tee-and-toss and light grounders this morning in Tampa in advance of his trip to Charlotte to be evaluated by Dr. Robert Anderson on Thursday. Girardi said he expected Jeter to be cleared for all baseball activities after the exam, but cautioned against setting a date for Jeter's return. "It's hard to say, because you don't know where exactly he is when he is cleared compared to coming in for a normal spring training and saying six weeks," Girardi said. "We'll just have to see how he moves and go from there."

-- Girardi said he was encouraged by [Michael Pineda](#)'s first rehab outing on Sunday, when he worked 4 1/3 innings, threw 68 pitches and was said to have reached 95 mph on the gun. "I hear he threw some good changeups and was pretty good," Girardi said. "You want to continue to build this kid up. I'm very happy with his progress so far and the way he's went about it. It's been a long time since he's pitched in the big leagues but he's went at it the right way."

--It can't all be great news, of course. [Eduardo Nunez](#), laid up with an oblique strain, took "dry swings" today, but Girardi had no idea what that meant in terms of his recovery. "It sounds like we're going in the right direction," he said. "Again."

-- [CC Sabathia](#) has a losing career record against the A's -- 8-9 with a 4.50 ERA overall and 4-5, 5.02 at Oakland Coliseum -- but in his last 12 starts against them, dating back to 2008, Sabathia is 6-2 with a 2.51 ERA.

-- The Yankees have been less than hospitable to Colon, their old teammate, in the two years since he left them as a free agent. Bartolo is 0-2 with a 6.50 ERA versus the Yankees in his past three starts, including a 4-2 loss at Yankee Stadium on May 4. [Mark Teixeira](#) is hitting .308 against him with three home runs in 39 at-bats. [Ichiro Suzuki](#) has also taken Bartolo deep three times, albeit in 85 career ABs. [Robinson Cano](#) is 6-for-14 against Colon (.429) with one home run.



Wednesday, June 12, 2013

Postgame notes: Overbay, Hafner so close

By Wallace Matthews

OAKLAND -- The Yankees lost to the Athletics, 6-4, Tuesday night in the first of a three-game series, but for two oh-so-close plays, they might have come away with a win.

-- The first one involved [Lyle Overbay](#), playing just his fifth game in right field, when he seemed to pull up to defer to [Robinson Cano](#) on [Derek Norris'](#) bloop to short right field, which dropped in between them and became an RBI double (it easily could have, and should have, been scored a single and an error). Overbay downplayed his inexperience in the outfield as a factor and said, "We really lost this game in the first inning when we didn't score off Colon," referring to the bases-loaded, one-out jam Oakland starter [Bartolo Colon](#) escaped when he got [Kevin Youkilis](#) and Overbay to foul out.

-- Still, despite having fallen behind 6-0 after six innings, the Yankees put a scare into the A's, scoring twice in the eighth on RBI singles by [Mark Teixeira](#) and [Vernon Wells](#), and twice more in the ninth on another clutch single, this one for two runs, by Teixeira. Then, there was a heart-stopping moment when [Travis Hafner](#) gave a [Grant Balfour](#) pitch a ride to center field, where it was pulled in at the wall by [Coco Crisp](#) a foot or so short of a game-tying home run.

The low-key Hafner did not seem all that surprised or affected by the dramatic ending to the game.

"I was hoping it would at least be off the wall, but the ball doesn't travel well here at night," he said. "You want to win the game, we had a good comeback going, but what are you going to do?"

-- **Numbers don't lie:** [CC Sabathia](#) is 2-2 with a 5.55 ERA over his last five starts.

-- Cano, who had just three hits in his previous 28 at-bats coming into the game, was 2-for-3, including a double during the ninth-inning rally.

--[Chris Stewart](#) continues to hit well. He was 2-for-4 and is 5-for-14 (.357) on the road trip. His batting average is .284, just two ticks below [Brett Gardner's](#), which leads the regulars at .286.

-- Teixeira's three RBIs gave him 14 in 11 games since returning from the DL.

NorthJersey.com

David Palladino to go with Yanks instead of LSU

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2013
BY MARK J. CZERWINSKI
STAFF WRITER
THE RECORD

There's suddenly a 6-foot-9 hole in the Louisiana State University starting rotation.

Faced with what he called "a choice between two dreams come true," Emerson's David Palladino chose the Yankees, passing up a full scholarship to the Division I baseball power to begin a professional career with the team he grew up rooting for.

Palladino, a fifth-round selection (No. 164 overall) in last week's Major League Baseball draft, agreed to terms with the Yankees on Monday. He'll be given a physical exam today, and is expected to sign his first contract Wednesday.

Palladino declined to discuss the terms of the deal. The draft slot was valued at \$278,100 for the Yankees, but they reportedly had the flexibility to go above that.

"It was a difficult situation," said Palladino, The Record 2011 high school Pitcher of the Year. "It was a difficult decision."

The choice got a little more complex four days before the draft when LSU, anticipating Palladino being drafted, increased its scholarship offer to a full ride. Palladino said LSU's decision caught him by surprise, and he said that the call to the Tigers' staff declining the scholarship was going to be one of the hardest things he's ever done.

"LSU is certainly one of the greatest programs ever," said Palladino, 20. "I wanted to play there, but I've always wanted to be a professional baseball player."

Palladino said his whole family was involved in the decision-making process, making a list of the pros and cons for each potential path as they discussed his options. That's the same thing the family did in 2011 when the Los Angeles Dodgers picked him out of Emerson High School in the 13th round.

"I had no regrets with that decision," said Palladino, who is 255 pounds.

"That's why it's important to make these decisions as a family."

The hard-throwing right-hander is an intimidating presence on the mound. He pitched this season for junior-college power Howard in Texas, posting a 7-3 record with a 2.18 ERA and 99 strikeouts in 70 1/3 innings.

After spurning the Dodgers, Palladino attended the University of South Carolina Upstate. He tore the patella tendon in his right knee midway through his freshman year and had surgery before transferring to Howard.

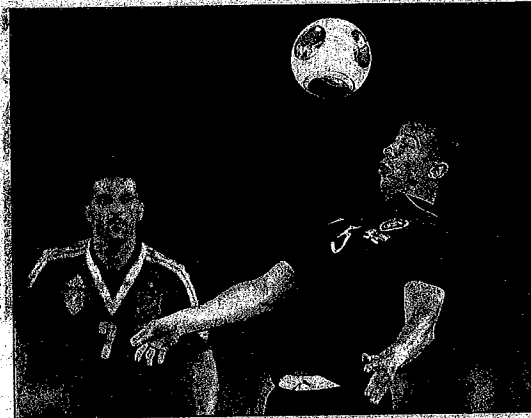
Palladino said he doesn't know what role the Yankees have in mind for him, but he also said that it doesn't matter.

"I want to start," Palladino said. "But at this point, I'm going to do whatever they want, whatever they ask, so I can have a chance to put on that major-league pinstripe uniform as soon as possible."

Palladino said he's looking forward to the life of a professional ballplayer.

"I think the toughest adjustment for me is realizing that this is my life now," Palladino said. "This is a job, my job, and I have to go out there every day and be the best that I can be."

"There's no room for screw-ups. But that's OK, because this is what I want. This is what I've always wanted, and it's what I want to do for the rest of my life."



Sean St. Ledger of Ireland plays the ball off his chest during the first half of last night's match against world No. 1 Spain.

SPAIN TUNES UP, TOPS IRELAND AT STADIUM

BY MICHAEL LEWIS
Special to Newsday

Spain is not the defending World Cup champion and top-ranked team in the world for nothing. The team warmed up for the upcoming FIFA Confederations Cup by putting on an entertaining show in a 2-0 victory over Ireland last night at Yankee Stadium.

Second-half substitutes Roberto Soldado and Juan Mata scored within a 19-minute span to snap a scoreless tie in front of 39,368 spectators. The crowd was the eighth-largest to watch a soccer match at the Stadium and just below the 39,462 that turned out to watch Manchester City defeat Chelsea, 5-3, on May 25.

A stout Ireland defense and some solid goalkeeping from starter David Forde held the fort until Soldado tallied in the 69th minute. Alvaro Arbeloa nudged a short pass to Soldado, who fired a 15-yard shot into the lower left corner.

The Spaniards needed some stellar goalkeeping from another second-half sub, Iker Casillas, and some help from the game officials to keep Ireland off the scoreboard. Casillas scooped out a shot in the 82nd minute. Sean Ledger got hold of the rebound and slotted it past Casillas. As Ireland celebrated the goal, Simon Cox was called for being offside.

Mata added an insurance

SCORECARD		
	2 : 0	
SPAIN		IRELAND

goal in the 88th minute, firing a Santi Cazorla pass under keeper Darren Delaney.

The Confederations Cup is the one piece of hardware the Spaniards have failed to secure during a remarkable five-year run. They became the first team to successfully defend a European Championship (2008, '12) sandwiched around a World Cup crown (2010).

Their only blemish was a disappointing third-place finish in the 2009 Confederations Cup, following a 2-0 semifinal upset by the United States.

"Because of that [loss to Team USA], we know how important this competition is," striker Fernando Torres said. "It's the only competition we didn't win in the past.

"We don't want to have the same feelings from 2009 and going back home and losing in the semifinals. Especially because we play in Brazil and we know how important it is for Brazil, as well, to win the Confederations Cup and show the supporters that they can beat Spain. We are the team to beat, and we can handle the pressure and we're ready for the chance."



6/11/2013 11:52 P.M. ET

Spain tops Ireland in soccer friendly at Yankee Stadium

By Josh Vitale / MLB.com

NEW YORK -- Yankee Stadium is no stranger to hosting champions. Twenty-seven World Series-winning Yankees teams have called the Bronx their home over the past 80 years, more than any other American sports franchise.

On Tuesday, though, the Yankees' ballpark played host to an entirely different kind of champion, as 2010 World Cup winner Spain took on the Republic of Ireland in an international friendly.

The infield dirt was covered with sod, the pitcher's mound was flat and the Yankees were in Oakland, but many in Yankee Stadium has reason to celebrate. Sparked by two second-half goals, Spain defeated Ireland, 2-0, in front of a crowd of 39,368.

It wasn't the outcome Ireland was looking for, but Giovanni Trapattoni will take it. The Irish manager saw his team keep up with a Spain team that's ranked No. 1 in the world, and they did it on a big -- albeit friendly -- stage.

"It was fantastic this time," Trapattoni said. "Our support, the Spanish support; the atmosphere was fantastic."

This wasn't Trapattoni's first experience in the Bronx, though. He has made a series of trips to the United States through his playing and coaching career, and Tuesday wasn't the first time he had led a team into Yankee Stadium.

He said he's enjoyed playing and managing around the country, but New York and Yankee Stadium are particularly special.

"Yankee Stadium," Trapattoni said. "It's a legend."

The Irish supporters -- and their Spanish counterparts -- in the stands sounded like they agreed. The green-clad fans could be heard breaking out into songs about "The boys in green," and the contingent of Spanish fans continually chanted, "Ole."

It was a raucous atmosphere. When either team had a scoring chance, it was as loud as it would have been if Mark Teixeira had just hit a go-ahead home run. And when Spain netted its two goals in the second half, the stadium took on a postseason atmosphere.

And even in a loss, the Irish faithful found reason to celebrate. As the final minutes ticked off the clock, a section of Ireland fans in the upper deck in right field removed their shirts and waved them over their heads as they jumped and chanted.

"The crowds have been very good. They've been very affectionate toward the team," Spanish manager Vicente Del Bosque said through a translator. "The Irish fans -- overall, I'm very pleased."

He was pleased with the way his team played, too. After both teams narrowly missed on scoring opportunities in the first half, Spain capitalized in the second. Roberto Soldado came off the bench to put the game's first goal on the board in the 69th minute, taking a pass from Alvaro Arbeloa and sneaking it past Irish goalkeeper David Forde into the goal near the left field wall.

Ireland's Sean St. Ledger seemed to net the equalizer in the 81st minute, but the goal was disallowed. Seven minutes later, Spain's Juan Mata netted the team's second goal, giving his team its final 2-0 margin.

"We achieved what we came to do," Del Bosque said. "I think it's been a good preparation, I think physically we've gotten better, and overall I think we're better than when we came."

Tuesday night's game was the fourth soccer game in the new Yankee Stadium and the second this year. Manchester City defeated Chelsea, 5-3, in front of 39,462 fans on May 25.

GOAL.com

Spain 2-0 Rep of Ireland: Soldado and Mata secure victory in New York friendly

The world and European champion overcame a turgid start and a spirited Irish outfit to seal a 2-0 win at Yankee Stadium ahead of this Sunday's Confederations Cup opener.

By Mohammed Ali

Spain wrapped up its preparations for the Confederations Cup with a 2-0 win over the Republic of Ireland in an international friendly at the Yankee Stadium in New York City.

Goals from substitutes Roberto Soldado and Juan Mata ensured Vicente del Bosque's side the victory, but the team needed to overcome a determined Irish outfit to seal the win after a sluggish start to proceedings on the East Coast.

With the reigning world and European champion opening its Confederations Cup campaign in four days, the onus was on La Roja to perform admirably against the Irish ahead of the tournament, and the opening exchanges proved to be a distinctly slow affair.

Andres Iniesta fired a shot narrowly over the bar after a brilliant attacking phase in the early stages, but even though Del Bosque's side was typically dominating the possession count, it lacked the potency to trouble David Forde in the Ireland goal.

Nevertheless, the Boys in Green displayed plenty of fight to frustrate the more esteemed opponent - a far cry from last summer's capitulation at Euro 2012, and could've even taken the lead. Gerard Pique's indecision on the ball was punished by Sammon, who fired agonizingly wide when put one on one against Victor Valdes, in the half's best chance.

Spain however, recovered from the poor opening as Ireland began to open up. Pique's header had earlier been cleared off the line by Paul McShane, before a neat pass from Pedro in towards David Villa was intercepted at the last moment by the Hull City defender.

Giovanni Trapattoni's men were beginning to ride their luck, and were fortunate to not fall behind. Xavi teed up Pedro, who expertly turned away from his marker before firing a thundering shot off the underside of the crossbar, before David Silva struck hopelessly over the bar from the rebound as Ireland breathed a sigh of relief.

The second half proved to be an equally dogged affair, as Ireland continued to frustrate its opponent. The flurry of substitutions just before the hour allowed the world champion to add a

new dimension to its attack, and it almost paid dividends as Jesus Navas tested Forde, before Pique's shot was thwarted by the goalkeeper.

Ireland's resistance was to be broken, as the team finally folded. Darren O'Dea's poor clearance was picked up by Alvaro Arbeloa in an advanced position, before substitute Soldado struck cleanly past the impressive Forde to hand La Roja the lead. It could've been two seconds later had Jordi Alba not struck narrowly wide.

The visitors had a goal chalked off for offside, in controversial circumstances. From a corner, which was helped on into the path of Simon Cox, in an offside position, before the ball was poked home by Sean St Ledger, sending the sizable Irish contingent inside the stadium into raptures, soon dashed by the referee's interjection.

Spain rallied from that scare, and finished strongly. Santi Cazorla saw a dipping effort from distance tipped over by substitute Darren Randolph, with Sergio Ramos heading narrowly over the bar from the resulting corner. Mata wrapped up the game with a finely worked second goal, with a delightful chip over the goalkeeper on the back of a fine assist from Santi Cazorla.

Spain takes on Uruguay in their Confederations Cup Group B opener on Sunday at the Arena Pernambuco in Recife, as attention turns towards the tournament in Brazil.

Daily Mail

Spain 2 Republic of Ireland 0: Mata on target in friendly at New York's Yankee Stadium

By Colin Young

PUBLISHED: 21:18 EST, 11 June 2013 | **UPDATED:** 02:49 EST, 12 June 2013

World and European champions Spain secured a comfortable pre-Confederations Cup win over the Republic of Ireland in New York's Yankee Stadium.

Second-half goals from Roberto Soldado and Juan Mata were the rewards for Vicente del Bosque and his players before they head off to the summer tournament in Brazil.

Although it was a typically convincing performance from Spain, they had to work hard in the Big Apple heat against a weakened but determined Irish side.

MATCH FACTS

SPAIN: Valdes (Casillas 59); Arbeloa, Pique, Ramos, Alba; Busquets; Pedro (Santi Cazorla 80), Villa (Soldado 59), Xavi (Mata 69), Iniesta (Fabregas 59); Silva (Navas 46). ***Subs not used:*** Albiol, Martinez, Azpilicueta, Torres, Monreal, Reina.

Booked: Pedro.

IRELAND: Forde (Randolph 69); McShane, St Ledger, O'Dea, Kelly (Delaney 90); Coleman, McCarthy (Meyler 84), Hendrick (Quinn 46), A.Keogh (McClellan 69); Keane (Cox 57), Sammon. ***Subs not used:*** R.Keogh, McCarey.

Booked: Cox.

Referee: Jair Marrufo (United States)

Attendance: 39,368

And Giovanni Trapattoni's young team, who actually squandered the best chance of the first-half through striker Conor Sammon, will feel they deserved a second-half equaliser which was denied them when Simon Cox was cruelly, but correctly ruled offside in the build-up to Sean St Ledger's bundled 81st minute goal.

Chelsea midfielder Mata sealed the second seven minutes later, adding to the 69th minute opener from Soldado.

It was a tough night for Ireland, but a major improvement on their Euro 2012 defeat to eventual winners Spain, who thrashed them 4-0 last summer. And encouraging signs for Trapattoni as Ireland look to qualify for Brazil themselves and next summer's World Cup Finals.

The first two and a half minutes summed up Ireland's run-around in the famous baseball stadium, which tonight pretty close to capacity, the majority of those present sporting the red of Spain.

Ireland gave the ball away at kick-off and then chased it around until Jordi Alba hit a shot over. Goalkeeper David Forde's almighty clearance was the first touch the Irish had apart from the kick-off.

Spain toyed with Trapattoni's men from then on, creating numerous chances and queuing up inside and outside the penalty area to test the Millwall No 1.

It was to the credit of every single hardworking Ireland player that Forde only made one telling first-half save, although Pedro did hit the crossbar and James McCarthy cleared a Gerard Pique header off the line.

It was a balmy New York night, and not conducive to a final end of season run-out for the Ireland squad. But then as captain Robbie Keane had noted the night before kick-off, 'Spain could play in a phonebox and still keep the ball away from you'.

From that point of view, Del Bosque's men did not disappoint and the chances certainly piled up as the minutes ticked by on the enormous scoreboard in the far corner of the Yankee Stadium.

David Villa hit a low shot wide and Andres Iniesta flashed one just beyond the post, before the first effort on target - Pique's header - was booted the distance of a home run by McCarthy.

The deluge continued through Alba, though the full-back was wasteful from David Silva's clever pass into the area. Sean St Ledger and his defensive partner Darren O'Dea then combined to scramble a Sergio Ramos effort into Forde's hands, while Xavi shot straight into the Ireland stopper's midriff before a cuter finish was met with equal resistance from the stopper.

The clearest opportunity came four minutes before the break when Pedro's magical feet opened up space at the edge of the area and he hit the crossbar, before Silva belted the rebound high into the crowd.

Yet despite the highly inevitable domination – nine shots to three - Ireland possibly had the best chance of the opening period when Derby County's Sammon powered through on goal after dispossessing Pique near halfway.

Unfortunately for Ireland, who also had efforts off target from McShane and Andy Keogh at two corners, the former Derry City and Wigan Athletic striker squandered the chance and completely mis-hit his shot wide of Victor Valdes and his goal. In fact he nearly hit the corner flag.

The second half was another game of keep-ball for Del Bosque's men and yet not until the two managers had started the whole array of substitutions around the hour mark did Forde have a save to make. And he was more than equal to the deflected efforts from Pique and new Manchester City man Jesus Navas.

The Irish also had a slice of good fortune when American referee Jair Marrufo decided a Pedro cross had not hit McShane's hand in the 65th minute.

But their luck finally ran out in the four minutes later when McCarthy and O'Dea failed to halt a run from Arbeloa and a loose bouncing ball fell fatally into the path of Roberto Soldado who stroked the ball under the diving Forde's body.

Immediately after that, Pedro could have made it two but he mis-timed his sidefoot from close range and put his shot wide.

Other than a Soldado strike, a drive from Santi Cazorla was all substitute keeper Darren Randolph had to break sweat over until two minutes from time when Mata was played in by fellow substitute Cazorla. The Chelsea man shifted in behind McShane and slid the ball home.

But the Irish management team, and players, felt harshly done by the American officials who ruled out St Ledger's headed equaliser from a James McClean corner.

Although the centre-back touched the ball home after Stephen Kelly's header had been touched on to the bar, Simon Cox got the first touch and he was rightly ruled offside.

This prestigious friendly came just three days short of the year anniversary of Spain's annihilation of Ireland in Gdansk.

And Trapattoni's intention was to avoid another drubbing at the hands of the world and European champions.

But the Italian's hands were tied by the withdrawal of several first choice members of his squad. Of the 11 who started in Poland, there were only two survivors, Keane and St Ledger. And then, after the weekend win over Faroe Islands, John O'Shea, Jon Walters, Glenn Whelan and Aiden McGeady pulled out of the trip to New York.

Spain, meanwhile, included eight who started a year ago, and still had the likes of Fernando Torres, Mata, Cazorla and Cesc Fabregas on the bench.

For Del Bosque this was what he wanted, a boost to preparations for next week's Confederations Cup, while Ireland, who still have an outside chance of World Cup qualification, will be glad their season has finished.



Tuesday, June 11, 2013

Spain controls Ireland in friendly

Associated Press

NEW YORK -- [Roberto Soldado](#) and [Juan Mata](#) scored second-half goals to lead World Cup champion Spain to a 2-0 victory over Ireland in an exhibition match at Yankee Stadium on Tuesday night.

Soldado struck after a pass from Alvaro Arbeola in the 69th minute. Mata took a pass from [Santi Cazorla](#) in the 88th minute and beat Ireland goalkeeper Darren Randolph.

Spain controlled play most of the game before 39,368 fans and was cheered loudly when goalkeeper [Iker Casillas](#) entered in the 58th minute.

Spain beat Haiti 2-1 in Miami on Saturday and will leave for Brazil this week to play in the Confederations Cup scheduled for June 15-30.

Bloomberg

Spain Beats Ireland 2-0 in Soccer Exhibition at Yankee Stadium

By Dex McLuskey - Jun 12, 2013 12:01 AM ET

Spain defeated Ireland 2-0 in a soccer exhibition at Yankee Stadium in New York.

Substitutes [Roberto Soldado](#) and [Juan Mata](#) got the goals for the world and European champions after 69 and 88 minutes last night. The result extended Spain's unbeaten run to 22 games since a 1-0 loss to England in an exhibition on Nov. 12, 2011.

It was the second soccer game in less than three weeks at Yankee Stadium after Manchester City beat English Premier League rival Chelsea 5-3 on May 25. The Yankees are staging events other than baseball games to recoup the \$1.5 billion cost to build the stadium, which opened in April 2009.

Singers Jay Z and [Justin Timberlake](#) will play the venue on July 19 and 20; the [New York Rangers](#) will take on National Hockey League opponents the New Jersey Devils and [New York Islanders](#) on Jan. 26 and 29, and the Yankees on June 3 said they'd host college football's Pinstripe Bowl, first played in 2010, for another 10 years.

Since losing 4-0 in the European Championship a year ago in its last game against Spain, Ireland has tumbled 23 places in soccer's world rankings to No. 41, while Spain has been the No. 1 nation since September 2011.

In 26 meetings between the countries, Spain has won 15 times, while Ireland logged the last of its four victories in 1989.

MLB swings away

Irks ex-coach in Alex probe



Efforts to dig up dirt on Alex Rodriguez and others in Biogenesis scandal have potential witnesses feeling bullied, Bill Serne

BY MICHAEL O'KEEFE
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

MAJOR LEAGUE

Baseball is playing hardball with people linked to Anthony Bosch and Biogenesis — and one potential witness is resisting MLB's attempts to drag him into its investigation into the Florida anti-aging clinic at the heart of its latest doping scandal.

Former University of Miami pitching coach Lazaro (Lazer) Collazo claims baseball investigators went too far when they came to his Miami home in March to question him about his ties to Anthony Bosch and his now-defunct Biogenesis clinic.

Collazo is a potential witness in the lawsuit MLB filed earlier this year against Bosch and others associated with Biogenesis that claims the self-styled "biochemist" interfered with baseball's basic agreement with the Major League Baseball Players Association by providing banned drugs to ballplayers. His lawyer, S. Antonio Jimenez, filed a motion two weeks ago arguing that his client should not have to participate in a deposition with MLB lawyers because he has never been employed by Biogenesis and has no knowledge of Bosch's alleged transactions with Alex Rodriguez, Ryan Braun and dozens of other players.

"This lawsuit is an artifice for Major League Baseball to conduct an investigation," Jimenez said. "It is a waste of judicial resources and it should never have been filed."

In a May 28 motion filed in Miami-Dade County circuit court, Jimenez claimed that MLB investigator Neil Boland and senior counsel Patrick J. Houlihan engaged in "intimidation, harassment, coercion, embarrassment" when they questioned Collazo about Bosch and Biogenesis. Collazo said the encounter with the MLB officials at his home frightened his wife and two youngest children.

"During the meeting, both investigators attempted to harass and coerce Collazo into providing the names of MLBPA members who may have received treatment with defendants," Jimenez said in the filing.

Complaints by Collazo and others involved in the case are the result

of the aggressive approach MLB investigators have adopted to keep banned drugs out of the sport and protect athletes who want to play without risking health and reputations by using performance-enhancing substances — even if it means disciplining Rodriguez, Braun and other stars of the game.

MLB investigators do not have the power to issue subpoenas for documents or testimony, so they have had to develop creative methods to battle PEDs — including buying records from Bosch's associates and using the discovery phase of the lawsuit to obtain documents and depositions.

MLB spokesman Patrick Courtney said the harassment and intimidation allegation is not true: "They did not harass him," Courtney said. "They did not do what they are accused of doing."

Collazo was scheduled to be deposed by MLB lawyers in Miami on May 29, but that deposition has been postponed until August. Jimenez acknowledges in the May 28 filing that Collazo was a Biogenesis client, but he argues that his client should not be required to participate in a deposition because he has never been employed by Bosch or Biogenesis. "Collazo, a non-party to this action, has never been employed nor has he ever received any monetary benefit from Biogenesis or its affiliates," Jimenez wrote in the court papers.

But MLB investigators apparently have information they believe suggests Collazo was more than just a patient of the anti-aging clinic. Collazo may have been targeted because he has been a mainstay in South Florida baseball circles for decades and knew many of the players tied to Biogenesis — including Rodriguez, Braun, the Padres' Yasmani Grandal, the Nationals' Gio Gonzalez and minor leaguer Cesar Carrillo — long before they played professional baseball.

MLB officials have promised to drop Bosch from the tortious interference lawsuit if he cooperates with its investigators, as well as indemnify Bosch against future litigation that might emerge from his testimony and cover his rising legal bills. They have also agreed to put in a good word for him with any prosecutors who might come after him, including the U.S. Attorney's office in Miami, which has shown interest in the Bosch case. Bosch and his representatives met with MLB officials on Friday, and talks are ongoing.

MLB officials hope Bosch will provide enough credible evidence to allow them to seek drug suspensions for up to 20 players — including Rodriguez, the Yankees' embattled superstar, and Milwaukee Brewers outfielder Braun — who have been linked to Biogenesis. Bosch and his representatives provided MLB with "reams of material" at his initial meeting with MLB officials on Friday, according to a source familiar with

the case, and additional meetings are expected.

Sources have told the Daily News that commissioner Bud Selig won't base disciplinary actions solely on Bosch's testimony and that MLB's investigators have already gathered a great deal of evidence it can present in an arbitration hearing if the union files grievances protesting suspensions or other disciplinary actions. MLB attorneys filed papers with the court last week seeking shipping and phone records that could presumably be used to corroborate what Bosch tells them.

Yahoo! Sports, meanwhile, reported on Tuesday that multiple minor leaguers — who are not protected by the union and are thus subject to unilateral discipline by Selig's office — have already told MLB investigators about their transactions with Bosch. Their accounts may be used to verify testimony from Bosch, whose credibility will surely be under fire in an arbitration hearing — especially since, as The News first reported last week, he asked Rodriguez to pay him for his silence.

Collazo is not the only Bosch associate who feels bullied by MLB investigators. Attorney Martin Beguiristain, who represents Carlos Acevedo, a former Bosch business associate, says MLB attempted to intimidate his client by naming him as a defendant in the case and by coming to his home to question him.

"MLB has a contract with the Players Association — why not sue the players?" he said. "It is not proper for them to go to my client's home. He has a wife and kids there. It is just wrong."

According to the papers Jimenez filed on May 28, MLB investigators have obtained a list of people who had received treatment from Bosch, who does not have a medical license and was fined \$5,000 by the Florida Department of Health earlier this year for holding himself out as a doctor. The investigators told Collazo that the names of two of his sons were also on the list.

"What is extremely troubling, and forms the basis of this motion, is the fact that the plaintiff appears to be in possession of confidential medical information not only belonging to Collazo but to numerous other individuals and intends to use this information as a means to uncover information in this investigation disguised as litigation," Jimenez wrote in the filing.

Collazo said he does not understand why MLB is so eager to tear down Rodriguez, who has been sidelined this season with a hip injury but has been one of the game's biggest stars for two decades.

"I've known Alex since he was 9 years old," Collazo said. "He has talked to the kids in my camps and he always talks about the importance of respect and education. He has been nothing but class with the kids around here and this community."

Yahoo! Sports

MLB using testimony from minor leaguers to condemn players with Biogenesis ties

By: Jeff Passan

June 11, 2013

13 hours ago

While major league players implicated in the Biogenesis scandal have yet to provide substantive information to Major League Baseball, multiple minor leaguers have discussed in detail their transactions with Anthony Bosch's clinic that allegedly provided performance-enhancing drugs to dozens of players, sources with knowledge of the interviews told Yahoo! Sports.

Under threat of suspension, the minor league players gave testimony that Major League Baseball plans to use to confirm the veracity of Bosch's story, the sources said. The league last week cut a deal with Bosch, the proprietor of the so-called wellness clinic, to drop a lawsuit against him, provide him with protection and try to sway the government from prosecuting him in exchange for his detailing players' involvement with Biogenesis.

The revelation that multiple minor league players used Biogenesis products confirms a long-held belief that immunity could be an option for major leaguers and that the list of players who sought out Bosch exceeds the 20 or so publicly named from his logbook. One source said: "There are others who went there. Big names. I don't know if they're in the notes, but if Tony tells the whole story, they'll be in there."

Minor leaguers' reasons for talking with MLB were obvious: Players not on a team's 40-man roster are not protected by the MLB Players Association and thus are subject to discipline at the league's whims. The suspension of alleged Biogenesis client Cesar Carrillo for 100 games – 50 for a non-analytical positive after his name was found in Bosch's logbook, 50 for lying to the league – spooked players enough that they were compelled to describe their interactions with Biogenesis.

Corroborating any of Bosch's testimony would be a win for MLB, which is seeking suspensions for Ryan Braun and [Alex Rodriguez](#), among others. The credibility of Bosch – he allegedly provided the PEDs to players, is not a doctor and was reported by the New York Daily News to have asked Rodriguez to pay him off for his silence – is one of MLB's greatest hurdles in potentially disciplining players.

So is getting major leaguers to cooperate. Lawyers for the MLBPA and players' counsel have agreed that, at this point in the investigation, staying mum is the best course of action, sources said. The league has informally spoken with players, waiting for more of its investigation to crystallize before approaching those whom it wants to discipline.

"Players aren't going to say anything – until they know what [Bosch] said," one source with knowledge of the players' plan said. "There's nothing to be gained from talking now. As long as they don't say anything, they're not lying."

The trickiest part for the union is maintaining solidarity among a group that could fracture if the league offers immunity in exchange for cooperation, as it did with the minor leaguers. Union lawyers have been present at the meetings thus far and will continue to be after the league finishes its interrogation of Bosch, which is expected to end in the coming days.

Wang pitching tonight for the Blue Jays

Posted By [Chad Jennings](#) On June 11, 2013 @ 3:44 pm In [Misc](#) |

The Blue Jays have officially signed Chien-Ming Wang, essentially plucking him out of the Yankees minor league system to start tonight in Chicago. Here's the AP with the basic details.

CHICAGO (AP) — Chien-Ming Wang agreed to a one-year contract with the Toronto Blue Jays and was set to start Tuesday night against the Chicago White Sox.

Wang will be paid at a rate of \$500,000 this season while in the major leagues and \$90,000 while in the minors. The deal does not contain any performance bonuses.

The 33-year-old right-hander was 4-4 with a 2.33 ERA in nine starts this year for the New York Yankees' Triple-A team at Scranton-Wilkes-Barre. The Yankees released him last week at his request.

Toronto designated infielder Andy LaRoche for assignment. He was 0 for 4 in one game with the Blue Jays and hit .282 with seven homers and 32 RBIs at Triple-A Buffalo.

Catcher Henry Blanco, designated for assignment on June 7, was released.

FOX Sports

Cole's debut an overwhelming success

JON PAUL MOROSI

UPDATED JUN 12, 2013 3:12 AM ET

PITTSBURGH

At some point, I stopped counting Gerrit Cole's standing ovations Tuesday night.

One was for taking the mound at PNC Park to throw his *warm-up pitches*, as if every **Pittsburgh Pirates** fan wanted the former No. 1 overall draft pick to feel their embrace, their hope, maybe a little of their anxiety.

One was for wiggling out of a first-inning jam, to the extent that burrowing 99-mph fastballs low in the strike zone constitutes "wiggling."

One was for what Cole said was his first hit since high school — a full-count, bases-loaded, two-run single against two-time Cy Young Award winner **Tim Lincecum** in his *first* major-league at-bat.

And the last one was for it all: 6-1/3 innings, two earned runs, 81 efficient pitches, and an 8-2 victory over the defending world champion **San Francisco Giants**. Cole's debut was an overwhelming success, affirming both his long-term potential and near-term importance to the organization.

"I was trying not to look up, because I felt like I was going to smile," Cole said of the final, thunderous cheer. "And that would not have looked really hard, really cool. But it was very much appreciated. It was very hard for me to keep a stone face."

Cole, 22, decided not to tip his cap before reaching the dugout steps. "I wasn't going to do that unless the veterans gave me the go-ahead," he explained. The rookie was on point about that, too. As Pittsburgh catcher **Russell Martin** said, "When you leave the mound and you've got two guys in scoring position, you don't want to bring too much attention to yourself."

Before you get the impression Martin was being too hard on the kid, consider something else he said after the game: "He's got the best fastball I've ever caught from a starter."

Of note: Martin caught Clayton Kershaw in his 2008 debut — and many times after that.

"He locates it down in the zone," Martin said of Cole. "It's heavy when it comes in. It's hard to explain. It just has that heavy feeling when you catch it. He has a four-seamer he mixes in with a two-seamer, so he's giving different looks with his fastball. It jumps on you, anywhere from 95 to 98. Powerful. He hides the ball well. He's pretty special."

The Pirates are counting on it. For Pittsburgh to finish with its first winning record since Barry Bonds roamed left field in 1992, Cole needs to pitch his way into the company of Matt Harvey and Shelby Miller among the league's top young starters — and do so very quickly.

This wasn't a charming, pitch-count-controlled start buffered by diminished expectations. Cole isn't here to blossom on his own schedule, according to developmental timetables. Effective immediately, Cole is a vital part of the Pirates' rotation. They need what he gives them.

Of course, he hits 99 on the radar gun. *Every* team wants that. But Cole's efficiency might be even more valuable to the Pirates, whose starters entered Tuesday with the second-fewest innings pitched of any staff in the National League.

Starters **Wandy Rodriguez** and **Jeanmar Gomez** are on the disabled list. **Charlie Morton** is about to make his first big-league start in more than one year. Key relievers Justin Wilson, **Mark Melancon** and **Jason Grilli** have had heavy workloads.

The circumstance calls for a durable starter, capable of winning games in a way that rests the bullpen. Cole is that. On good nights, Cole's relatively high contact ratio (seven hits, only two strikeouts) affirms the wisdom of the pitch-to-contact approach he honed at Triple-A. On bad nights, he might give up four runs because bloop hits fall in at the wrong times.

Obviously, Tuesday was one of the good nights. Pirates manager Clint Hurdle let Cole bat for himself in the top of the seventh — he received another ovation then, by the way — and there was no second-guessing the decision: Cole had thrown only 72 pitches through six innings.

"Only one three-ball count," Hurdle noted afterward.

There's no standing ovation for a statistic like that. But that is what matters most to the Pirates. They are holding a playoff spot in June, and Cole is the type of man who can help them keep it.



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6/11/2013 10:00 A.M. ET

Cardinals prove homegrown talent trumps spending

Scouting, development have St. Louis thriving despite free-agent departures

By Mike Bauman / MLB.com

Over the last two winters in free agency, the St. Louis Cardinals have lost Albert Pujols, who at that time was considered the premier player in the game, and a frontline starting pitcher, Kyle Lohse.

The Cardinals have been so devastated by these defections that they currently have the best record in the Major Leagues.

On the flip side, three teams that have been extremely active in adding big-name, high-salaried talent -- the Angels, the Dodgers and the Blue Jays -- could be found entering this week in third, fifth and fifth place, respectively. And the Angels' third place was worse than it sounded; double-digit games out of the division lead.

It ought to be recalled that the vast majority of us in the baseball punditry applauded these clubs for their aggressive pursuit of impressive personnel. And in some cases, these rave reviews were accompanied by prognostications of certain championships to come.

Not so fast. And not so far. OK, the season is far from over. But there is an emerging moral for team-building in the early 21st century:

Grow your own. It is so much cheaper than the alternative. It can happen regardless of market size. It is a function of intelligence, acumen and diligence, not a question of pocket depth.

It is a better deal than giving a 10-year contract for a gross national product to a 32-year-old man, thus making the underlying assumption that his productivity will match the expenditure by defying the normal human aging process.

Take a long look at the Cards. And if you're in the rest of the National League Central, maybe you want to wear shades, because of the reflected glare from that 41-22 record.

Pujols was their franchise player, right? They could never be the same without him. And in fact, they are different without him, but that doesn't translate into worse.

The Cardinals were supposed to receive condolences after the departure of Pujols to the Angels. Instead, they are receiving congratulations from baseball people who understand how the Cards have wisely allocated their resources, rather than risking much of their entire future on the contract of one player.

The Cardinals have four starting pitchers and a closer on the disabled list now. But it does not matter. They have the organizational pitching depth that is only a dream for most franchise.

A St. Louis pitcher goes down. A pitcher comes up from the Minors throwing strikes at 98 mph. Yet another St. Louis pitcher goes down. Another pitcher comes up from the Minors. He's throwing 91 mph, but it's OK, because he's throwing double-play balls.

The Cards, for instance, acquired Trevor Rosenthal in the 21st round of the 2009 Draft. He throws 100 mph, but he also has this knee-buckling curve, 20 mph slower. He struck out the side on 11 pitches in Cincinnati on Sunday night. That's a tough Reds lineup. But Rosenthal was unhittable. He's an eighth-inning guy for the Redbirds. He's still, you know, making progress.

Great scouting. Great player development. These two elements are trumping great big bucks.

Free agency isn't what it once was. With broader prosperity in the contemporary game, small- and medium-market clubs can retain at least some of their star-power players, keeping them safe at home and off the market.

There are fewer real stars on the open market than there were 10-15 years ago. Those that are on the market will be, almost by definition, somewhere between high-priced and overpriced.

In the case of their two major free agency losses, the Cardinals didn't pay that money, didn't play that game. Now they are ahead of the game. This is the road map for the future of any franchise without endless financial resources. And even those franchises at the top of Mt. Revenue might want to make a move in this direction.

The teams that spent the big money on the big-name players did so out of the normal motive: They wanted to win. They weren't misinformed. They weren't stupid. Plenty of other clubs would have done the same thing, if they had the money to do it.

But the St. Louis Cardinals are onto a better way. This is not just a matter of fiscal conservatism. The Cards have spent considerable money, for instance, keeping their catcher, Yadier Molina, who may be the single most valuable player in the entire game.

But in today's inflated market for pitching, the homegrown talent offers a structured, sound, sane and ultimately successful path to the top. The regular season is still a better place to make headlines than the offseason.

USA Today
6/12/13

DEALS

Baseball

► American League

Boston Red Sox: Placed P Clayton Mortensen on the 15-day disabled list. Recalled P Jose De La Torre from Pawtucket (International/AAA).

Cleveland Indians: Transferred P Brett Myers to the 60-day disabled list.

Houston Astros: Agreed to terms with OF James Ramsay, P Kyle Westwood, P Sebastian Kessay and C Brett Booth on minor league contracts.

Kansas City Royals: Agreed to terms with P Luke Farrell, P Chase Darhower, P Kevin McCarthy, P Kevin Perez, P Glenn Sparkman, P Andrew Brockett, P Alex Black, OF Amalani Fukofuka, OF Daniel Rockett, OF Dominique Taylor, OF Riley King, SS Hunter Dozier, SS Kevin Kuntz, 2B Andrew Ayers, 1B Brandon Dullin, P Jonathan Dzieladzic and C Frank Schwindel.

Los Angeles Angels: Designated 3B Chris Nelson for assignment. Activated OF Peter Bourjos from the 15-day disabled list.

Minnesota Twins: Recalled OF Oswaldo Arcia from Rochester (International/AAA).

Oakland Athletics: Agreed to terms with P Dylan Covey, P Louis Trivino, P Dakota Freese, P Junior Mendez, P Samuel Bragg, P Trevor Bayless, P Kevin Johnson, P Jonathan Massad, P Blake McMullen, P A.J. Burke, P Dominique Vattuone, P Joseph Michaud, OF Tyler Marincov, OF Justin Higley, OF Jaycob Brugman, OF Scott Masik, OF Benjamin McQuown, OF Chris Kohler, OF Matt Stalcup, P Jerad Grundy, C Josh Miller, C Kyle Wheeler, 1B Ryan Huck, 2B Joseph Bennie and 3B Austin Kubala on minor league contracts.

Tampa Bay Rays: Placed P Alex Cobb on the bereavement list. Recalled P Jake Odorizzi from Durham (International/AAA).

Texas Rangers: Agreed to terms with P Alex Gonzalez on a minor league contract.

Toronto Blue Jays: Assigned OF Evan Crawford outright to New Hampshire (Eastern/AA). Sent P Luis Perez to Dunedin (Florida State/A) for a rehab assignment. Agreed to terms with P Chien-Ming Wang. Designated 3B Andy LaRoche for assignment.