



**New York Yankees Clips  
Saturday, May 21, 2016**



# YANK TRI-UMPH

## CC's 'A' game gives Bombers 3 straight wins

BY MARK FEINSAND  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

OAKLAND — Break up the Yankees.

It took more than 40 games, but the Bombers finally have their first three-game winning streak of the season, beating the Athletics, 8-3, in the second of four games at the Oakland Coliseum.

Carlos Beltran and the offense gave CC Sabathia plenty of run support, while the big lefthander picked up right where he left off two weeks ago, firing six strong innings for his third win of the season and 100th victory as a Yankee.

This was the seventh time the Yankees were attempting to turn a two-game winning streak into three, having failed in each of the first six attempts.

"We've been battling all year. We're starting to turn things around, so you just want to keep the momentum going," Sabathia said.

Showing no sign of the groin injury that sidelined him for 15 days, Sabathia allowed one run on a season-low three hits and one walk, striking out a season-high eight batters.

"I felt like I did pretty good. I got in a groove as the game went on and was able to hit my spots," Sabathia said.

Beltran had three doubles and drove in three runs, while Ronald Torreyes and Jacoby Ellsbury each had two-run triples. Aaron Hicks, Didi Gregorius and Torreyes combined to score five runs in the bottom

three spots of the lineup.

At 19-22, the Yankees are within three games of .500 for the first time since they were 8-11 on April 26.

Sonny Gray, last year's third-place finisher in the American League Cy Young race, entered the night with a 3-4 record and 5.84 ERA, but the Yankees have made a habit of turning struggling starters around.

It looked like it would be another one of those nights through three innings, as the

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Yankees had three hits and two walks but were unable to scratch a run across.

"We made Sonny Gray work really hard," Joe Girardi said. "You look up after three innings, you think at some point you're going to break through."

Sabathia worked a quick first before the Athletics put together a rally in the second thanks to a walk and a hit batsman, both with one out. Matt McBride made Sabathia pay for his mistakes, his RBI single giving Oakland a 1-0 lead.

Sabathia stranded two runners in the third, sending the Yankees offense back to work. It would be quite some time before he saw the mound again.

That's because the Yankees bats broke out against Gray in the fourth, mounting a one-out rally after Hicks walked and Gregorius singled.

Getting the start at third on Chase Headley's day off, Torreyes tripled to left-center to give the Yankees a 2-1 lead.

"(Torreyes) is a good little player,"

Girardi said. "He had a big night tonight."

Ellsbury reached safely on catcher's interference for the fifth time this season, then Gray unleashed a wild pitch — one of three for the righthander in the game — to bring Torreyes home for a third Yankees run.

Brett Gardner walked, while another wild pitch advanced runners to second and third. Beltran hit a fly to center that Coco Crisp misread, gifting the hitter with a two-run double that capped the five-run frame as the Yankees would bat around in the inning.

Sabathia had no trouble protecting the lead, sitting Oakland down in order in both the fourth and fifth.

Beltran tacked on another run in the sixth, driving in Gardner with his third double of the night to push the lead to 6-1. Sabathia wrapped up his outing with a scoreless sixth, striking out the final two batters he faced.

"I thought he got stronger as the night went on. You couldn't ask for anything more," Girardi said of Sabathia's performance. "He had everything going again."

Handed a healthy five-run lead, the bullpen needed to get nine outs without the services of Dellin Betances, Andrew Miller and Aroldis Chapman after Girardi used them on Wednesday and Thursday.

Kirby Yates allowed a run in the seventh, but he bounced back with a 1-2-3 eighth. Then Ellsbury added his two-run triple in the ninth, giving Chasen Shreve a cushy six-run lead to close out the ninth.

Daily News

5.21.16

# Oakland's horror show helps Sabathia earn 100th win with the Yankees

# A IS FOR

By GEORGE A. KING III

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OAKLAND, Calif. — Place Donald Trump's moss on Hillary Clinton's mug and that is how ugly the Athletics played Friday night.

The A's made three errors, center fielder Coco Crisp botched two balls that went for hits, and Sonny Gray uncorked three wild pitches and walked four.

All the charity played a part in an 8-3 Yankees win in front of an announced crowd of 28,235 at Oakland Coliseum.

However, it would be silly to disregard what CC Sabathia contributed to the Yankees' season-high third straight victory.

"He had everything working tonight," catcher Brian McCann said of Sabathia, who hopped off the disabled list and allowed one run and three hits and fanned eight in six innings. "He kept them off balance from the first pitch. He could do anything he wanted."

In addition to the A's ineptness aiding Sabathia, who is 3-2, Carlos Beltran delivered a large dose of help. The designated hitter, who would prefer to play right field, went 3-for-5 and drove in three runs. The second of his three doubles plated two runs in a five-run fourth inning that gave the Yankees a 5-1 lead.

Sabathia, who was on the shelf with a strained left groin, gave up a run and stranded two in the second. He left two more on in the third and cruised through the next three innings.

"I got in a groove as the game went on," Sabathia said. "[Location] got better as the game went on."

The victory was Sabathia's 100th as a Yankee. Combined with 106 wins as an Indian, Sabathia is the eighth pitcher in the modern era to win 100 or more games with two teams.

With Dellin Betances flagged from working and Joe Girardi hoping to give Andrew Miller and Aroldis Chapman the night off after all three had pitched in the two previous games, Kirby Yates hurled the seventh and eighth and gave up a run. After Jacoby Ellsbury's two-run triple hiked the lead to 8-2 in the ninth, Chasen Shreve allowed a run and recorded the final three outs in a non-save situation.

"It was big," Girardi said of Ellsbury's blow. "It meant I didn't have to get Chapman up."

Girardi said if a save situation surfaced, he was going to use Chapman for a third straight game.

Beltran has been the designated hitter 10 times since Alex Rodriguez went on the DL. Girardi said when Rodriguez returns, he will be the DH and Beltran will go back to right field. The switch-hitting Beltran hasn't been shy about his affinity for playing the field, and despite a decided lack of range, he still believes he can play there.

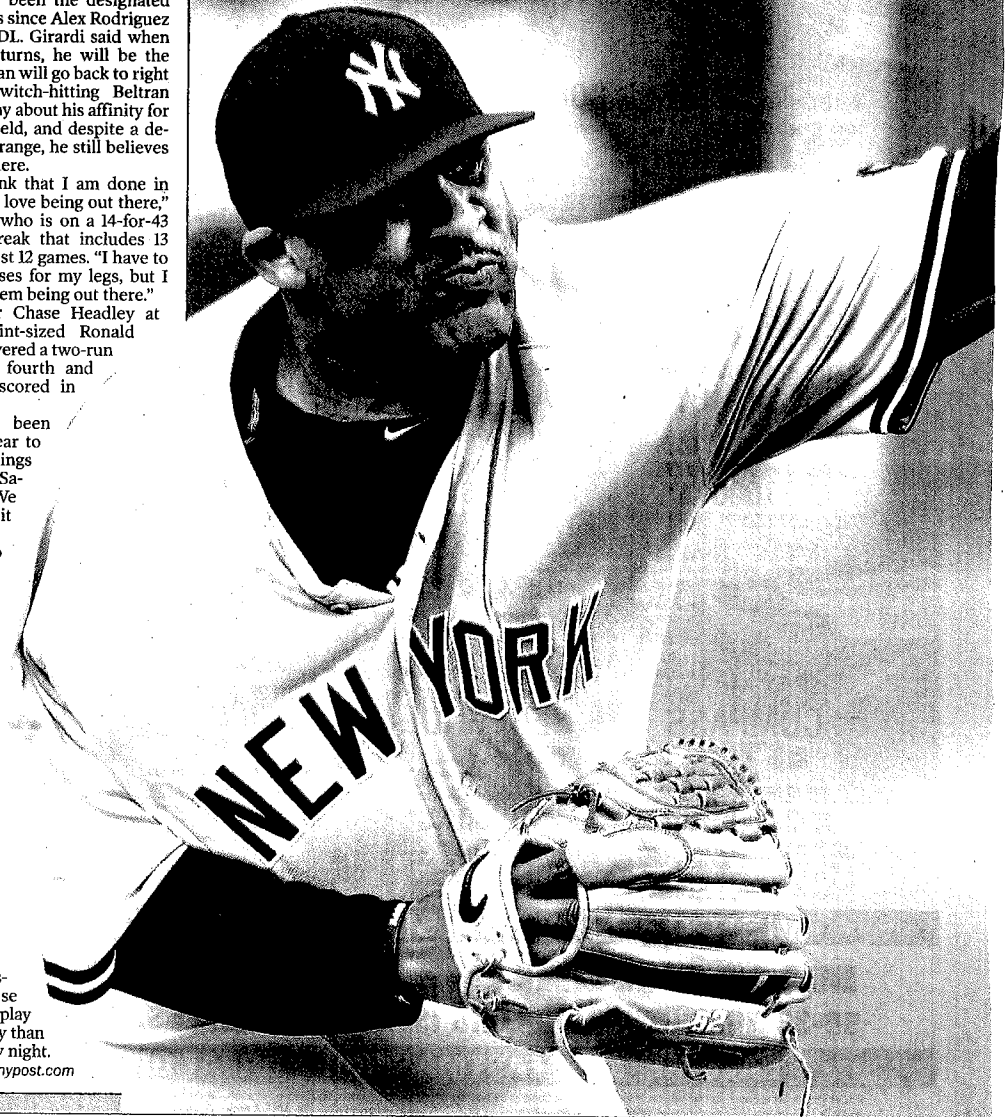
"People think that I am done in the outfield. I love being out there," said Beltran, who is on a 14-for-43 (.326) hot streak that includes 13 RBIs in his past 12 games. "I have to do my exercises for my legs, but I have no problem being out there."

Starting for Chase Headley at third, the pint-sized Ronald Torreyes delivered a two-run triple in the fourth and singled and scored in the ninth.

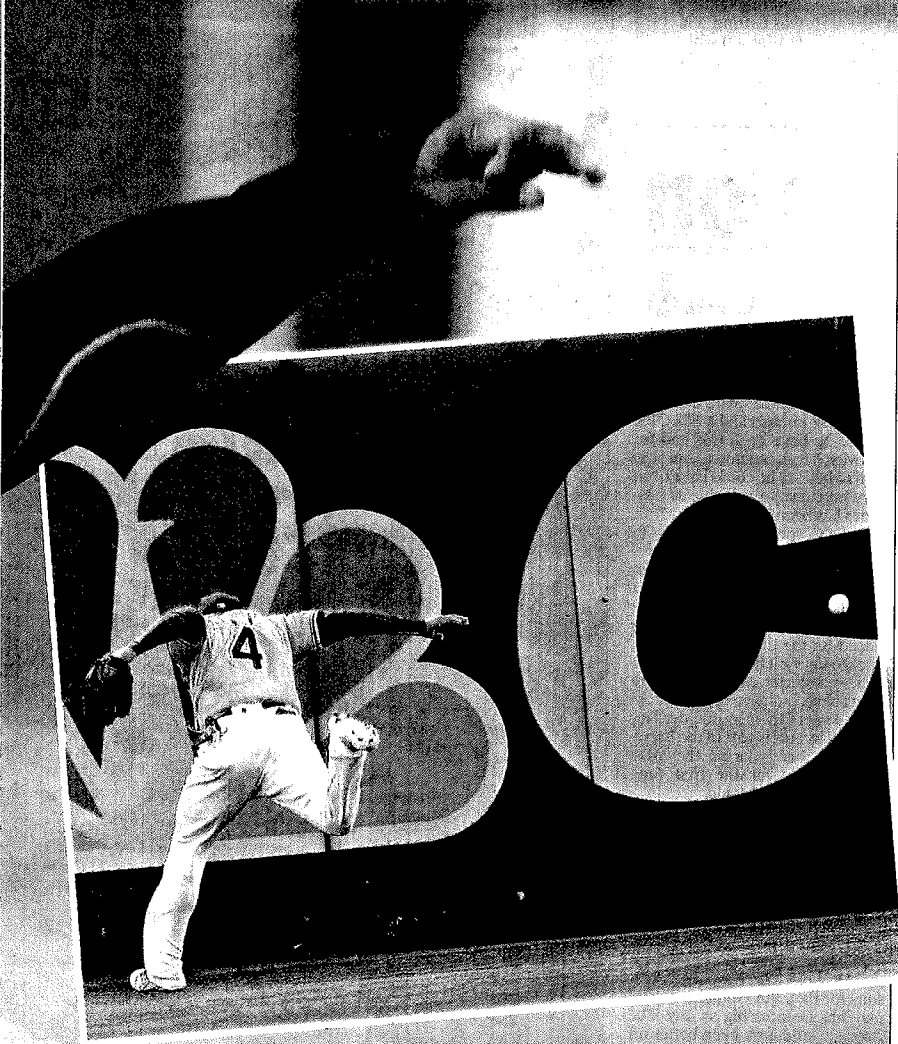
"We have been battling all year to turn things around," Sabathia said. "We want to keep it going."

For that to happen, the Yankees will require an outing from Masahiro Tanaka on Saturday that resembles those produced by Nathan Eovaldi, Ivan Nova and Sabathia in the past three games and the timely hitting delivered by Beltran, Torreyes and Ellsbury, because the A's can't play worse Saturday than they did Friday night.

george.king@nypost.com



# AWFUL



**CC HOW IT'S DONE:** CC Sabathia pitched six innings of one-run, three-hit ball and got some help from the A's terrible defense, including two misplayed balls by center fielder Coco Crisp (inset), as the Yankees defeated Oakland 8-3 on Friday night. AP (2)

NY Post

5.21.16

# AP

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## CC Sabathia makes history in New York Yankees' 8-3 win over Oakland Athletics

05/21/2016 1:04 AM ET

By The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) CC Sabathia's 100th win with the New York Yankees didn't mean nearly as much as getting his season back on track.

After sitting out the past two weeks recovering from a groin injury, the big left-hander showed he can still be a factor for manager Joe Girardi's ballclub - even while pitching on the road in front of more than 100 family and friends.

Sabathia came off the disabled list to pitch six innings and become the eighth player in the modern era to win 100 games or more with two teams, and the Yankees beat the Oakland Athletics 8-3 on Friday night.

"I thought he got sharper as the night went on which I think is even better," Girardi said. "You couldn't ask for anything more, six good innings from CC where he shut them down. I thought he had everything going."

Sabathia (3-2) was just as sharp as he was in his previous start before going on the disabled list with a groin injury earlier this month. He allowed one run, three hits, walked one and had a season-high eight strikeouts.

"I was able to make pitches and I felt like I got better as the game went on," said Sabathia, who called the outing his best in more than a year. "The two-seamer command wasn't as good as I wanted it to be but just being able to throw my off-speed pitches for strikes and get some swings and misses was good."

The win was Sabathia's 100th in New York pinstripes. He also had 106 victories with Cleveland to join an illustrious list of players that includes Hall of Famers Nolan Ryan and Greg Maddux to win 100 or more with two teams.

"It means a lot to be able to win that many games here," said Sabathia, who grew up 30 miles north of the Oakland Coliseum. "I've been on some good teams and been lucky enough to stay healthy."

Carlos Beltran doubled three times and drove in three runs, Jacoby Ellsbury added two RBIs while Ronald Torreyes had a two-run triple during a five-run fourth inning to help the Yankees to their second straight win in this series after getting swept by the A's in April.

Oakland scored its only run off Sabathia in the second on Matt McBride's two-out single.

The Yankees gave Sabathia plenty of support in the fourth inning when they batted around.

Torreyes tripled in two runs to break a 2-for-23 slump and he scored on a wild pitch. Beltran's second double of the game knocked in Ellsbury and Brett Gardner.

Beltran added an RBI double in the sixth.

Most of the damage came off Oakland starter Sonny Gray, who gave up five runs in 3 1-3 innings.

Gray (3-5) continued to have command problems and was knocked out of the game after retiring 10 batters. He walked four, struck out three and threw three wild pitches in his shortest outing of the season.

Two of Gray's walks and two of the wild pitches came in the fourth. The A's ace is 0-4 with a 10.38 ERA over his last five starts.

"For a while out there it looked he had things figured out," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "They just made him work a little bit . got his pitch count up. And then in the fourth,it wasn't as good."

Oakland committed three errors to raise its AL-leading total to 34.

#### BELTRAN'S BAT

With Alex Rodriguez close to coming off the DL - he did some running before the game - Beltran's days as the Yankees DH are coming to an end. Not even performances at the plate like he had Friday will change Girardi's mind. "Right now when Alex comes back I plan on DHing him," Girardi said.

#### TRAINER'S ROOM

Yankees: LHP James Pazos was optioned to Triple-A Scranton to make room for Sabathia.

Athletics: OF Josh Reddick is scheduled to meet with a hand specialist on Monday after fracturing the tip of his left thumb stealing second base Thursday. ... RHP Liam Hendriks (triceps strain) received a cortisone injection in his elbow. ... OF Sam Fuld is in Florida recovering from rotator cuff surgery. ... Backup C Josh Phegley will begin a rehab assignment with Triple-A Nashville on Saturday. ... RHP R.J. Alvarez (elbow surgery) will throw a full bullpen session Sunday.

#### UP NEXT

Yankees: RHP Masahiro Tanaka (1-0) pitches Saturday and has allowed two earned runs or fewer in six of his eight starts this season.

Athletics: LHP Sean Manaea (1-1) is coming off his first win in the major leagues and will try to become the first Oakland pitcher since Aug. 22, 2015, to pitch more than seven innings.

## Yanks' big 4th, sharp CC fuel 3rd straight win

By Bryan Hoch and Jane Lee / MLB.com | 3:05 AM ET

OAKLAND -- Carlos Beltran collected three doubles and as many RBIs, helping the Yankees hand Sonny Gray and the A's another loss at the Coliseum on Friday night by an 8-3 decision.

Backing CC Sabathia's six innings of one-run ball, the Yankees chased a struggling Gray out of the game after just 3 1/3 innings, scoring five times in an eventful fourth inning that included a two-run triple from Ronald Torreyes. It marked the Yankees' first three-game winning streak of the season.

"It's the first time we did this? It's a good start, then," Beltran said. "CC did a great job today, pitched good, gave us the opportunity to win a ballgame. Let's try to go for the fourth game in a row tomorrow."

Sabathia did his part with eight strikeouts in his return from the disabled list, and Jacoby Ellsbury chipped in with a two-run triple in the ninth to cap off the scoring.

"We've been battling all year,' Sabathia said. "We're starting to turn things around, so you want to keep it going, keep the momentum going."

Gray was on the hook for five runs (four earned) on six hits and four walks. He also unleashed three wild pitches in the loss, which moved his record to 3-5 with a 6.19 ERA. The A's managed six hits, including an RBI double from Coco Crisp, while committing three errors.

### MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

**CC is A-OK:** Sabathia picked up right where he left off earlier this month, commanding the A's in his return from a left groin strain. Sabathia limited Oakland to just Matt McBride's second-inning RBI single as the Vallejo, Calif. native picked up the victory in front of a sizable crowd of friends and family members. There was a time earlier in Sabathia's career when he would get too amped for outings in Oakland -- attributing to his 5-7 lifetime record here -- but he says that is no longer an issue. [More >](#)

"He looked great; had everything working tonight," catcher Brian McCann said. "He had them off balance from the first pitch. He could do whatever he wanted tonight."

**Gray day:** Gray's early-season struggles have been well-documented, and the right-hander believed he'd made the necessary adjustments following his last start to put them in the past. But Gray couldn't make it out of the fourth inning for the third time in his last five starts, needing 98 pitches -- only 53 of them strikes -- to record 10 outs, struggling



with command throughout. He has a 10.38 ERA in those five starts, with 25 runs allowed in 21 2/3 innings. [More >](#)

"Early on in the first couple innings it was more about just throwing a lot of pitches," A's manager Bob Melvin said. "The velocity was 95 at times, probably the best velocity we've seen out of him, and he threw some really sharp breaking balls. And then in the fourth it got a little out of hand. They got some hits and then he had trouble finding the strike zone."

**Drive for five:** The Yankees batted around for five runs in the fourth inning, sparked by an unexpected contribution from Torreyes, as the utilityman stepped into the lineup at third base and delivered a two-run triple up the gap in left-center field. Torreyes scored on a wild pitch and Beltran drove in a pair of runs with a hard-liner double that Crisp misplayed in center field. [More >](#)

"Sometimes a ball that is hit right at you like that on a line, especially when the wind is blowing like it is tonight, is tough to judge," Melvin said. "It just got over his head."

### **SOUND SMART WITH YOUR FRIENDS**

Ellsbury reached base in the fourth inning on catcher's interference, the fifth time that he has done so this season. Entering play on Friday, only 12 catcher's interference errors had been called in the Majors, and no other player had more than two. Ellsbury leads the Majors with 19 catcher's interferences since 2007.

### **WHAT'S NEXT**

**Yankees:** [Masahiro Tanaka](#) (1-0, 3.51 ERA) has the ball for his ninth start of the season at 4:05 p.m. ET Saturday as the Yankees go for their fourth straight victory. After an ace-caliber opening to his season, Tanaka's command has slipped of late, as he has allowed 10 runs and 15 hits in his last two starts (12 innings).

**A's:** Rookie [Sean Manaea](#) takes the mound in the 1:05 p.m. PT matchup with the Yankees. Manaea has a 7.91 ERA in his first four big league outings, but the lefty appeared to turn a page in his most recent start, limiting the Rangers to one run on four hits in 6 2/3 innings on Monday for his first Major League win.

# The Record

MAY 21, 2016 LAST UPDATED: SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016, 2:10 AM

## **CC Sabathia, Carlos Beltran lead Yankees passed A's, 8-3**

**BY PETE CALDERA**

STAFF WRITER |

THE RECORD

OAKLAND, Calif. – Joe Girardi's bullpen Big Three needed a break on Friday night, and CC Sabathia – just off the disabled list - delivered at Oakland Coliseum.

On a windy, cool evening before scores of friends and family from his nearby hometown of Vallejo, the veteran lefty pitched six strong innings, yielding just one run.

And the Yankees used a five-run fourth inning – and some sloppy overall play by the Athletics – to win a third consecutive game, the first time that's happened all season.

“We were playing some bad baseball (and) we needed to do something about it,” said designated hitter Carlos Beltran, whose three doubles and three RBI aided an 8-3 Yankees win, which allowed Aroldis Chapman, Andrew Miller and Dellin Betances to take a well-deserved night off.

The electric, late-inning trio had combined to hold narrow leads and save the Yankees' two previous wins, Wednesday at Arizona and Thursday against the A's (19-24).

Chapman would have been used Friday in a save situation according to the manager.

“You can't ask for any better,” Girardi said of Sabathia's performance, after the lefty had been sidelined since May 5 due to a strained left groin. In capturing his 100th win as a Yankee, Sabathia (3-2) struck out eight batters and walked one.

“I felt like I got better as the game went on. I felt good,” said Sabathia, who tossed 98 pitches and added that some early swings and misses by the A's “gave me the confidence to keep it going.”

Plus, the Yankees (19-22) were assisted by two poor reads by veteran Oakland center fielder Coco Crisp in the fourth, contributing to a 5-1 lead.

Getting a start Friday for Chase Headley (rest), third baseman Ronald Torreyes lined a go-ahead two-run double in the fourth, a ball that Crisp failed to grab as he extended his glove on the run in right-center field.

Three batters later, Crisp broke in on a deep Beltran fly. The ball sailed over Crisp's head for a two-run double that knocked right-hander Sonny Gray (3-5) from the game.

Torreyes had already scored on one of Gray's three wild pitches during his 3.1 innings. The visiting fourth inning also included Jacoby Ellsbury reaching – one again – on catcher's interference, and two of Gray's four walks as the Yanks batted around.

Beltran has 13 RBI over his last 12 games and is batting .326 over that span, a period in which he's split time between right field and DH, with Alex Rodriguez (hamstring) on the DL.

"I know some people think I'm done in the outfield, but I like to be out there," said Beltran, 39. "I have no problem being in the outfield every day."

A-Rod might not come off the DL until Tuesday; he won't be activated today according to Girardi, who said Beltran would serve as DH again.

The only Yankee not to reach base was Mark Teixeira (0-for-5), who is hitless in his last 14 at-bats and 3-for-18 on a road trip that began with two losses at Arizona.

Beltran's RBI double off the right field wall in the sixth and Ellsbury's two-run triple in the ninth rounded out the scoring, while Kirby Yates and Chasen Shreve finished what Sabathia started.

Sabathia is now the eighth pitcher since 1900 to win at least 100 games with two different franchises, having also won 106 games with Cleveland.

Sabathia was similarly sharp in his previous start, sailing through seven shutout innings at Baltimore on May 4, sporting a sharp changeup to go with his sinker, slider and well-spotted fastball.

On Friday night, Sabathia "had everything working and had them off balance from the first pitch," said catcher Brian McCann, who had significant praise for the lefty's cutter.

"He's starting to get a way better feel for it," McCann said. "When you've got hitters looking in and you expand (the zone), you can do a whole lot of things."

## CC Sabathia returns in style, Yankees blow out Athletics | Rapid Reaction

By [Randy Miller](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 11:52 PM, updated May 21, 2016 at 1:38 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — There was no head scratching needed watching the [Yankees](#) on Friday night.

They won again, this time impressively.

A night after winning the series opener despite committing a few costly mental errors, the Yanks prevailed in an 8-3 romp over the Athletics at Oakland Coliseum that should have them feeling as good about themselves as they have all season.

The Yanks still trying to battle their way out of last place in the AL East, but they're now riding a season-best three-game winning streak that has included three outstanding starting performances in succession.

The latest to dial it up was left-hander CC Sabathia (3-2), who worked six shutout innings on the day he was activated from the DL after missing 15 games with a left groin strain.

This was the same Sabathia who had pitched seven shutout innings in beating Baltimore in his previous start on May 4. Mixing a good cutter slider and changeup, he allowed just three hits, struck out eight and walked only one in a 98-pitch outing.

Sabathia's strong effort followed consecutive one-run, six-inning outings that resulted in wins for Nathan Eovaldi on Wednesday in Arizona and Ivan Nova on Thursday in Oakland.

Besides Sabathia having a big night, the Yankees offense put up six runs in four innings on A's ace Sonny Gray (3-5), all but one coming during a five-run uprising in the fourth.

The biggest hit of the big inning came from utility infielder Ronald Torreyes, who was playing third for Chase Headley. With Oakland up 1-0, Torreyes delivered a two-run triple to left-center. Later in the inning, Carlos Beltran lined a two-run double that sailed over center fielder Coco Crisp's head after he started in.

Beltran, who was a goat and hero in Thursday's 4-1 win, was 3-for-5 with three doubles and three RBIs on Friday.

The night before, Beltran cost the Yanks a run when he forgot the outs and didn't score from second on a dropped flyball, but he drove in a run before his gaffe with a double and two more after with a ninth-inning homer.

On Friday, the Yanks added on in the ninth, making it 8-2 on a two-run double by Jacoby Ellsbury.

### **NOTABLE**

- The Yankees' four-run third was their second biggest inning of the season, trailing only their six-run first in a 16-6 home win over Houston in the second game of the season.
- The Yankees have been in last in their division every day since April 24, but they're now just a half-game behind Toronto for fourth in the AL East.
- The the Yankees got away with sloppy defense in the third inning. Torreyes booted leadoff hitter Coco Crisp's grounder to third, then two batters later Castro threw wide right to first on the backend what should have been an inning-ending 5-4-3 double play.
- Slumping first baseman Mark Teixeira, back in the starting lineup after only playing the final two innings on Thursday, was 0-for-5 with two strikeouts and now is hitting .196. He's 0-for-14 with eight whiffs in his last four games and is on a career-long homerless drought that is up to 113 at-bats.
- Didi Gregorius was 3-for-4 with a run scored, raising his average from .238 to .252.
- The A's committed three errors, one a dropped foul pop by first baseman Billy Butler that extended Torreyes' fifth-inning at-bat.
- The A's will be without their No. 3 hitter for the final three games of their series against the Yankees and then some. Right fielder Josh Reddick left Thursday's game after suffering a hand injury on a seventh-inning steal, and on Friday he was placed on the 15-day DL with a broken left thumb. Jake Smolinski was called up from Triple-A on Friday and started in right and was 0-for-3.
- Yankees manager Joe Girardi will manage his 1,500<sup>th</sup> career game on Saturday. He was 831-667 heading into Friday. He's 753-583 with the Yankees since 2008 after posting a 78-84 record managing the 2006 Florida Marlins.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

- Saturday: Yankees at Oakland Athletics, 4:05 p.m., YES; Masahiro Tanaka (1-0, 3.51) vs. LHP Sean Manaea (1-1, 7.91).
- Sunday: Yankees at Oakland Athletics, 4:05 p.m., YES; RHP Michael Pineda (1-5, 6.60) vs. RHP Jesse Hahn (1-1, 3.30)

**insider**

BY MARK FEINSAND

**A-Rod's return from DL stint still up in air**

**O**AKLAND — Alex Rodriguez's return from the disabled list may not take place in Oakland after all.

A-Rod made more progress on Friday, running the bases and in the outfield, turning it up a notch as he tested his injured hamstring.

"Today was a good day," Joe Girardi said. "He did the arcs, he was much quicker on those. He ran the bases. We'll wait to see how he feels tomorrow and we'll decide what we have."

Girardi didn't sound like he was planning to have A-Rod back on Saturday, while Sunday now sounds like a question mark, too.

"I'm not sure; a lot of it is just how he feels," Girardi said. "We could do it (Saturday). There's the old theory that if a guy feels good, you wait an extra day just to make sure. Then you have to decide, we're off Monday, so does it make sense to give him a couple extra days just to make sure? Let's just see how he comes out (Saturday). He ran pretty good today."

**BASE INSTINCTS**

Three different Yankees committed baserunning blunders on Thursday night, but Girardi was unfazed by two of them as Chase Headley was picked off on what the Yankees felt was a balk, while Carlos Beltran simply thought there was one out rather than two, causing him to hold up at second base on a dropped fly ball.

The third mistake belonged to Didi Gregorius, who was thrown out at second base after trying to advance to second on his single when right fielder Josh Reddick threw to third.

Girardi said Gregorius was "overaggressive" on the play, something that has been an issue in the past.

"You just continue to try to teach," Girardi said. "You continue to talk to him about it, making sure that you make good decisions. We can't get in his body or his mind; that's something that we can't do. We just try to teach and show him examples."

Gregorius didn't think he was being overaggressive, saying he would have been safe had he not hesitated momentarily after rounding first base.

"I'm just trying to get into scoring position right there," Gregorius said. "I saw the throw go to third and I hesitated a little. If I didn't hesitate, I would have made it because it was still a close play. It just happened. I'm just playing the game. I'm not trying to do too much."

**PEACE OUT, PAZOS**

LHP James Pazos was optioned to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre to make room for CC Sabathia on the active roster. ... LHP Phil Coke was outrighted to Triple-A after being designated for assignment earlier in the week.

**NEXT GAME**

Saturday, 4:05 p.m., at Oakland, RHP Masahiro Tanaka (1-0, 3.51) vs. LHP Sean Manaea (1-1, 7.91); YES



Daily News

5.21.16

# No timetable set for A-Rod's return

By GEORGE A. KING III

## YANKEES NOTES

OAKLAND, Calif. — Alex Rodriguez continued to run the bases before Friday night's 8-3 win over the Athletics at the Oakland Coliseum, but there was no word whether the designated hitter would come off the disabled list Saturday or Sunday.

"Today was a good day," manager Joe Girardi said. "He ran the arcs and was much quicker on those. He ran the bases. We are going to wait and see how he feels and then we will decide what we have."

Girardi ruled out Rodriguez (strained right hamstring) returning Saturday and did not pledge to put him in the lineup Sunday either. Rodriguez last played May 3.

"It becomes kind of interesting because we have a day off on Monday," Girardi said of Sunday.

Girardi also wasn't sure about Saturday.

"I am not sure. A lot of it depends on how he feels. We could do it [Saturday]? There is the old theory: If a guy feels good, you wait an extra day," Girardi said. "We are off Monday, so does it make sense to give him a couple of extra days? Let's see how he comes out [Saturday]. He ran pretty good [Friday]."

Rodriguez stood in the batters' box for Michael Pineda's bullpen session after the running program ended.

Based on their 10-4 record in games the DH was used, the Yankees haven't terribly missed Rodriguez, who is hitting .194 (14-for-72) with five homers and a

dozen RBIs in 20 games. He last played May 3.

With Rodriguez out, Carlos Beltran was the DH for 10 games, while Mark Teixeira, Brian McCann, Gary Sanchez and Austin Romine filled in once each.

When Beltran was the DH, Aaron Hicks played right field and is a defensive upgrade over Beltran. However, Hicks is batting .215 (17-for-79).

► Speaking of Beltran, who went 2-for-5 with a homer and three RBIs in Thursday night's 4-1 win over the A's, he just concluded a solid calendar year.

Since May 18 of last season Beltran is hitting .284 with 28 homers and 83 RBIs. The homers were tied for fifth among AL outfielders.

He continued that hot streak with three doubles in five trips to the plate Friday night and drove in three runs.

► After not starting Thursday night, when he entered the game as a defensive replacement, Teixeira was at first base Friday night looking to shake a miserable slump.

Instead, he went 0-for-5 with two strikeouts and left six runners on base.

► Girardi will manage his 1,500th game in the big leagues Saturday. Among all managers with as many or more games managed, Girardi ranks 16th in career winning percentage at .564.

**ON DECK**

**INSIDE THE MATCHUPS**

**AT A'S**

**SATURDAY — 4:05**  
RHP Masahiro Tanaka (1-0, 3.51) vs.  
LHP Sean Manaea (1-1, 7.91)

**SUNDAY — 4:05**  
RHP Michael Pineda (1-5, 6.60) vs.  
RHP Jesse Hahn (1-1, 3.38)

**Both games on YES, WFAN (660 AM, 101.9 FM)**

**YANKEES:** Tanaka got tagged for four runs on eight hits in five innings his last time out in a no-decision against the White Sox. Tanaka has not won over his past five starts.

**A'S:** After surrendering eight runs in 2 2/3 innings in his first start of the season, Manaea got on track with a four-hit, one-run effort for the win against the Rangers on May 16.

**STAT 30?**

**YANKEES:** Closer Aroldis Chapman has thrown the top 13 fastest pitches in the majors this season, according to MLB Statcast.

**A'S:** Oakland, which made three errors Friday night, leads the American League in errors with 34, which had led to 15 unearned runs.

47  
New York Post, Saturday, May 21, 2016  
nypost.com

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NY Post  
5.21.16

YANKS NOTEBOOK

## A-Rod to sit until Tuesday?

BY ERIK BOLAND

erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — Alex Rodriguez ran again yesterday with no pain, a positive sign. But the 40-year-old DH, on the disabled list since May 4 with a right hamstring strain, still hasn't been able to cut loose with his legs, and Joe Girardi indicated the Yankees might wait until Tuesday before activating him.

"We'll see," Girardi said. "It becomes kind of interesting because you have a day off on Monday. So it's something we'll talk about."

The Yankees end a stretch of 20 games in a row tomorrow and are off Monday before starting a three-game series against Toronto on Tuesday night.

Girardi called yesterday "a good day" and said A-Rod made "a lot" of progress. "He did the arcs, he was much quicker on those, he ran the bases," he said. "So tomorrow we just kind of wait to see how he feels and then we'll decide what we'll have."

In the week leading up to this four-game series, Thursday had been targeted as a likely return date for A-Rod. His hamstring hasn't cooperated, though, at least not to the point that he has felt comfortable enough, in his words, to "just let it go."

"We could do it [today]," Girardi said. "But there's the old theory that if a guy feels good, you wait an extra day just to make sure. Then you have to decide, we're off Monday, so does it make sense to give him a couple extra days just to make sure? Let's just see how he comes out [today]."

### ■ Let's chat

While Girardi has refrained from blasting his team publicly for baserunning gaffes during this trip — including three Thursday night — that doesn't mean there haven't been internal discussions. "Everything is addressed," he said. "There is nothing that goes unnoticed here."

Newsday  
5.21.16



# The Record

MAY 21, 2016 LAST UPDATED: SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016, 1:20 AM

## Yankees notes: Poor baserunning proves costly

THE RECORD

### Bad baserunning

Manager Joe Girardi believes his team "can do a better job" when it comes to limiting baserunning mistakes, though he sees some of those errors born out of frustration and over-aggressiveness. "The mental mistakes are the ones that bother you the most because those are the ones you have more control over," Girardi said.

In Thursday's 4-1 win at Oakland, Carlos Beltran cost the Yankees a run at second base when he forgot there were two out on a dropped fly ball. And Didi Gregorius made another poor decision when he was thrown out at second base, eliminating a first-and-third, one-out scenario. "We want him aggressive," Girardi said of Gregorius. "We just want him to make a better read."

Girardi said that such plays are constantly discussed. "There's nothing that goes unnoticed here, we talk about it," he said, adding that "I take full responsibility" for the players' lapses. "Our job is to teach. I'm never going to back away from that."

### Horseplay

After pitching against the Athletics today, Masahiro Tanaka – a devout horse racing fan — will be rooting for long shot Japanese thoroughbred Lani in the Preakness Stakes. "Lani is a horse that's stronger in longer distances," Tanaka said through his interpreter, which could certainly help in the 1 1/2-mile Belmont Stakes. "Hopefully, he'll do well in both races."

Jockey Yutaka Take is aboard the 30-1 shot, which finished ninth in the Kentucky Derby. "I wouldn't say we're friends, but I've met him," Tanaka said of the famous Japanese jockey. Before the race, Tanaka will try to rebound from his last two starts, yielding a combined 10 earned runs in 12 total innings.

### A-Rod update

Girardi said he's "assuming" that Alex Rodriguez (right hamstring strain) won't be activated off the 15-day disabled list for today's game. The Yankees might wait until Tuesday to activate A-Rod, given Monday's scheduled off day. "The last thing you want is a setback and then you're looking at four weeks," Girardi said. Before the game, Girardi described Friday as "a good day" for Rodriguez, 40, who increased his intensity running the bases in pregame exercises.

— Pete Caldera



## Mark Teixeira back in Yankees' lineup for CC Sabathia's return from DL

### THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

**Chad Jennings**, [cjennings@lohud.com](mailto:cjennings@lohud.com) 7:10 p.m. EDT May 20, 2016

A few things to point out before tonight's Yankees game in Oakland:

- After having the day off yesterday, **Mark Teixeira** is back in the lineup tonight. He's been bad against right-handers this year, but his first base backup Dustin Ackley is only 3-for-17 in his career against A's starter Sonny Gray.
- **Ronald Torreyes** is starting at third base. Seems to be worth pointing out, if only because Joe Girardi is sticking with Torreyes rather than giving the start to **Rob Refsnyder**. Not particularly shocking, but it does suggest the Yankees are still committed to Torreyes as their utility infielder and might not replace him with Refsnyder whenever Alex Rodriguez is ready to be activated.
- As expected, **CC Sabathia** has been activated from the disabled list. To open a spot on the active roster, left-handed reliever **James Pazos** was optioned back to Triple-A.

In his last start before going on the disabled list, Sabathia was terrific. Seven scoreless innings in Baltimore on May 4 was arguably his best start in three years. It was the first time he'd pitched that many innings without a run since April 7, 2013.

Of course, it turns out, Sabathia's groin began bothering him in the fourth inning of that game, which is why he's spent the past 15 days on the disabled list.

Sabathia is returning just in time to pitch in Oakland, where he grew up and where he has a 5.44 ERA in 15 career starts.

Through five starts this season, Sabathia has never allowed more than three earned runs. He's twice failed to get through the fifth inning, but for the most part, he's done what any team asks of its No. 5 starter: he's kept games within reach.

Here is tonight's Yankees lineup:

1. Jacoby Ellsbury CF
2. Brett Gardner LF
3. Carlos Beltran DH
4. Brian McCann C
5. Mark Teixeira 1B
6. Starlin Castro 2B
7. Aaron Hicks RF
8. Didi Gregorius SS
9. Ronald Torreyes 3B



## Pregame notes: One way to save the Yankees' bullpen; score more runs

THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

**Chad Jennings**, [cjennings@lohud.com](mailto:cjennings@lohud.com) 7:31 p.m. EDT May 20, 2016

Two games in a row, Yankees manager Joe Girardi has pulled his starting pitcher after allowing one run in six innings with a pitch count well below 100. Each time, the decision has been met with questions and second guessing.

Why not stick with the starter a little bit longer and perhaps save Dellin Betances, Andrew Miller or Aroldis Chapman to pitch another day? Why talk about the need for starting pitchers to work deeper into games, then pull the plug on two guys who were about to do just that? Why load a larger workload on these key relievers, when the starting pitcher was showing little sign of trouble?

All of those are fair questions, yet the Yankees won each game in which Girardi used his aggressive bullpen strategy.

My opinion: I think I would have given both Nathan Eovaldi and Ivan Nova a chance to pitch through the seventh, but I don't think it's an obvious, clear-cut decision either way. I think it's fair to question Girardi's tactics, but I don't think he's out of line in defending them.

Three things to consider:

- **Winning back-to-back games doesn't mean Girardi made the right choice**

In the moment, Girardi's bullpen management has worked perfectly. He's brought his biggest weapons into two tight games, and those dominant relievers did their jobs. Girardi likes to say he'll worry about tomorrow, tomorrow, and that's fair. There's a chance the Yankees won't need those guys until some time next week, and if that's the case, the decision to bring them into these games will not have hurt anything.

But if the Yankees do play another close one tomorrow night, Girardi probably won't have any of those three, when he could have had two of them by just asking one more inning of Eovaldi on Wednesday and one more inning of Nova on Thursday. The bullpen decisions have worked, but that doesn't mean they won't hurt the Yankees in the near future (and that's to say nothing of workload concerns down the road).

- **Low pitch counts don't make Girardi's bullpen decisions wrong**

Here's what we don't know: What would Eovaldi and Nova have done in those seventh innings? Their pitch counts were low, and they seemed to be rolling, but that doesn't mean they were destined to cruise through the seventh inning without allowing runs, or without putting enough runners on base to put the bullpen in a real pinch.

Eovaldi has allowed a 1.011 OPS when facing hitters for the third time in a game, and that's what he was about to do before Girardi went to the bullpen on Wednesday. Nova was about to face Josh Reddick (who

had homered against him), Danny Valencia (who'd singled and lined out), and if anyone got on base, Stephen Vogt (who already had two hits). Yes, it's very easy to imagine Eovaldi and Nova each cruising through that seventh inning and giving Girardi no excuse for burning through his key relievers unnecessarily. But the fact is, we don't know whether Girardi needed those three or not. We only know he won with the decisions he made.

- **If you're going to blame Girardi, save some blame for the offense as well**

My gut reaction to watching the bullpen maneuvers of the past two days is to say Girardi overreacted and should have stuck with his starters to at least go batter-to-batter in the seventh. I don't think it's a slam dunk decision either way, but I tend to think I would have held off on going to the bullpen in the sixth with a such a low pitch count on the starting pitcher. If the Yankees have trouble closing out a game tonight or tomorrow, I think it will be fair game to place some blame on Girardi's bullpen management.

But I think it's also fair to put some blame on the offense as well. Without yesterday's baserunning mistakes, the Yankees would have carried at least a three-run lead into the seventh inning, and maybe a four-run lead. Ahead by that much, Girardi might have thought twice about going to the bullpen after six innings. Same deal on Wednesday if the Yankees hadn't left 10 men on base and gone 1-for-8 with runners in scoring position. The offense isn't quite as punchless as it was in April, but low-scoring games are problematic for a pitching staff. Scoring some runs might have saved the bullpen and bought both Eovaldi and Nova a longer leash.

- Before tonight's game, Alex Rodriguez ran the bases. It seems possible he could return from the disabled list to face left-handed starter Sean Manaea tomorrow, but that's obviously not a sure thing. Not so long ago, the Yankees thought Rodriguez would be activated by now, but that always seemed pretty optimistic. Could be a decision that doesn't come until pregame tomorrow.
- Also before today's game, Michael Pineda threw a bullpen that included some pitches with Rodriguez standing in the box. Just guessing, but that seems like a combination of Pineda working on some of his issues and Rodriguez getting a chance to see pitches.
- After being designated for assignment earlier this week, **Phil Coke** has been outrighted to Triple-A.
- Just because the question has already come up and probably will again: **Rob Refsnyder** is not in the lineup again tonight, and that shouldn't be an overwhelming surprise. It seems the Yankees still prefer **Ronald Torreyes**'s defense over Refsnyder's glove. So why was Refsnyder called up in the first place? To give the Yankees a full bench, which they didn't have for a few days. This is kind of Refsnyder's role right now. He's basically a shuttle utility player until further notice. That said, if A-Rod isn't active tomorrow, I'd think there's a chance Refsnyder could be in the lineup against the lefty.
- Tonight's Oakland starter is **Sonny Gray**, who's been surprisingly bad with a 5.84 ERA so far this season. **Brett Gardner** is coming off a really good game, and he's 4-for-10 in his career against Gray.



## Game 41: Yankees at Athletics

THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

Chad Jennings, [cjennings@lohud.com](mailto:cjennings@lohud.com) 11:07 p.m. EDT May 20, 2016

### YANKEES (18-22)

1. Jacoby Ellsbury CF
2. Brett Gardner LF
3. Carlos Beltran DH
4. Brian McCann C
5. Mark Teixeira 1B
6. Starlin Castro 2B
7. Aaron Hicks RF
8. Didi Gregorius SS
9. Ronald Torreyes 3B
- LHP CC Sabathia (2-2, 3.81)  
Sabathia vs. Athletics

### OAKLAND (19-23)

1. Coco Crisp LF
2. Marcus Semien SS
3. Danny Valencia 3B
4. Khris Davis LF
5. Billy Butler 1B
6. Stephen Vogt C
7. Jake Smolinski RF
8. Matt McBride DH

9. Tyler Ladendorf 2B

- RHP Sonny Gray (3-4, 5.84)  
Gray vs. Yankees

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**FIRST PITCH:** 9:35 p.m. ET

**TV/RADIO:** YES Network and WFAN

**WEATHER:** Temperatures getting down into the 50s

**UMPIRES:** HP Bill Miller, 1B Pat Hoberg, 2B Brian Knight, 3B Todd Tichenor

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**SURGERY FOR HENSLEY:** Former first-round pick Ty Hensley is going to miss another full season. Hensley will miss his second straight year because of yet another Tommy John surgery. He had the same procedure last year as well.

**BULLPEN DEPTH:** Today the Yankees signed veteran Neal Cotts to a minor league deal. The left-handed reliever will report to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre as added bullpen depth.

**PREGAME MOVES:** Before tonight's game, CC Sabathia was activated from the disabled list and James Pazos optioned to Triple-A. This is Sabathia's first start since May 4, when he delivered a gem in Baltimore.

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**UPDATE, 9:58 p.m.:** Scoreless after one inning. Teixeira flied out to leave two stranded in the top of the first. Sabathia put the side down in order in the bottom half.

**UPDATE, 10:45 p.m.:** So Teixeira strikes out to end the top of the third, then the bottom of the third opens with a Torreyes error. A's have runners at the corners with two outs.

**UPDATE, 10:48 p.m.:** Strikeout gets Sabathia through the third.

**UPDATE, 10:58 p.m.:** Two-run triple for Torreyes, who hit a ball pretty hard to left-center and got to third easily. Didn't see where Coco Crisp was playing Torreyes, but I can't **imagine he was playing particularly deep against a light-hitting utility man who had been awful lately.**

**UPDATE, 11:06 p.m.:** Man, the Yankees have punished Gray in this fourth inning. Five runs already, and Beltran's two-run double -- thoroughly misplayed by Crisp in center -- has chased Gray from the game. Yankees up 5-1 with one out and a runner at second.

# The Record

MAY 21, 2016 LAST UPDATED: SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016, 1:21 AM

## Yankees heavily leaning on the bullpen

BY PETE CALDERA

STAFF WRITER |

THE RECORD

OAKLAND, Calif. – Aroldis Chapman's arrival on May 9 finally completed the Yankees' super late-inning bullpen trio. But that new dynamic came with a caveat.

The back-to-back-to-back use of Chapman, Andrew Miller and Dellin Betances to finish out one game might be a rare occasion, manager Joe Girardi warned. In a usual scenario, the idea would be to have at least one of three available to close out the next day's game.

But circumstances on this current road trip changed that dynamic in a hurry.

On consecutive nights, Girardi employed all three of his electric relievers to finish narrow wins against the Diamondbacks and Athletics. And that left the Yankees, potentially, without a proven closer as they entered Friday night's game at Oakland Coliseum.

"We'll worry about tomorrow, tomorrow," Girardi said after the Betances-Miller-Chapman connection closed out Thursday night's 4-1 win against the Athletics.

Just one night earlier, Girardi summoned the trio to finish Wednesday's 4-2 victory at Arizona.

On each occasion, the Yankees received a strong six-inning, one-run, zero-walk effort by their starter.

Nathan Eovaldi yielded just one hit, retiring the final 18 Diamondbacks he faced Wednesday and Ivan Nova gave up four hits to the A's on Thursday.

"I don't second-guess myself. Maybe a lot of other people do," Girardi said of summoning the bullpen trio on consecutive nights following Thursday's win. "But there's a reason we put them together down there, and it's for games like [Wednesday] and [Thursday]."

"We didn't put them together for games that are 6-1, 7-1."

The Yankees held a 3-1 lead when Betances was called on to start Wednesday's seventh inning. And the Yanks led, 2-1, when Betances began Thursday's seventh.



"When you've got 3-1 and 2-1 [leads] and you're in close games and you have guys that strike people out, it's much harder [for the opposition] to score," Girardi said in defending his decisions.

And the recent circumstances surrounding the Yankees might have been just as influential as the game's score when considering the full use of the dynamic trio.

Critical of his club's last-place standing, managing general partner Hal Steinbrenner specifically mentioned the subpar performance of Mark Teixeira, Chase Headley, Michael Pineda and Luis Severino – comments that reverberated in the Yankees' clubhouse Wednesday.

And there was an acute desire to start a four-game Oakland series with a win Thursday. It was a task made that much more difficult due to a series of baserunning blunders that kept the Yankees from expanding their narrow lead.

So, Nova was thanked for his six innings of solid work and the Betances-Miller-Chapman roulette wheel was spun again.

"The one thing we haven't done is, we haven't burned them out," Girardi said of his bullpen trio. "I'm going to use them when I feel the time is right, that's my call."

Pitching out of self-created jams, Betances used 31 pitches Wednesday and 15 pitches Thursday. He was deemed unavailable for Friday.

Miller combined to throw 31 pitches on his consecutive days, while Chapman combined to throw 27 pitches in the same period.

A two-time All-Star already, Betances is under team control and Miller is in the second year of a four-year, \$36 million contract. Chapman is eligible for free agency at season's end, giving the Yanks a long-term investment in two of their three bullpen aces.

In the short term, the Yankees have to hope for continued improvement from their starters.

"Yes, I do want more distance," Girardi said. "We've done a better job of that as of late and we'll continue to stretch them out more as we need."

**BRIEFS:** Lefty reliever James Pazos was optioned to Class AAA Scranton/Wilkes-Barre to accommodate the activation of CC Sabathia (groin) from the disabled list. ... Headley was rested from Friday's starting lineup and Teixeira returned to the lineup after being rested from Thursday's start.

## Uh, oh, Yankees fans: Red Sox could be even better in future

By [Joe Giglio](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 9:00 AM, updated May 20, 2016 at 7:08 PM

For the first time in a long time, the Yankees actually have a farm system worth talking about. From Aaron Judge to Greg Bird to Jorge Mateo to James Kaprielian to Gary Sanchez, talent is emerging.

When looking through that lens, the future in the Bronx could be much brighter than the present.

But when projecting forward in the AL East, it might not be enough to take the Yankees from last place in 2016 (where they currently reside, even after a mini winning streak) to the top.

Why? The Boston Red Sox, specifically a farm system that could have baseball's top minor league arm and bat by next year, per [Jeff Passan of Yahoo Sports](#):

### **2. Anderson Espinoza, RHP, Low-A, Boston**

*No, Espinoza is not the next Urias, even if he is among the rare pitchers in full-season ball at 18. And, no, Espinoza is not the next Pedro Martinez, even if he stands 6-foot and weighs 160 pounds and throws upper-90s gas like Pedro once did. Here's what he is: a kid playing in a league of college players and striking out 11.9 per nine innings. Depending on how quickly Washington pushes Lucas Giolito, Espinoza could be in the discussion for the best pitching prospect in the minors by season's end.*

### **3. Yoan Moncada, 2B, High-A, Boston**

*Espinoza would rate as the best prospect for at least half of big league teams. With the Red Sox, he may not even be among the top two. Moncada, the Cuban for whom Boston paid \$63 million, is looking like a savvy enough investment to make up for the Rusney Castillo mess. His line through one month: .325/.455/.518, with 21 stolen bases in 31 games. Could the Red Sox have the best hitting and pitching prospect in the minors going into 2017? Absolutely.*

The scariest part? Passan listed Andrew Benintendi, a High-A center fielder and last year's first-round pick, fourth on his most recent Prospect Heat Check list.

So, to recap: The Red Sox, already good and sporting young stars like Mookie Betts and Jackie Bradley Jr., have a swell of talent growing in the farm system to either add to the current team or use in trades.

The Yankees' climb back to the top of the division won't be easy.

## Blunders Hurt Only Egos, So Far

OAKLAND, Calif. — When Oakland Athletics outfielder Josh Reddick settled under a fly ball on Thursday night, Carlos Beltran retreated to

**BILLY  
WITZ**

**ON  
BASEBALL**

second base, where he was as startled as everyone else in the stadium when the ball popped out of Reddick's glove and dropped to the grass.

But Beltran was nearly as startled when he arrived at third base and glanced up at the scoreboard. Suddenly he felt queasy. It read: two outs.

"I'm like, 'Oh my God,'" Beltran said.

Beltran had simply forgotten how many outs there were. If he had remembered that there were two outs, he would have been running at the crack of the bat and would have scored easily. Instead, he was left at third base, and the score remained tied when the next batter, Starlin Castro, ripped a line drive that was snagged by Athletics third baseman Danny Valencia.

Beltran was able to explain what had happened in good humor because his blunder had not cost the Yankees the game. Indeed, he did his best to atone for it by belting a two-run, ninth-inning homer that finally provided the Yankees a cushion in their 4-1 victory.

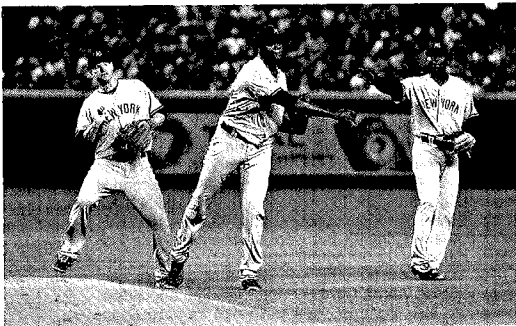
"Yeah, terrible mistake," Beltran said with a smile. "I'm sorry that I'm laughing, but it's a mistake that unfortunately can happen in baseball."

That is true. As Manager Joe Girardi pointed out, there is probably not a player who has been in the major leagues for a while who has not at some point forgotten how many outs there were. Beltran sheepishly admitted that it had happened to him before, so he could not promise that it would not happen again.

It happened in the World Series last October when Kansas City right fielder Alex Rios thought there were two outs when there was really one, and did not throw home when he had a good chance to nail Curtis Granderson trying to score on a fly ball. Like Beltran, Rios was relieved that night when his team won.

Beltran said his mistake had brought him several innings of anxiety.

"I felt like I got caught up



NORM HALL/GETTY IMAGES

From left, Chase Headley, Michael Pineda and Didi Gregorius have all made their share of mistakes in recent games.

praying for four innings that we got the lead and would be able to win this one," he said.

What is troubling for the Yankees is that Beltran is not the only one who has recently spent time whispering invocations. Third baseman Chase Headley, who was out of the lineup Friday night, has been picked off base and has thrown to the wrong base. Catcher Brian McCann allowed a runner to take two bases when he loafed after a passed ball. Shortstop Didi Gregorius was thrown out trying to take an extra base, and pitcher Michael Pineda did not look back Arizona's Paul Goldschmidt when Goldschmidt was a third of the way to third base as Pineda delivered a pitch.

That was all in the last three days.

The list could have been longer had Jacoby Ellsbury not been hit in the head by the baseball that was most likely going to beat him to the bag when he stretched a double into a triple — and taken home when the ball bounced into the stands.

Such mental mistakes and miscalculations can be infuriating to fans who may not be able to fully understand why Mark Teixeira is in a funk at the plate because they have never tried to hit a 95-mile-per-hour fastball. But when the mistakes are the types that are drilled out of Little Leaguers — well, what's the excuse for that?

Girardi said such blunders were addressed individually by the coaching staff.

"There's nothing that goes unnoticed here, whether it's a

bad read, whether it's a mental mistake — everything is always talked about," Girardi said Friday. "Sometimes it's trying too hard; sometimes it's just a mental mistake. The mental mistakes are the ones that bother you the most, because those are the ones you have more control over."

Girardi said that today's players were given so much information on where to be positioned and which pitches to swing at that he wondered whether they had become too programmed. But that would not seem to apply to the Yankees, whose mistakes in recent days have been committed mostly by veterans who know better.

Girardi also insisted that the Yankees devoted as much time to fundamentals as ever.

"I take full responsibility," he said. "I always do. Our job is to teach and to tell them. I'm never going to back away from that. I'm the guy that's in charge here, and I always take full responsibility, for everything that happens."

So it is that Beltran is not the only one who was able to breathe easier. The Yankees managed to win on Wednesday in Arizona and on Thursday in Oakland, playing through their mental miscues. That is admirable, but for a team that is struggling to find its offensive muscle and a full rotation and cannot count on its redoubtable relievers — Dellin Betances, Andrew Miller and Aroldis Chapman — to pitch every night, the Yankees have plenty to surmount.

It would be good if they did not have to overcome themselves.

NY Times

5.21.16

## **Yankees' Joe Girardi: Blame me for all the mental errors**

By Randy Miller | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

Email the author | Follow on Twitter

on May 20, 2016 at 8:55 PM, updated May 20, 2016 at 9:57 PM

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — Like everyone else who saw the Yankees' 4-1 win in Oakland on Thursday night, manager Joe Girardi couldn't believe all the mental mistakes his players made.

Carlos Beltran forgot the outs and didn't score from second on a dropped flyball to right.

Chase Headley was picked off first base for the first out in the sixth and the second occurred two batters later when Didi Gregorius was thrown out at second trying to take an extra base.

Earlier in the week, several other Yankees lost their heads, too, and it's been that way off and on all season.

Who's at fault?

Girardi says blame him.

"I take full responsibility," he said Friday before the Yankees-Athletics game at Oakland Alameda Coliseum. "I always do. Our job is to teach and tell them, so I'm never gonna back away from that. I'm the guy that's in charge here and I always take full responsibility for everything that happens."

The Yankees have embarrassed themselves time and again this season running the bases.

The biggest offenders have been shortstop Didi Gregorius and second baseman Starlin Castro.

"Everything is addressed," Girardi said.

How so?

"Well, a coach talks to a player," Girardi said. "There's nothing that goes unnoticed here. We talk about it whether it's a bad read or it's a mental mistake. Everything is always talked about.

"Sometimes it's trying too hard. Sometimes it's just a mental mistake. And the mental mistakes are the ones that bother you the most because those are the ones you have more control over."

The Yankees have been trying to tone down Gregorius without turning him from overaggressive to passive running the bases.

"You just continue to try to teach and continue to talk to him about it ... 'Make sure that you make good decisions,'" Girardi said. "We can't get into his body or his mind. That's something we can't do, so you just try to teach and show examples. That's the best way to do it."

In general, there's a school of thought that today's players are more talented but make more mental mistakes than players from past generations.

Girardi's take on this was interesting.

"I think players probably are in the big leagues quicker now in a sense," he said. "I think at times we have all this information that we're always giving them that maybe we give 'em too much and we should make them be a little more responsible. You talk about positioning and moving them all the time ... and it's a lot."

Meantime, Girardi says the Yankees will work to try to cut down on mental mistakes. He guessed the Yanks have been devoting as much time to fundamentals this season as years past.

"I still think it's the same," he said.



## Sabathia picks up where he left off in Yankees' third straight win

THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

**Chad Jennings**, [cjennings@lohud.com](mailto:cjennings@lohud.com) 12:52 a.m. EDT May 21, 2016

Another terrific start for the Yankees, and this time they didn't need any of the top three relievers.

CC Sabathia returned from the disabled list to pitch six strong innings in an 8-2 win against the Athletics. Sabathia struck out eight, walked one and allowed just three hits, following the lead of Nathan Eovaldi and Ivan Nova, who delivered gems the past two games.

This time, the Yankees' lineup also provided significant run support.

Taking advantage of Sonny Gray's uncharacteristically bad start to the season, the Yankees scored five runs in the fourth inning to take the lead and take control. They added an insurance run in the sixth and pulled away with three runs in the ninth.

The outburst started with a one-out walk in the fourth inning, when six straight Yankees reached base against Gray, who now has a 6.19 ERA. Ronald Torreyes had a two-run triple and scored on a wild pitch, then Carlos Beltran capped the fourth inning with a two-run double over Coco Crisp's head in center field (Crisp didn't make a particularly good play on the Torreyes triple, and he made a really bad play on the Beltran double).

Two innings later, Beltran doubled in another run, and Jacoby Ellsbury tripled in two runs in the ninth. Beltran finished the game with three doubles and three RBI. Ellsbury, Torreyes, Didi Gregorius and Aaron Hicks also reached base three times, while the other Yankees starters except Mark Teixeira and Starlin Castro reached base twice.

But it was Sabathia who really controlled the game.

After missing two starts because of a strained groin, Sabathia more or less picked up where he left off with that terrific outing in Baltimore. A walk, hit batter and two-out single gave the A's a run in the second inning, but Sabathia struck out Billy Butler to leave two runners stranded in the third inning, and he allowed just one base runner through his final three innings. Kirby Yates and Chasen Shreve finished off the win, which was the Yankees' third in a row.

## Sabathia crafts gem for 100th win as Yankee

By Bryan Hoch / MLB.com | [@BryanHoch](#) | 2:30 AM ET

OAKLAND -- The mid-90s heat is just a memory at this point, no more likely to reappear in CC Sabathia's arsenal than the Core Four is to reassemble and lead the Yankees to another championship. Yet the big lefty is continuing to learn how he can win with an alternate approach.

Continuing to showcase his developing mix of pitches, Sabathia picked up where he left off earlier this month, returning from a stint on the disabled list with a groin strain to strike out eight over six innings of one-run, three-hit ball in Friday's 8-3 victory over the Athletics.

"He's capable of whatever. Check the back of his baseball card out," catcher Brian McCann said. "There's not too many guys walking around with his resume and his heart and his determination to be great. You never count guys like that out. We want him taking the ball every fifth day."

Making his first start since May 4 at Baltimore, Sabathia was credited with his 100th victory as a Yankee, becoming the eighth pitcher in the modern era (since 1900) to reach the century mark in wins with multiple franchises.

That accomplishment is significant to Sabathia, who logged 106 wins with the Indians, then detoured briefly to the Brewers before joining the Yankees prior to the 2009 season.

"It means a lot. I've been on some good teams here," Sabathia said. "I've been lucky enough to stay healthy. Not the past three years, but it feels good."

Pitching in front of more than 100 friends and family members, the Vallejo, Calif. product limited the A's to Matt McBride's second-inning RBI single, throwing 64 of 98 pitches for strikes.

To the Yankees, Friday's effort provided more evidence that they can feel confident counting on Sabathia, 35, who entered the spring competing with Ivan Nova to serve as the club's fifth starter.

"When I take a look at CC, he's not the same pitcher he was in Cleveland, but he has something other pitchers don't have," Carlos Beltran said. "That is experience. He know how to pitch. He knows that he has to make adjustments. He has great stuff to compete in this league for many, many years."

Having improved the touch on a cutter he borrowed from Andy Pettitte to bust in on right-handed hitters, Sabathia has also raised the comfort level with his sinker, slider and changeup, giving him movement on both sides of the plate.

Because of that, McCann said that Sabathia looks like a "completely different pitcher" than he was last year.

"When you've got a pedigree like that, once something clicks, they can run with it," McCann said. "He's reinventing himself. He's not throwing 95 anymore. He's throwing 87 to 90. He's pitching. He's working the ball in and out and it's great to see."

And so this might just be the new normal for Sabathia, who believes he is still capable of being a 200-inning workhorse, even if he has to use some new tricks to get there.

"I just want to stay healthy, you know?" Sabathia said. "I know what I'm capable of when I'm out there and I'm healthy."





## **Brian McCann: Reinvented CC Sabathia can be Yankees ace again**

By [Randy Miller](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 21, 2016 at 8:00 AM, updated May 21, 2016 at 8:01 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — Yankees catcher Brian McCann had the best view to the latest show put on by CC Sabathia 2.0 Friday night at Oakland Coliseum.

From a squat position behind home plate, McCann watched Sabathia use his getting-better-by-the-start new style of pitching to be great again.

There were several gaffes in the Yankees' series-opening win in Oakland on Thursday night.

This time, Sabathia shut out the Oakland A's and struck out eight over six dominate innings in an 8-3 Yankees win that gives them a season-best three-game surge.

"He could do anything he wanted," McCann said of Sabathia, a Bay Area native who was brilliant despite pitching for the first time in 16 days (and with more than 100 family and friends in the house).

This was the same Sabathia who put up seven zeroes winning in Baltimore on May 4, that start coming about despite groin pain that he hid until the next day.

A 15-day stint on the DL ensued, and when it ended Friday, there was absolutely no rust.

"He had everything working," McCann said. "He had 'em off-balance from the first pitch."

McCann says that he saw this coming, even during spring training when one of the most decorated left-handers in the game had to battle Ivan Nova for the last spot in a Yankees rotation that was viewed anywhere from mediocre to bad.

"A hundred percent," McCann said.

Sabathia, who earned most of his 216 career wins blowing hitters away as a 6-foot-6, 300-pound power pitcher, now is a crafty Einstein on the mound. His secret weapon nowadays is an improving pitch that was first taught to him in June of last summer by Andy Pettitte ... the same pitch that made Mariano Rivera the greatest closer ever.

"That cutter's a huge pitch for him," McCann said. "He's getting a way better feel for it. He's locating with it. He's expanding with it up.

"When he's doing that, he's getting quick outs. Then he's dropping the backdoor slider in there and getting changeups rolled over. He can win a lot of ballgames pitching like that."

Even Yankees management didn't seem to be expecting much this season from Sabathia, hence his spot in the rotation. Six starts in, Sabathia has good numbers, a 3-2 record with a 3.41 ERA and a shutout streak that is up to 13 innings.

McCann never bought into Sabathia, who turns 36 in July, being finished as an ace let alone finished. He expected top-of-the-rotation performances.

"Absolutely," he said. "This is the first time he's thrown a cutter. It's been what, less than a year? Fifteen starts? I don't know. But he's starting to get a way better feel for it ... both sides of the plate. He's keeping hitters off balance."

McCann was asked how drastic a change it is catching Sabathia now compared to early in 2015.

"Completely different pitcher," the catcher responded. "He's got a way better feel for the cutter."

Sabathia says his goal this season is 200 innings, which he's got to eight times but not since 2013.

McCann thinks Sabathia can be way more than just an innings eater.

"He's capable of whatever," he said. "Check the back of his baseball card. There's not too many guys walking around with his resume and his heart and his determination to be great. You never count guys like that out."

## Would Yankees deal Brian McCann at trade deadline?

By [Joe Giglio](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 11:00 AM, updated May 20, 2016 at 11:23 AM

Eventually, reality may hit the [Yankees](#) in 2016.

Despite a modest two-game winning streak over the lowly Diamondbacks and Athletics, the Yankees enter play on May 20 with an 18-22 record through 40 games. Coupled with a minus-29 run differential, [FiveThirtyEight](#) gives New York just a six percent chance to rally and win the AL East.

Nathan Eovaldi gives Yankees hopeThe Yankees need an ace. Maybe Nathan Eovaldi can step up, Yankees beat writer Randy Miller says after a dominating outing Wednesday in Arizona. 5/18/16 (Randy Miller | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#))

If general manager Brian Cashman and owner [Hal Steinbrenner](#) make the call to become [sellers at the trade deadline](#) for the first time in over two decades, attractive pieces will be available for contenders. From [Aroldis Chapman](#) to Andrew Miller to Carlos Beltran to Brett Gardner, it's easy to name the Yankees most likely to come up in trade rumors between now and the end of July.

But on Thursday's edition of [ESPN's Baseball Tonight podcast](#), host Buster Olney and guest Keith Law discussed one that's rarely brought up in potential Yankee trade scenarios: Brian McCann.

"I think the Yankees will market—even if they're trying to contend—Aroldis Chapman, who's a free agent at the end of the year, Andrew Miller, who they talked about with the Dodgers and Astros during the offseason, outfielder Brett Gardner because they have [Aaron Judge](#) who is getting close to the big leagues, and Brian McCann, their all-star catcher, with [Gary Sanchez](#) developing in the minor leagues," Olney said.

The conversation about McCann continued, including a possible trade proposal with an American League contender.

"Did you like my idea of the Yankees calling the Rangers and saying, 'You've got catching issues, we've got Brian McCann under contract for two more years and you've got Joey Gallo, who would give us a great option at third base with [Chase Headley](#) struggling?," Olney asked.

While Law didn't think the Rangers would trade Gallo for McCann, he thought it was worth a call.

McCann, 32, owns a .789 OPS this year. Since arriving to the Yankees in 2014, the slugging backstop has hit 54 home runs, but has been barely above average (102 OPS+) when factoring in the hitter's park that is Yankee Stadium. He's owed \$34 million in 2017-18, and could see a \$15M option vest for 2019.

Gallo, 22, was ranked as *Baseball America's* sixth-best prospect entering 2016. His light-tower power from the left side is reminiscent of Baltimore's Chris Davis. In a 36 game big-league cameo last summer, Gallo hit six home runs.

## Beltran brings hot bat to temporary DH role

By Bryan Hoch / MLB.com | [@BryanHoch](#) | 2:51 AM ET

OAKLAND -- This extended cameo in the designated-hitter role has agreed with **Carlos Beltran**'s switch-hitting stroke so well, the Yankees may not be in a hurry to have the veteran pick up his glove.

Beltran stroked three doubles and drove in three runs in the Yankees' **8-3 victory** over the Athletics on Friday, and while he has made it clear that he would prefer to be helping on defense, **Alex Rodriguez**'s absence from the lineup has provided an opportunity for Beltran to focus on swinging the bat.

"I know people think I'm done in the outfield, but I love being out there," Beltran said. "I feel like I'm more in the game, I'm more active. I take care of my legs. I've got to do my lifting, I've got to do my exercises to make sure my legs are fine. I don't have a problem being in the outfield every day."

As Rodriguez **continues to work toward returning** from a right hamstring strain that has kept him out of the lineup since May 3, Beltran's wish may soon be granted, though the Yankees have floated the idea of waiting until they return to The Bronx to activate Rodriguez.

That could mean at least another two days of West Coast DH duty for Beltran, who has been productive from both sides of the plate. He is 7-for-19 (.368) on this road trip and has hit .326 (14-for-43) with 13 RBIs over his last 12 games.

Yankees manager Joe Girardi said that Beltran would serve as the DH again on Saturday, which will continue to give **Aaron Hicks** outfield reps while offering the added bonus of saving Beltran's legs. Yet Girardi stressed that the arrangement is only temporary until Rodriguez returns.

"We're going to put [Beltran] back in right field," Girardi said. "He'll probably DH some, too. I can do that as well. Right now, when Alex comes back, I plan on DHing Alex."

As he continues to adjust to this unfamiliar role of hit-and-sit, Beltran suggested that the inconveniences of the outdated Coliseum actually may have worked in his favor, providing a lesson for what to do -- or not to do -- when the assignment comes up again at Yankee Stadium.

"Sometimes at home, we've got the cage, we've got the machine, we've got a lot of stuff," Beltran said. "Sometimes we get caught up in taking a lot of swings and working on a lot of stuff."

"Here, we don't have a cage; the cage is in center field. So I get caught up with watching the games, watching everyone's at-bats. Sometimes if you do less, it's good for you."



## Who needs A-Rod when Yankees have Carlos Beltran?

1:50 AM ET 5.21.16

**Wallace Matthews ESPN Staff Writer**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- In his past 17 games, Carlos Beltran has batted .267 with five home runs and 16 RBIs. Over that span, his on-base percentage has hit a season high of .297, and his OPS is .882.

Why are Beltran's numbers over the past 17 games significant? Because that period coincides precisely with the amount of time Alex Rodriguez has been out of the New York Yankees' lineup with a hamstring strain. And not coincidentally, over that span, Beltran has started 10 games at designated hitter and only six in the outfield.

By contrast, over the first 24 games of the season, 22 of which Beltran started in right field, his OBP was 20 points lower and his OPS only .710.

Clearly, keeping Beltran off his 39-year-old legs as much as possible has benefited his production at the plate.

Beltran had a big night Friday in the Yankees' 8-3 victory over the Oakland Athletics with three doubles and three RBIs, although one of them, a line drive to straightaway center, froze center fielder Coco Crisp and probably should have been caught. Still, Beltran hit the ball with authority all night, and with the absence of A-Rod and the continuing struggles of Mark Teixeira (another 0-for-5 and six runners stranded in scoring position, hitless in his past 14 at-bats and batting .196), his is the most dangerous bat in the Yankees' lineup. In the two games in Oakland so far, Beltran is 5-for-10 with a home run, three doubles and six RBIs.

Beltran's three RBIs Friday, along with a two-run triple by Ronald Torreyes, paved the way for an easy return to action for CC Sabathia, who pitched six strong innings, allowing just one run on three hits and striking out eight in his first start after a 16-day stint on the disabled list with a groin strain.

But there is another return looming that could negatively affect the Yankees' offense: the return of Rodriguez.

Although it appears likely A-Rod's return will be delayed until the team returns to New York and opens a brief three-game homestand against the Toronto Blue Jays, manager Joe Girardi faces a dilemma: Does he give A-Rod, who is hitting .194, his old DH job back and return the hot-swinging Beltran to right field? Not only does this put added demands on Beltran's aging body, it compromises the Yankees' outfield defense and takes Aaron Hicks, who has been swinging better lately, out of the lineup.

On virtually a daily basis since A-Rod went on the disabled list May 4, Girardi has professed to be "hopeful" that he would return to the lineup as soon as possible.

But now that the day is drawing near, a Yankees lineup with Alex Rodriguez as the everyday DH and Carlos Beltran back in right might no longer be Girardi's best option -- or his team's.

## Yankees make decision on Alex Rodriguez for Saturday

By [Randy Miller](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 21, 2016 at 7:30 AM, updated May 21, 2016 at 7:31 AM

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — As of Friday afternoon, the Yankees getting Alex Rodriguez off the disabled list and in their lineup for Saturday's day game against the Oakland Athletics still was a possibility.

By night's end, it wasn't ... even though Rodriguez had another day of progress, manager Joe Girardi announced after an 8-3 Yankees win at Oakland Coliseum.

Even before the game, it seemed as if momentum was building for Rodriguez to return from his right hamstring strain next Tuesday when the Yankees open a series at home against the Toronto Blue Jays.

By waiting, the Yankees can utilize Monday's day off to get A-Rod a little more rehab time.

"Well, I think the important thing is you know that Alex is OK because the last thing that you want is a setback," Girardi said. "If you have a setback then you're probably looking at four weeks (missed), and that's not what we want."

A-Rod has been running the bases the last few days, a little faster each day ... and with no hamstring discomfort. He's been eligible to come off the disabled list since Thursday.

"He ran really hard (Friday)," Girardi said. "We'll see how he is (Saturday) and then we'll move from there."



## Alex Rodriguez unlikely to return to Yankees until next week

10:57 PM ET 5.20.16

**Wallace Matthews ESPN Staff Writer**

OAKLAND, Calif. -- Alex Rodriguez ran the bases on Friday night. He practiced going from first to third and from third to home. He practiced going halfway on a fly ball to the outfield, and he practiced taking the wide turn at first after getting a hit. According to New York Yankees manager Joe Girardi, "He ran pretty good today."

But the likelihood is that the Yankees will not have their 40-year-old designated hitter back in the lineup before the team returns home to play the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday night.

Although Rodriguez did not speak to the media after his running drill, saying he first needed to talk to Girardi and team trainer Steve Donohue, a clubhouse source told ESPN.com that Rodriguez was not expected to be ready to play Saturday against the Oakland Athletics and their left-handed starter, Sean Manaea. The same source said that with Oakland starting a right-hander, Jesse Hahn, in Sunday's series finale, the probability was that the Yankees would opt to keep A-Rod and his sore hamstring on the DL through the weekend.

"I'm not sure," Girardi said when asked the likelihood of Rodriguez being activated for Saturday's game. "A lot of it is just how he feels. We could do it tomorrow. There's the old theory that if a guy feels good, you wait an extra day just to make sure. Then you have to decide: We're off Monday, so does it make sense to give him a couple extra days just to make sure? Let's just see how he comes out tomorrow."

Rodriguez's workout consisted of four "arcs," or trips around the infield at the edge of the outfield grass, followed by four trips from home to first, four from first to third and four from third to home. In between, he also practiced stops and starts between bases and making the turn between first and second. Although he ran evenly, he did not appear to be running at full throttle.

"Today was a good day," Girardi said. "He was much quicker on the arcs, and he ran the bases. We'll wait to see how he feels tomorrow and we'll decide what we have."

Rodriguez is hitting .194 with five home runs, 12 RBIs and an OPS of .719. He has missed 21 games since straining his right hamstring on May 3 against the Baltimore Orioles.



## Yankees' Alex Rodriguez runs for return that may be further delayed

By [Randy Miller](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 8:31 PM, updated May 20, 2016 at 11:39 PM

**OAKLAND, Calif.** — Yankees designated hitter Alex Rodriguez was on the field at Oakland Coliseum by mid-afternoon again Friday for another day of running to see if his right hamstring strain has completely healed.

A-Rod looked healthy running fairly hard for a few sets of sprints from right field to center field, then for a few first-to-third runs in the infield.

A-Rod tracks pitches Yankees designated hitter Alex Rodriguez, close to returning from a hamstring injury, stood in the batter's box to track pitches during starter Michael Pineda's bullpen outing before Friday night's game in Oakland.

Later, A-Rod worked on tracking balls by standing in bullpen batter's box as Michael Pineda threw a pre-game bullpen. After that, A-Rod hung out with teammates in the clubhouse before heading back outside to take batting practice with the Yankees.

"Today was a good day," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said. "He did the archs. He was much quicker on those. He ran the bases. We'll wait to see how he feels (Saturday) and then we'll decide what we have."

It's looking like there's a good chance that the Yankees will opt to keep Rodriguez on the 15-day disabled list until they begin a home series Tuesday night against the Toronto Blue Jays.

A-Rod was eligible to be activated on Thursday, but the Yanks ruled that out last Tuesday while adding a new best-case date of Saturday in Oakland. By Friday, Sunday's series finale with the Athletics appeared



to be the new best-case date, but the Yanks are deciding if pushing it back again might be the safest way to go.

If they keep A-Rod out through Sunday, he'll get an extra day of rehab time because the Yankees are off on Monday.

"We'll see," Girardi said. "It becomes kind of interesting because you have a day off on Monday, so it's something that we'll talk about.

"We could do it (Saturday). There's the old theory that if a guy feels good, you wait an extra day just to make sure. Then you've got to decide ... We're off Monday, so does it make sense just to give him a couple of extra days to just to make sure? Let's see how he comes out (Saturday). He ran pretty good (Friday)."

What does A-Rod think? How does he feel? Does he want to come back ASAP?

"I don't have anything (for you)," he said "I have to talk (the trainer) first."

The Yankees did get a player back from the DL on Friday, but it was left-hander CC Sabathia, who will start Friday night's game against Oakland.

The Yankees made room on their 25-man roster by optioning left-handed reliever James Pazos back to Triple-A. This is twice now this season that Pazos has been up for a short stint and left without getting into a game.

Whenever A-Rod returns, utility infielder/outfielder Rob Refsnyder probably will be optioned back to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Refsnyder was recalled on May 17 and didn't get into his first two games with the Yankees.

## Yanks might hold A-Rod's return to next week

### 'Every day is getting better,' veteran says of strained-hamstring recovery

By Bryan Hoch / MLB.com | [@BryanHoch](#) | May 20th, 2016

OAKLAND -- The Yankees saw progress again on Friday as [Alex Rodriguez](#) tested his strained right hamstring on the bases at the Oakland Coliseum, and while he is eligible to be activated from the disabled list, manager Joe Girardi suggested that the team may wait until next week after they return home.

Initially, the Yankees had been aiming to activate Rodriguez on Saturday, but Rodriguez's reaction to that has seemed lukewarm. As such, the Yankees could take advantage of Monday's off-day and have the 40-year-old designated hitter active for Tuesday's game against the Blue Jays.

"There's the old theory that if a guy feels good, you wait an extra day just to make sure," Girardi said. "Then you have to decide, we're off Monday, so does it make sense to give him a couple extra days just to make sure? Let's just see how he comes out tomorrow. He ran pretty good today."

Rodriguez did not speak to reporters prior to Friday's game, but said on Thursday that he believed the hamstring was continuing to improve.

"Every day is getting better," Rodriguez said. "To me, it's getting the confidence to go out there and let it go."

He sustained the hamstring strain on May 3 against the Orioles in Baltimore and is batting .194 (14-for-72) with five homers and 12 RBIs in 20 games.

#### Worth noting

- The Yankees activated left-hander [CC Sabathia](#) from the 15-day disabled list (left groin strain) to make Friday's start. In a corresponding move, left-hander [James Pazos](#) was optioned to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Pazos has not appeared in a big league game this season.
- Left-hander [Phil Coke](#) cleared waivers and has been outrighted to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. Coke had a 6.00 ERA in three appearances spanning six innings before being designated for assignment on Tuesday.

# Nova may be right

Thinks of himself as a starter, and he has looked like one

BY ERIK BOLAND  
erik.boland@newsday.com

OAKLAND, Calif. — From the time he showed up for spring training, Ivan Nova never wavered.

"I'm a starting pitcher, I'm not a reliever," Nova said after a morning workout Feb. 11 — seven days before the official report day for pitchers and catchers — at the team's minor-league complex in Tampa. "But it's their decision, and whatever they tell me to do, that's what I gotta do."

Nova entered spring training in a competition with CC Sabathia for the fifth starter spot, but it was competition in name only.

All things being equal — and they were, as neither pitcher distinguished himself — Sabathia was going to get the job, which he did, sending Nova to the bullpen.

The righthander did not pout and was decent in a relief role, with some good outings and some bad ones, ultimately posting a 5.14 ERA in six appearances.

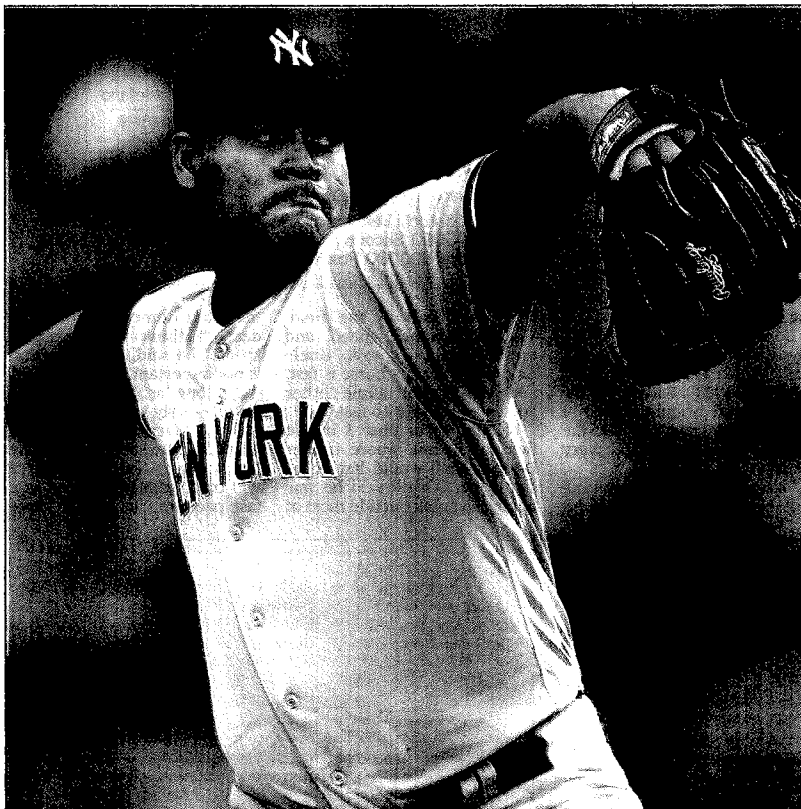
But when Sabathia landed on the DL — he returned last night against the A's — Nova returned to the only role he ever wanted, and the 29-year-old has been lights-out.

In the Yankees' 4-1 victory over the A's on Thursday night, Nova needed only 62 pitches to get through six innings, allowing one run and four hits. He improved to 2-0 with a 1.65 ERA in three starts.

"I felt great," said Nova, who struck out three, did not walk a batter and watched the A's pound ball after ball into the ground against his sinker. "I threw another good game for the team and we won the game. This is what you want to do every time out there."

With struggling Luis Severino on the disabled list with a right triceps strain, Nova's rotation spot is secure, but if and when the 22-year-old is ready to return, the Yankees could have a decision to make.

Of course, if Nova continues



Ivan Nova is 2-0 with a 1.65 ERA in three games since moving into the Yankees' starting rotation.

## LATE RESULT

Read about last night's Yankees-A's game at [newsday.com/yankees](http://newsday.com/yankees)

Today

Yankees at Oakland  
TV: YES, 4:05 p.m.  
Radio: WFAN (660, 101.9)

pitching this way, it won't be difficult at all. Severino (0-6, 7.46 ERA), who was a candidate to be sent to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre to work out his issues before he got hurt, simply would end up in the minors when he's healthy.

"He's pitching great," Joe Girardi said of Nova. "We'll worry about that when the time comes, but I really like what he's doing."

Nova, a free agent at season's end, has been a Yankee his entire career after being signed as

a non-drafted free agent in July 2004.

Inconsistency has been a hallmark of his time in pinstripes. He entered 2016 with a 46-33 record but had a 4.33 ERA.

Last year was his worst season yet as, coming off Tommy John surgery, he went 6-11 with a 5.07 ERA. Nova lost his spot in the rotation in September, setting up a situation in which he arrived at spring training mostly as an afterthought.

It's why he said, both during spring training and now, that his motivation isn't to prove

anything to the Yankees.

"I was struggling last year and I have to prove to myself I can be better than what I was last year," Nova said. "That's the only intention I have, just to prove to myself I can pitch."

He does, of course, acknowledge the obvious: He's far more comfortable as a starter than a reliever.

"It's very different from being in the bullpen," said Nova, who had only seven career relief appearances, and none since 2013, entering the year. "I have my time to warm up and work on the pitches I need to work on. Out of the bullpen, you don't have that chance. When you're a starter, if you don't have it in the first inning, you can have it in the second inning. This is my natural position and I feel good about it."

Newsday  
5.21.16

## **For Masahiro Tanaka, One More Day Off Makes All the Difference**

Yankees' ace has been hit hard when pitching on regular four days' rest. Will the Yankees alter the entire rotation just to get him one more day off?

By **JARED DIAMOND**

May 20, 2016 3:08 p.m. ET

Between April 23 and May 5, Masahiro Tanaka pitched every bit like the ace the Yankees are paying him \$22 million this season to be. In three games during that span, he allowed four earned runs in 21 2/3 innings, belying the partially torn ligament in his right elbow that constantly threatens to derail his career.

Those outings all had something in common: Heading into each of them, quirks of the schedule had offered the Yankees the opportunity to give Tanaka five days of rest, instead of the traditional four.

When he hasn't had that luxury, Tanaka's performance has suffered. On regular four days' rest, he has surrendered 10 earned runs over 12 frames in his last two appearances, including a rocky four-run, five-inning showing against the Chicago White Sox last Sunday.

It shouldn't come as much of a surprise that Tanaka has faltered with more frequent work. In his native Japan, where he pitched professionally for seven years, teams typically employ six-man rotations, compared with five in the U.S., and starters usually pitch only once a week.

Tanaka's problems on "normal" rest this year have put the Yankees in a bind over how to handle one of their most valuable and expensive assets—even if he refuses to attribute his downturn to his increased usage.

*'If you just look at the results, that's what it is, so I understand that a question like that might come out.'*

—Masahiro Tanaka

"Personally, I don't think so," Tanaka said through an interpreter. "But if you just look at the results, that's what it is, so I understand that a question like that might come out."

He's right about one thing: The results haven't been pretty. In three starts on four days' rest this season, Tanaka has posted a 5.68 ERA, with opposing batters hitting .276 against him. In five starts on extra rest, he has a 2.23 ERA and a .195 batting average against.

Since Tanaka joined the Yankees in 2014, the splits haven't been quite as stark. He has a 3.14 ERA with additional rest, versus 3.39 on normal. But that could be because the Yankees have gone to great lengths to protect him, pitching him on regular rest in just 16 of his 52 career starts. Before last Sunday, he had only made consecutive starts on four days' rest twice in his career, and he has never done it in three straight.

Tanaka insists that he doesn't mind the rigors of the major-league calendar and said he goes into every start "with good condition, whether it's four or five days in between."

Instead, he blamed poor mechanics for why his splitter, the most devastating weapon in his arsenal, stayed flat against the White Sox. Manager Joe Girardi agreed that Tanaka lacked the sharpness on his splitter, saying “his stuff again was not sharp.” Catcher Brian McCann cited Tanaka’s “location” and “the action on his pitches,” but was adamant that it wasn’t related to rest.

Despite the Yankees’ assertions to the contrary, they must at least consider whether Tanaka would benefit from starting exclusively on five days’ rest. After all, he wouldn’t be the first Japanese player to struggle to adapt to the American pitching routine.

“I think it’s absolutely legitimate,” said C.J. Nitkowski, a former major leaguer who spent four seasons pitching in Japan and South Korea. “When you’ve done something your whole life in a routine, and all of a sudden it gets changed in a way that’s more physically demanding, absolutely it’s fair to look at that.”

The history of Japanese pitchers making the transition to the major leagues hasn’t always been smooth.

In eight big-league seasons from 2007 to 2014, Daisuke Matsuzaka had a 4.82 ERA on four days’ rest, versus 4.18 on five days’ rest, and underwent Tommy John surgery in 2011. Texas Rangers ace Yu Darvish hasn’t pitched in the majors since Aug. 9, 2014, after elbow surgery. Tanaka learned of his own elbow problem 18 starts into his American career and has been dealing with it ever since. Los Angeles Dodgers rookie Kenta Maeda has a 5.16 ERA on four-days’ rest and a 0.74 ERA with at least one more day.

Darvish has advocated for American teams to move to a six-man rotation, convinced that doing so would reduce injuries. Matsuzaka and others have suggested the same.

It stands to reason that employing six starters could help teams who outlay tens of millions of dollars for Japanese pitchers get a better return on their investment. As it stands, Japanese pitchers are thrust immediately into a five-man rotation, essentially given little more than spring training to adjust to pitching with less rest.

But it isn’t that simple.

“I don’t know if we have enough starters,” said Nitkowski, now an analyst for Fox. “It’s a nice idea, but we have 30 teams. Do we have 180 starters that could actually help you contend?”

That’s a key reason why the Yankees aren’t considering such a change. With CC Sabathia and Luis Severino dealing with injuries, it’s hard enough for them or the Yankees to field a viable five-man rotation. Frankly, it was tough when everybody was healthy.

That said, the Yankees will continue to try to find Tanaka more rest whenever they can, an acknowledgment that mimicking his Japanese routine as closely as possible could be the right strategy. Tanaka got a fifth day off before Saturday’s start against the Oakland Athletics, since the Yankees used six starters for this turn in the rotation. Chad Green made his major-league debut Monday against the Arizona Diamondbacks, and Sabathia came off the DL on Friday. The Yankees have the day off Monday as well, which means Tanaka will receive extra rest next week, too.

But no matter what the Yankees do, Tanaka will have to pitch on regular rest eventually. They just have to hope he figures out how to do it effectively.

“The schedule is what it is,” Girardi said. “If that’s the case, we have to figure out a way to get him to be sharp, because we don’t have a six-man rotation.”



## Tanaka seeks to rebound vs. Manaea, A's

By Mark Chiarelli / MLB.com | 1:26 AM ET

Masahiro Tanaka looks to rebound from two shaky starts when the Yankees eye a fourth straight win against Sean Manaea and the A's Saturday in the third game of a four-game set at the Coliseum. First pitch is scheduled for 4:05 p.m. ET.

Tanaka's given up 10 earned runs in his last 12 innings and has seen his ERA rise by more than a run since May 5. He gave up four runs on eight hits in five innings Sunday against the White Sox, and was tagged for six runs in seven innings in his previous start against the Kansas City Royals.

The inconsistency didn't prove to be costly for New York, which won both games. The Yankees ace is 1-0 with a 3.51 ERA in eight starts this year.

The A's will counter with Manaea, who has struggled some since getting called up on April 29. The 24-year-old is 1-1 with a 7.91 ERA in four starts this season, but is coming off his strongest start of the year against the Rangers. He gave up just one run over 6 2/3 innings Monday and earned his first Major League victory.

### Things to know

- Tanaka's faced the A's twice in his career and won both times. He owns a 1.32 ERA in 13 2/3 innings against Oakland, but has never pitched in the Coliseum.
- Manaea has never faced the Yankees in his young career. Through four starts he's held left-handed batters to a .150 average but has struggled against righties, allowing a .379 average and all four of his home runs.
- Only two A's batters on the active roster have tallied a hit off Tanaka. Stephen Vogt is 1-for-5 all-time against the righty, while Billy Butler is 1-for-3 with a double.



## Yankees prospect Ty Hensley needs Tommy John again

THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

**Chad Jennings, cjennings@lohud.com** 12:49 p.m. EDT May 20, 2016

For the second year in a row, Yankees prospect **Ty Hensley** will miss the entire season because of Tommy John surgery.

A first-round pick in 2012, Hensley is now 22 years old and has made just 14 minor league starts in his career. Hip impingement surgery cost him all of 2013, and Tommy John cost him all of last season. As of spring training, the Yankees were encouraged by Hensley's progress and thought he would pitch this season.

"Right on track to come back and pitch again this year," vice president of player development Gary Denbo said in mid-March. "Looks big and strong and healthy."

This morning, though, both Denbo and Brian Cashman confirmed Hensley will miss the entire season because of an elbow setback. We tend to think of Tommy John as an incredibly safe procedure from which pitchers always return within a year or so, but when it doesn't work out that way, the results can be devastating. History has not been kind of many pitchers who have undergone Tommy John surgery more than once.

Out of an Oklahoma high school, Hensley was the Yankees' first high school right-handed pitcher drafted in the first round and signed since Phil Hughes in 2004. His selection drew immediate attention when a physical revealed shoulder issues which led to his signing bonus being reduced to \$1.2 million. Listed at 6-4, 220 pounds, Hensley entered the system as a big guy who got his fastball into the mid-90s and drew raves from Baseball America for his curveball, which was touted as his best pitch.

Injuries, though, have regularly and significantly thrown wrinkles into Hensley's pro career, from those early shoulder concerns, to the hip surgery, to an offseason fight that left him hospitalized, to that first Tommy John surgery, and now to his second Tommy John surgery.

There is better news for many of the other injured Yankees in the minor league system.

- Two other high-profile pitchers coming back from Tommy John surgery -- **Austin DeCarrand Domingo German** -- are "on scheduled and doing well," according to Denbo. No timetable for their activation from the disabled list, but indications are positive that they'll be back on a mound this year. German was in big league camp with the Yankees and suffered a setback, but it wound up being relatively mild.
- Two key pieces of the Charleston roster -- Opening Day starter **Domingo Acevedo** and regular No. 3 hitter **Trey Amburgey** -- are each on the disabled list with hamstring injuries. Denbo said they're each "progressing well," but again did not provide a date when either is expected to return.
- A little more concrete information on **James Kaprielian**, last year's first-round pick who was shut down last month because of elbow inflammation, is still resting, but Denbo said he's scheduled to begin a throwing program "in a few days." Building on an impressive showing in big league camp, Kaprielian had opened this season with a 1.50 ERA and a 0.61 WHIP through three starts before the injury.
- Still no throwing program for **Jacob Lindgren**, who was also shut down last month because of an elbow issue. Lindgren had surgery to remove an elbow bone spur last season but said he felt healthy this spring. He pitched seven innings with no hits but nine walks before going on the High-A Tampa disabled list this year. Cashman said he's still resting, but Denbo said he's progressing.
- Three other prospects currently on the disabled list -- **Mason Williams** (shoulder), **Slade Heathcott** (knee) and **Luis Torrens** (shoulder) - are "all progressing well" according to Denbo. Williams and Torrens have yet to play this season. Heathcott was put on the Triple-A disabled list a little more than a week ago.



## Yankees pitching prospect Ty Hensley suffers huge setback

By [Brendan Kutty](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 2:52 PM, updated May 20, 2016 at 3:07 PM

It's as if the bad news never ends for [Ty Hensley](#).

The [Yankees](#) pitching prospect will miss the 2016 season because of Tommy John surgery again, a source close to the pitcher told NJ Advance Media on Friday. The source spoke on the condition of anonymity because he wasn't permitted to speak publicly.

Hensley first had the procedure last spring. That procedure forced him to miss all of the 2015 season.

[Chad Jennings of the Journal News](#) first reported the news of Hensley's injury.

Hensley, a No. 30 overall pick for the Yankees in 2012, appeared to be nearing full health for the first time. The 22-year-old was throwing at the Yankees' minor league complex during spring training and had posted video of his workouts.

The team gave Hensley, an Oklahoma native, a \$1.6 million signing bonus when he was drafted. But an abnormality discovered in his pitching shoulder cost \$400,000 in bonus money.

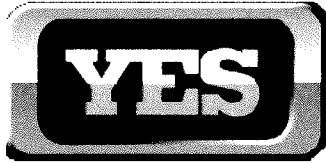
Since then, he's suffered a litany of problems. He's had an abdominal strain, a pair of hip surgeries, and a fight near his hometown left him bloodied and unconscious.

Hensley has pitched just 16 games with the Yankees, topping out with four appearances at short-season Staten Island — a rookie league — in 2014. He's got a 2.98 ERA over the span.

When the Yankees drafted the 6-foot-5, 220-pounder, they dreamed on his fastball that touched 97 mph but lived in the low-90's and a hard curveball.

Here's what Yankees scouting director Damon Oppenheimer said after selecting Hensley:

"We're excited to get a guy with such a high ceiling," Oppenheimer said. "He has the ideal body for a high school pitcher, as well as power stuff, and has the ability to be a high-end starter. He's demonstrated a quality makeup and has shown himself to be a hard worker, which makes him a quality pick for us."



## **New York Yankees RHP prospect Ty Hensley to have second Tommy John surgery**

05/20/2016 2:01 PM ET

By Lou DiPietro

New York Yankees right-handed pitching prospect Ty Hensley will undergo a second Tommy John surgery on his right elbow and miss the entire 2016 season, **per a report by Chad Jennings** of the Journal News.

Hensley, 22, was the Yankees' first-round pick (No. 30 overall) in 2012, but injuries have limited him to just 16 appearances in his career, in which he has gone 1-2 with a 2.98 ERA in 42 1/3 innings. After making his debut in the Rookie-level Gulf Coast League the summer he was drafted, Hensley missed all of 2013 after undergoing surgery to relieve a hip impingement, and he split 2014 between the GCL and Short-Season Class-A Staten Island before his first Tommy John surgery last April cost him all of 2015.

According to the Yankees' minor-league head, vice president of player development Gary Denbo, the team believed as late as mid-March that Hensley would be ready to return from that surgery possibly as soon as the opening of the Yankees' four short-season schedules in June.

"Right on track to come back and pitch again this year," Denbo told Jennings in March. "Looks big and strong and healthy."

Unfortunately, a second surgery will end 2016 before it starts for Hensley, and could keep him out for much if not all of 2017 as well.



## Yankees sign LHP Neal Cotts to minor league deal

THE LOHUD YANKEES BLOG

Chad Jennings, [cjennings@lohud.com](mailto:cjennings@lohud.com) 3:34 p.m. EDT May 20, 2016

To add some additional bullpen depth, the Yankees have signed veteran lefty Neal Cotts to a minor league deal. The team announced that Cotts will report to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

Now 36 years old, Cotts has pitched to a 1.19 WHIP with basically a strikeout per inning the past three Major League seasons with Texas, Milwaukee and Minnesota. He made 14 appearances in the hitter friendly Pacific Coast League earlier this season and had a 1.10 WHIP with 13 strikeouts in 13.2 innings.

Back in 2011, Cotts was supposed to be in big league camp with the Yankees, but he was released soon after taking a physical. Two years later, in 2013, he reemerged with the Rangers and pitched to a sub-1.00 WHIP in his first big league season since 2009. He wasn't nearly as good in 2014 -- lefties actually gave him trouble -- but he was solid again last season, including a .186 opponents batting average against left-handed hitters.

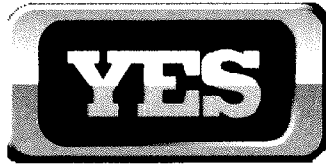
Cotts took an opt-out to escape a minor league deal with the Angels earlier this week.

For the Yankees, he seems to provide immediate bullpen depth for a team that finds itself surprisingly thin in the bullpen. Nick Rumbelow and Branden Pinder have undergone Tommy John surgery, Bryan Mitchell had toe surgery at the end of spring training, and Jacob Lindgren is currently shut down with an elbow issue. Veteran depth options Vinnie Pestano and Tyler Cloyd are also on the Triple-A disabled list, as is non-roster spring training invitee Kyle Haynes.

In the past week we've also seen the Yankees trade for experienced reliever J.R. Graham and also put Chad Green and Conor Mullee on the 40-man roster to address pitching depth issues.

Take what you can get, I suppose, but it's worth noting that a left-handed reliever doesn't perfectly fit the Yankees' current needs. They're currently carrying four left-handed relievers on the big league roster, lefties Tyler Webb, Richard Bleier and Tyler Olson have been somewhere between solid and excellent in Triple-A, left-handed starter Dietrich Enns has been an early breakout prospect this season, and lefty Phil Coke is still in DFA limbo.

Even so, depth is depth, and there's really no harm in a minor league deal to see what Cotts has left.



## **New York Yankees sign LHP Neal Cotts to a minor-league deal**

**Southpaw will be assigned to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre**

05/20/2016 3:01 PM ET

By Lou DiPietro

The New York Yankees announced Friday that they have signed LHP Neal Cotts to a minor-league deal and will assign him to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre.

Cotts, 36, started the season with the Angels organization, posting a 3.29 ERA and one save in 13 2/3 innings over 14 appearances at Triple-A Salt Lake, but he exercised the May 15 opt-out clause in his minor-league deal and was released on Wednesday.

Originally a second-round pick by Oakland in 2001, Cotts made his major-league debut with the White Sox in 2003 and has a 3.96 career ERA over 482 games with five teams. He split 2015 between the Twins and Brewers, going 1-0 with a 3.41 ERA in 63 1/3 innings over 68 appearances.



## Yankees LHPs James Pazos, Phil Coke outrighted to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre

05/20/2016 4:22 PM ET

By A.J. Herrmann

The New York Yankees activated LHP CC Sabathia off the 15-day disabled list on Friday, and he will start the second game of the Yankees' four-game set against the Athletics in Oakland.

To accommodate Sabathia's return, the Yankees optioned lefty reliever James Pazos to Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, the team announced Friday evening. Fellow lefty reliever Phil Coke was also outrighted to Triple-A.

Sabathia was 2-2 with a 3.81 ERA in five starts before landing on the disabled list. In his last outing on May 4, he threw seven shutout innings in the Yankees' 7-0 win over Baltimore, but he suffered a groin strain during that start and was placed on the DL retroactive to May 5.

Pazos, 25, has not made an appearance for the Yankees in 2016, but joined the big league club last May 17. Last season, Pazos entered in relief 11 times, posting a spotless 0.00 ERA with three strikeouts in five innings of work.

The Yankees added another **lefty reliever in Neal Cotts** earlier Friday afternoon to bolster lefty depth in the system, but with the activation of Sabathia, Pazos will be the player to clear a space for him on the active roster.

Coke, 33, made three appearances in 2016 for the Yankees, posting a 6.00 ERA over six innings out of the bullpen. He was originally drafted by the Yankees in 2002, and made his MLB debut in pinstripes on September 1, 2008. Coke was a member of the 2009 World Series champion team, and spent the next five seasons with the Detroit Tigers.

In nine MLB seasons, Coke owns a career ERA of 4.23 and a win-loss record of 22-27 over 417 career innings. He was re-acquired by the Yankees on April 25 from the Atlantic League Lancaster Barnstormers, and threw seven scoreless innings in two appearances with the Triple-A RailRiders before being called up to the majors.



## Several ex-Yankees thriving close to the Bronx in the independent Atlantic League

**Bridgeport Bluefish roster features four of the many ex-Bombers in the league**

05/20/2016 10:16 AM ET

By Lou DiPietro

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. - The Ballpark at Harbor Yard, the home of the Bridgeport Bluefish of the independent Atlantic League of Professional Baseball, is 54 miles from Yankee Stadium. It's one of three Atlantic League venues within roughly an hour's drive from the Bronx, but to those playing on the circuit, it can sometimes feel as far away from "The Show" as anything.

In the eight-team Atlantic League, even the largest of parks are equivalent to mid-level minor-league stadiums, and the dreamed-about major-league life of charter planes and five-star accommodations is replaced by hours-long bus rides, shared hotel rooms, and, for many, calling "home" either a hotel room or a spare bedroom with a host family in the local area of their current team.

It's a familiar life for some, but a radical change for any of the numerous players in the league who have sipped at least one cup of coffee from MLB's chalice.

"We've had some of the toughest travel I've ever seen; in the first month, we've had six bus times earlier than 2:30 A.M.," said Dan Johnson, a six-team MLB vet who is in Bridgeport continuing his conversion into a knuckleball pitcher. "It's been tough, especially at my age. I've been spoiled in my career playing in the upper levels with good lights, good fields, veteran umpires...I'm learning here you have to swing at things you might not normally because there's no working at-bats, and on ground balls, you may get whacked in the face on a bad hop. It's been a tough challenge in that way."

On the other side, though, while the Atlantic League is not affiliated with Major League Baseball, the circuit is quite well-known within its circles. From 2013-2015, nearly 100 players were signed out of the Atlantic by affiliated organizations, and prior to last season, the league became the first independent to forge an agreement with MLB formalizing a process for purchasing players' contracts.

Already this year, three Bluefish have been signed away, two of them with Yankees ties; one is RHP David Carpenter, who spent part of last season in the Bronx and is now in the

Angels organization, and the other is RHP David Kubiak, a Long Island native who has a Yankees tattoo on his left arm and earned the pinstripes to go with it when he was signed on May 4 and sent to Double-A Trenton.

"We're like a big family, and everyone's goal is to get to the next level - in this case, get signed to affiliated ball - so we're always excited for those guys," said Bluefish RHP D.J. Mitchell, a former Yankees draft pick who was one of two players the Bombers traded to Seattle for Ichiro Suzuki in 2012. "You definitely are hoping you get the call as well, but at the same time, you know when someone else does, it's well deserved for them and hopefully they do well.

Johnson, now 36, and Mitchell, who just turned 29 on May 13, are two of four players currently on the Bluefish roster (and two of more than a dozen in the league) who have been Bronx or Baby Bombers at some point, and they know that the struggle is real, but ultimately hopefully worthwhile.

"We've had maybe three games where it hasn't rained on us, and our home games have all been cold. We've had a lot of injuries as well, and there's no extra players or budget to sign extra guys, so there's been no days off," Johnson said. "It's kind of a grind, but it's what you have to deal with.

"The competition here is great - there are a lot of guys with big-league time here, and then there are guys that you sometimes at and wonder how they ended up here and never got the affiliated opportunity," added Mitchell. "Like I said, everyone's goal is to get to the next level, so it's very competitive and it's enjoyable baseball."

Unlike Mitchell, who made four relief appearances in the Bronx, Johnson never played for the New York Yankees, but he counts 133 games at Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre in 2013 as his pinstriped credential, and he cashed a major-league paycheck as recently as last summer with St. Louis.

Those two are joined on the Bluefish by infielder Luis Nunez, who was in the Yankees system from 2005-11, and right-hander Jonathan Albaladejo, who made 66 appearances out of the Bombers bullpen (and 90 more in the minors) from 2008 to 2010 and won a World Series ring with the 2009 team.

A handful of other Bluefish have played in the Majors but most of them haven't, and for both Mitchell and Johnson, their current opportunity to play is also a chance to be a mentor.

"There are a lot of guys here who haven't played affiliated ball, so what I try to get across to the guys is that it's not getting there, but staying there that is the hardest part," said Johnson. "I'm trying to groom them to understand things so they don't have to learn when they get there; they understand what I'm talking about and they can hit the ground running because they know what to expect. Labels in the big leagues go a long way, so I

try to get across to them to play hard all the time; most of the guys know that if they have the talent they'll get there, it's whether or not you can stay there."

"For me, it's not just that I've been in the Majors, it's that I've been here, because ultimately you have to get comfortable here and learn about the league," added Mitchell, who is in his third season with the Bluefish. "Obviously, knowing what it takes to get to the big leagues, I help guys as much as I can with a lot of little things; it's like a big family, so we try to help each other with whatever we can but it's not just them learning; I can also learn something from these guys, too."

Johnson, for one, can attest to Mitchell's statements. His last stop before Bridgeport was the Tampa Bay Rays, who signed him last winter intending to try out his knuckleball, but when an injury prevented that from coming to fruition, off he came to the Park City to learn from new pitching coach Jesse Litsch, whose own MLB career was cut short due to multiple shoulder injuries.

"Jesse is why I came here; I can throw a knuckleball, but what I needed was mechanics, and someone to teach me how to throw and repeat my mechanics over and over and over," Johnson said. "I talked to him before I came here, and knowing that he had been doing some developmental stuff in China and that he was going to be here to help me was huge."

And as they learn, Johnson and the others can then pass that knowledge down to guys who hope one day to be standing in their major-league shoes, even if they're right now in the same ones in a sense.

"Jesse, Albie...they all tell me I have nasty stuff and teach me different things to help me improve it, and that's been huge for me," said righty Joe Kuzia, who was pitching in high school in nearby Seymour during Albaladejo's Yankees tenure. "Carpenter was great, too, and Dan, he has a good grip on things but he's just new to pitching, so he's basically going through the same steps as I am."

Carpenter is gone and any or all of the others may too depart someday, but the lessons they've given will carry on - and departure also doesn't necessarily mean that class is dismissed, either.

"When Carp was here, we were working on a split-finger changeup, just getting grip down and tossing it lightly," Kuzia explained, "and I still, I text him every now and then just to go over some things."

An Angel, Kuzia says, not just in uniform, but in life, too - and such is life in the Atlantic League.



# AP

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## Tim Raines confident with final Hall of Fame bid looming

10:36 PM ET 5.20.16

### Associated Press

CHICAGO -- Tim Raines is hopeful he'll make the Baseball Hall of Fame next year when he's on the ballot for the 10th and last time.

"This is probably the first year out of the nine years that I've been on the ballot that I really, really feel like I have a chance," Raines said Friday.

Raines, who was part of an event marking 25 years for the Chicago White Sox at U.S. Cellular Field, knows the numbers. The former leadoff hitter was 23 votes shy earlier this year. He knows he would have to depend on a separate committee if he doesn't make it in 2017.

"I think about it a lot more than I ever have in the past," Raines said.

Ken Griffey Jr. and Mike Piazza will be enshrined in Cooperstown, New York, this summer. Jeff Bagwell appeared on 71.6 percent of ballots and Raines 69.8, shy of the 75 percent needed. But no player has ever received as much of the vote as Bagwell and Raines and never eventually gotten in.

Raines hit .294 in a 23-year career in which he walked 1,330 times and stole 808 stolen bases. He was a seven-time All-Star with the Montreal Expos and was being honored Friday for helping the White Sox reach the 1993 postseason.

Raines hopes voters will find room for two leadoff hitters in the Hall of Fame from his era, as he would join Rickey Henderson.

"I don't know the reason you can't have two guys being great leadoff guys. But obviously it is," Raines said. "Things have gotten better over the nine years I've been on the ballot.

"For those 23 that want to vote for me next year, please. I'll be grateful," he added, smiling. "It would be something I never dreamed of and never really thought. But it would be something I'd be very appreciative of."



## Yankee-killing Hall of Famer is the latest to endorse Donald Trump

By [Joe Giglio](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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

on May 20, 2016 at 8:27 AM, updated May 20, 2016 at 8:56 AM

George Brett broke the heart of Yankees fans during his playing days. Now—at least for those not supporting Donald Trump for President—he's doing it again.

During a recent Kansas City Royals broadcast, Brett joined the team's announcing crew in the booth. As announcers Ryan Lefebvre and Rex Hudler were discussing the team's charity auction, per Royals Review, Brett compared the "endorsement" he received to host a batting clinic for an upcoming auction to his own endorsement of Trump for President.

"Well, that's very nice. A lot of my friends are hoping that the Republican Party does that with Donald Trump, me included."

If that's an official endorsement of Trump, we can add Brett to this (growing) list of athletes that have done the same. Expect more as the political season continues.

# JUST THE START

**T**HANKS to the immediacy of social media, word began to filter in to some of the Red Bulls' players and coaches before they took the field for Wednesday's home match against Chicago.

New York City FC was resting its star players, David Villa and Andrea Pirlo, for a match in Toronto that kicked off about 30 minutes before the Red Bulls-Fire match did Wednesday night at Red Bull Arena in Harrison, N.J.



**Mark Cannizzaro**

The message was clear: Saturday's anticipated "derby" match against the Red Bulls at 3 p.m. at Yankee Stadium already was on the minds of NYCFC. Beating the Red Bulls was deemed more important than the match at hand in Toronto, which ended in a 1-1 draw.

There is no way to interpret this maneuver by NYCFC coach Patrick Vieira other than to say his side is determined to put an end to the dominance the Red Bulls displayed in winning all three derby matches last year, NYCFC's first season in MLS.

"Obviously, it's a big deal for them," Red Bulls midfielder Lloyd Sam said. "After what happened last season, you can imagine they'd want to put a lot into this game."

Said Red Bulls midfielder and leading scorer Mike Grella: "They're in good form right now, and for sure they want to get the better of the derby — particularly with the way it ended last year."

The Red Bulls defeated NYCFC 2-1 at Red Bull Arena, 3-1 at Yankee Stadium and 2-0 back at Red Bull Arena. For the second time in three seasons, the Red Bulls won the Supporters' Shield for having the MLS's best regular-season record and went to the playoffs. NYCFC watched the playoffs from home.

This season, while the Red Bulls struggled early, losing six of their first seven matches, NYCFC has improved greatly and enters Saturday leading the Eastern Conference with 17 points — four ahead of the Red Bulls.

Dismiss it if you please, considering the rivalry's neophyte status, but the fact is this: Saturday's match represents a big event at Yankee Stadium, where more than 40,000 people are expected — or about what the Yankees draw for a

## Red Bulls-NYCFC rivalry in its early stages, but already intriguing



### Money Ball

NYCFC has \$17.5 million invested in three players — Frank Lampard, Andrea Pirlo and David Villa. The Red Bulls' entire 2016 salary chart is a little more than \$5 million. Here is a look at the top four salaries on each side:

NYCFC	
Frank Lampard:	\$6 million
Andrea Pirlo:	\$5.9 million
David Villa:	\$5.6 million
Mix Diskerud:	\$750,000
RED BULLS	
Bradley Wright-Phillips:	\$710,000
Sacha Kljestan:	\$687,500
Dax McCarty:	\$500,000
Gonzalo Veron:	\$500,000

**NOTE:** The Red Bulls recently acquired Aurelian Collin, who is scheduled to make \$525,000.

**YOU AGAIN!** The Red Bulls swept their series with NYCFC last season, but the rivalry renews Saturday with both teams looking to make a statement, writes Post columnist Mark Cannizzaro. *N.Y. Post: Charles Wenzelberg (2)*

significant game. The teams drew a nearly full house at the Stadium last year and sold out Red Bull Arena in both meetings.

Though the rivalry is seemingly about 20 minutes old, there already has been some colorful back-and-forth banter between the clubs.

There is a regular Twitter tussle between the two team accounts, with NYCFC mocking the Red Bulls' slogan, "New York is Red," by tweeting, "New York is Blue."

Red Bulls supporters were highly creative with some banners at the home matches against NYCFC. In the first meeting, they unfurled a banner that read: "20 years late and a stadium short."

In the second match at Red Bull Arena, the fans rolled out a huge banner that mocked NYCFC's aging foreign stars Frank Lampard (37 years old) and Pirlo (36) with

images of them with canes underneath a sign that read: "City Retirement Home."

Another terrific contrast between the two clubs is in their respective salary structures.

Lampard is being paid \$6 million per year, which is more than the Red Bulls' entire payroll. Pirlo is making \$5.9 million and the best of the three, Villa (who came on in the 74th minute against Toronto), makes \$5.6 million. They are the fifth-, sixth- and seventh-highest-paid players in MLS.

The Red Bulls do not have a single player among the top 20 on the league salary list. Their top player, Bradley Wright-Phillips, makes \$710,000.

One of the fun subplots to this match is there actually might be a Lampard sighting on the pitch instead of inside a luxury suite wearing street clothes.

Lampard played only 10 games for NYCFC last year because he didn't arrive in New York until July after fulfilling his Manchester City commitments and was limited by injuries. This season, he has not played in any of the 12 matches because of a left calf strain.

Vieira told reporters this week there is "a big chance" Lampard at least will be among the 18 active players on the roster Saturday.

Both teams are in good form entering the match, combining for six wins, three draws and only one loss in the past 10 games.

"We know that we've got a huge task on Saturday," Red Bulls goalkeeper Luis Robles said. "It's going to be about a pretty awesome rivalry that's starting to gain momentum. I know that they're going to be looking to rectify what happened last year."

*mark.cannizzaro@nypost.com*

NY Post  
S.21.16



ADAM HUNGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

David Villa, a 34-year-old forward from Spain, has embraced a low-profile New York team.

By FILIP BONDY

Over the course of five months, two hours at a time, David Villa sat down with a language instructor in his family's Upper West Side apartment to master the fine art of English. Not just English, actually. Major League Soccer English.

"So in the field, I can think that way," Villa said Thursday. "I can talk to teammates, the referees, the coach, the media. Better and better."

It is for reasons such as this — and because Villa already has scored eight goals this season for a second-place New York City F.C. team that missed the playoffs in its inaugural campaign in 2015 — that he has quickly won the hearts and minds of club officials and fans. Unlike many aging, high-salaried players who have joined M.L.S. and then failed to live up to their reputations or contracts, Villa has proved to be a bargain — even at \$5.6 million a year.

It is not just the goals. Villa's work rate this year has been exceptional, especially for a 34-year-old forward whose greatest days — including World Cup, European and Champions League titles — came alongside better players with bigger teams.

But there is also the personal side: Villa's embrace of the New York City experience, his steady stream of selfies with fans and teammates and his eagerness to add English to his skill set as N.Y.C.F.C. captain in order to serve as a more capable intermediary between

Continued on Page D6

## Aging Star Rejuvenates New York City F.C.

From First Sports Page

Coach Patrick Vieira and the players.

"He's a different type of leader, quiet," Vieira said as N.Y.C.F.C. prepared for Saturday's rivalry game against the Red Bulls in the Bronx. "He doesn't need to talk. I try to make him involved, the link between myself and the rest of the team. It is important for me to make him understand that no one else here has his career."

On Thursday, Red Bulls Coach Jesse Marsch heaped praise on Villa for the New York City F.C. turnaround, crediting not only his work rate but also his willingness to challenge any ball, to track back defensively and finish the chances he helps create.

"It's hard to not be a fan of the way he plays and the things he does," Marsch said.

Villa is practically up for sainthood since last weekend, when a passer-by posted a photo of him delivering food to a homeless man and his son outside a Starbucks when N.Y.C.F.C. was in Portland, Ore., for a game against the Timbers.

"I didn't know there was a photo," Villa said about the Portland incident. "It was very sad, seeing the man with a boy who is my own son's age. It must be very hard."

All travails are relative, of

course. Villa suffered his own soccer indignities last year, when N.Y.C.F.C. finished eighth in the Eastern Conference in its debut season and he was about the only bright spot for the first-year club. Even the saint grew frustrated. After a 5-1 defeat against the Los Angeles Galaxy last August, Villa finally snapped. "I need teammates at my side to help me," he said. "I can't do this alone."

This season, after a slow start, has been better. New York City F.C. enters Saturday's match with a 4-3-5 record, good enough for second place in a weak Eastern Conference.

Villa refused to blame Jason Kreis, an intense commander who was replaced by the more laid-back Vieira after a single season, for the team's disappointing first year. Villa simply says the new system works to his advantage, with more emphasis on possession and through passes.

"The first year is always more difficult for any new club," Villa said. "This year, the team is more compact. The new guys are helping us. There is more precision."

While Villa may not be an all-around creator like Sebastian Giovinco of Toronto F.C., who led the league in goals and assists in winning Most Valuable Player honors last year, he is one of the purest finishers in M.L.S. Despite his relatively small frame, the fleet Villa has scored in every way

imaginable, though he generally requires some form of delivery from teammates.

That kind of service is arriving with greater frequency this year, and the prospect of the long-delayed return of midfielder Frank Lampard also raises expectations. Vieira said he hoped Lampard could join the squad Satur-

room on the field to satisfy the talents of Lampard and Steven Gerrard. Some fear a similar collision with Villa and Lampard, though Vieira is not in that group.

"That's also what they said about Youri Djorkaeff and Zinedine Zidane," said Vieira, who played with those stars with France in the 1990s. "Then we won the World Cup."

Villa was not picked by Spain's coach, Vicente del Bosque, as part of his national team's preliminary roster for this summer's European Championship. This does not bother him, he says. He will focus instead on a large match on a narrow Yankee Stadium field Saturday. In preparation, Vieira sat Villa for much of Wednesday's game in Toronto, using him only as a late substitute to avoid playing him three times in a week.

"It was a tough decision, but he took it well, professionally," Vieira said.

Villa has been through local derbies far more important than the one in New York, including for Atlético Madrid against Real Madrid in La Liga. But he called Saturday's match a great opportunity for his current club to prove its mettle, to establish its place in front of its home crowd.

"A good day for the fans, a day to exchange jerseys," Villa said in his accented but improving English. "This is an amazing city."

**A rare older player who lives up to his salary of more than \$5 million a year.**

day, which would mean that Villa might finally enjoy more of the sort of in-stride passes that have come only sporadically from Andrea Pirlo — the team's third well-pedigreed, well-paid international star.

There is some concern about whether Villa and Lampard will mesh. Their finishing skills overlap in many ways, and Villa has at times drifted into the more withdrawn position that Lampard would be expected to occupy as an attacking midfielder. On England's national team, it was theorized there was not enough

NY Times

5.21.16

# Forbes

## Hudson River Derby: NYCFC Seeks First Win Over Rival Red Bulls

By Chris Smith MAY 21, 2016 @ 09:00 AM

The New York Red Bulls travel to Yankee Stadium on Saturday afternoon to reignite their young but fierce rivalry with NYCFC. The so-called Hudson River Derby is but a year old, and yet the Bronx will be home to well over 40,000 screaming fans this weekend. That commotion is not only a testament to the dedication of the New York area fans, but it also highlights that Major League Soccer, when at its very best, offers as much excitement as any other league.

At a recent media event promoting this weekend's showdown, NYCFC midfielder Mix Diskerud noted that the fan excitement is palpable - "the passion you feel around the games is amazing" - and it's a sentiment echoed by Red Bulls captain Dax McCarty: "Any time you play a big game, especially a derby, you can't help but feel the energy in the city. You can't help but feel the energy in the locker room."

As much as the rivalry may sometimes seem exaggerated - the teams have only played three times, after all - fans are still turning out in droves for the games. Red Bull Arena's only MLS sell-outs last year were for the two games against NYCFC; the duo of matches drew over 25,200 fans apiece. For sake of comparison consider that the Red Bulls' rivalry with DC United is one of the league's best, and yet neither of the two matches played in New Jersey last year had more than 23,000 fans in attendance.

That in-stadium popularity was also apparent on the other side of the river. NYCFC had great attendance all season long, yet demand was so impressive for last year's Hudson River Derby that the team opened Yankee Stadium's upper deck to boost capacity; the game

wound up with more than 48,000 fans. This year the team had sold more than 30,000 tickets for Saturday's game as of two weeks ago.

And those fans are quite clearly invested in the contests. The stands are not only crowded, but also raucous. Not to mention that last August opposing fans even clashed in a brief sidewalk scuffle ahead of the third derby of the season. That sort of passion has certainly not gone unnoticed by the players – “We like the fights,” Red Bulls forward Bradley Wright-Phillips joked earlier this week.

Those massive crowds of dedicated fans are great news for team owners. The Red Bulls were Major League Soccer's biggest money loser (pre-tax losses of \$9 million in the 2014 season) before a recent shift away from massive payrolls, so the addition of such a must-watch rivalry is a great shot in the arm. And NYCFC's ownership – split between the owners of Manchester City (80%) and the Yankees (20%) - seems more than justified for making such significant investments in the team, shelling out \$100 million in expansion fees plus another \$17 million per season just to cover the base salaries of Frank Lampard, David Villa and Andrea Pirlo.

Thus far the team from New Jersey has controlled the competition, winning all three showdowns last season. Yet while the rosters are largely unchanged, this year it seems that the tables may be turning. The Red Bulls, who won last year's Supporters' Shield, got off to a slow start and have yet to win a game on the road. Meanwhile their cross-river rivals sit atop the Eastern Conference with 17 points through 12 games.

As if that wasn't enough appeal, this weekend's game may feature one additional twist. At the last showdown between these teams, Red Bulls supporters taunted NYCFC's veterans with a tifo that depicted Pirlo and Lampard with canes and hunched backs. This weekend the latter of those two stars may very well make his long-awaited return from injury to help lead the home team to its first ever Hudson River Derby victory.

# AP

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## Red Bulls-New York City FC Preview

15 hours ago [AP - Sports](#)

Last season, the New York Red Bulls won the Supporters' Shield while expansion club New York City FC finished tied for the second-fewest points in MLS.

Entering this weekend, NYCFC is on top of the Eastern Conference and the Red Bulls are the ones looking to catch up.

The Red Bulls captured all three 2015 meetings and are in search of their first road victory ahead of Saturday's nationally televised matchup at Yankee Stadium.

New York had 60 points a year ago but has been awful defensively, conceding 20 goals from 12 matches to match New England for the league's second-worst ratio. The Red Bulls (4-7-1) have the league's worst goal difference at minus-6.

New York City FC (4-3-5) has 17 points and is 3-0-2 in its last five, winning 2-1 at Portland on Sunday before a 1-1 draw in Toronto on Wednesday.

Now NYCFC is looking to reverse its poor form from last season, when it was outscored 7-2 by its biggest rival.

"It's a big game, I think all the supporters for both teams are looking forward to it and we've been counting the days," New York City midfielder Mix Diskerud said. "We've had a long week now with two games, we've got some strong results so we want to finish it off as strong as possible as well."

NYCFC is under first-year coach Patrick Vieira, a European legend as a player who is coaching for the first time.

"Patrick Vieira's done a great job with that team," Red Bulls coach Jesse Marsch said. "We know we're in for a huge challenge. But I promise you that that will be something that we'll be up for. We can't wait and we're really excited for that match."

Bradley Wright-Phillips scored four times against NYCFC last year. The Red Bulls star has failed to score this season outside of two matches against Orlando City SC in which he has three goals.

New York also is enduring a busy stretch following Wednesday's 1-0 victory over Chicago on Mike Grella's goal. Marsch used many of his regulars with the Red Bulls in dire need of a win over the league's worst team.

In contrast, Vieira did not start superstars Andrea Pirlo and David Villa among others Wednesday. Both figure to be in the lineup for this one.

"I looked at the lineup," Marsch said. "New York City sat a lot of guys, so they got two good results on the road."

Villa failed to score despite 12 shots in last year's three meetings with the Red Bulls. Pirlo took part once in this rivalry since he was still with Italian club Juventus for the first two.

New York is 0-5-1 on the road, with NYCFC eager to extend those woes.

"I think everybody in New York should come out there and just be a part of it even if you don't follow either team or support either of the other teams," Diskerud said. "It's a game in which you feel the atmosphere as a player."

NYCFC designated player Frank Lampard may make his season debut after being out due to a calf injury.



## NYCFC, Red Bulls Renew Rivalry in Reversed Roles

With NYCFC leading the Eastern Conference and the Red Bulls struggling to stay afloat, the two local MLS teams have switched places from a year ago

By **RYAN WALLERSON**

May 20, 2016 8:09 p.m. ET

A lot can change in a year. Just ask New York City FC and the New York Red Bulls.

The Red Bulls finished the 2015 season, their 20th in Major League Soccer, with a three-game sweep over NYCFC and the best record in the league. Meanwhile, the star-laden NYCFC struggled to find its footing in its inaugural season, finishing eighth in the 10-team Eastern Conference.

But a third of the way through their second season as cross-river rivals, the teams' circumstances are essentially reversed. Heading into their first meeting of the season Saturday at Yankee Stadium, NYCFC sits atop the Eastern Conference, while the Red Bulls have fallen to fifth, clinging to playoff position, just three losses from matching their total from all of last year (10).

For NYCFC, the difference has been better defense and team chemistry under new head coach Patrick Vieira, as well as the emergence of Colombian center back Ronald Matarrita, Irish midfielder Tommy McNamara and American winger Khiry Shelton. Team Captain David Villa has led a potent attack with eight goals in 12 matches.

### Hudson River Reversal

NYCFC and the Red Bulls have essentially switched places in the second year of their rivalry.

STATS	2015		2016*	
	NYCFC	RED BULLS	NYCFC	RED BULLS
<b>Record</b>	10-17-7	18-10-6	4-3-5	4-7-1
<b>Points</b>	37	60	17	13
<b>Goals</b>	49	62	18	14
<b>Goals Allowed</b>	58	43	17	20
<b>Conference Rank</b>	8	1	1	5

Source: MLS

\*through 12 games

WSJ.

The Red Bulls have actually matched NYCFC in wins with four, but they also lead the conference in losses, with seven. Striker Bradley Wright-Phillips has only three goals in 12 games, and Matt Miazga's departure to Chelsea has weakened the backline, which has allowed 20 goals, tied for the most in the conference. The Red Bulls played so poorly in a 2-0 loss to D.C. United last Friday that their captain, Dax McCarty, apologized to fans.

If each team continues on its current pace, NYCFC won't finish with the flashy numbers that the Red Bulls did in 2015, but it will reach the playoffs in convincing fashion. The Red Bulls, who are 0-5-1 on the road, will be lucky to make the tournament.



## David Villa credits gritty play for New York City FC's improved results

May 20, 2016 4:41 PM EDT

Dylan Butler Contributor

NEW YORK—There hasn't been a specific turning point, a moment in a game or a change in personnel that signified the change.

But it's an added commitment, according to New York City FC captain David Villa, that has helped the team take a franchise-best five-match unbeaten streak into Saturday's showdown with the New York Red Bulls at Yankee Stadium (3 pm ET; FOX | TSN2).

The team is still committed to Patrick Vieira's plan, to play out of the back, to keep possession in his preferred 4-3-3 formation, but the change has come off the ball, according to Villa.

"Fighting for the battle, fighting for second balls, we're defending better and when you win the battles and when you have the ball and you play very well, you have more opportunity for winning games," Villa said at a media availability at Twitter's Manhattan headquarters. "The team understood this second part a few weeks ago."

Vieira said he was impressed with the club's form, even in the beginning of the season, but mistakes proved costly as the club won just one of their first eight games of the season.

NYCFC has put together some solid defensive performances of late, conceding just five times in the five-match unbeaten streak.

"Even the first few games that we played in the beginning of the season, we played some really good football, but we made some mistakes that we're not making now," Vieira said. "I believe that the players are getting better and better and we're more stronger as a team. This is the reason why we start winning games. I strongly believe we will be better game after game."

As a result, midfielder Andrea Pirlo believes it is the perfect time to play the first of three derby matches against the New York Red Bulls.

"We're in a very good spot right now, a very good period. We've worked very hard and will continue to work very hard," he said. "We look at what we do, we correct our mistakes and this goes to the merit of our coach and our staff who are constantly on the field every day to improve the quality of the work of our team. The results are already being felt and seen and we're very happy with that. Of course, this is just the beginning and there's so much work to be done."



## 2016 U.S. Open Cup Draw: NYCFC tries out new stadium

By Calvin Daniel □ @CalDan384 on May 20, 2016, 3:43p 2

*NYCFC will not be hosting their Open Cup match in Yankee Stadium this year.*

**The Lamar Hunt Open Cup**, the annual tournament involving many of the various leagues and divisions of soccer based within the United States, is in it's third round as we speak. As typical for this tournament, MLS teams will be entering the competition in it's fourth round. TheCup.us has posted the scheduled date and locations for all of the Round 4 matches coming our way next month. **New York City FC** will be entering the Open Cup tournament on June 15th, where they will face off against either the **New York Cosmos** from **NASL** or the **NY Pancyprian Freedoms**, the Queens based side who are affiliated with the **Cosmopolitan Soccer League** and **USASA**.

New York City FC will be the home team for this match, but of note is that they will not be playing at Yankee Stadium. The club will instead be hosting this 4 round match at **Fordham University's Coffey Field**. The stadium is located in the Bronx and has a capacity of 7,000. It is easily accessible by Bus, Subway, and even Metro North by fans. In terms of alternative locations, it's not a bad solution other than it's capacity limits.

Many fans will no doubt wonder why Yankee Stadium will not be used to host the match, especially if they get to have their rematch versus the New York Cosmos. The club played their first cup match in franchise history last year against the New York Cosmos on their home field over in Hofstra University. The result was a one and done exit for the Hudson Blues as they lost the match to the Cosmos in a penalty shootout. A very frustrating beginning for the club's history in the Cup tournament to say the least.

Among the many things Vieira is trying to improve this season, one has to imagine having a stronger showing in the Open Cup will be one of them. While some MLS sides may not value the tournament as highly as their regular season matches, there are benefits to performing well in this tournament. Namely, the winner of the Open Cup is guaranteed a spot in the CONCACAF Champions League Tournament. One has to imagine that an international tournament of this level has to be an aspiration of CFG's for NYCFC. Vieira, a man who played in the UEFA Champions League, probably also understands the value in this tournament as well.

For now, though, Vieira and the club will remain focused on their MLS Cup campaign, as they face cross-river rivals **New York Red Bulls** this weekend.

## **Garth Brooks on His Yankee Stadium Show: ‘[I] Hope the Weather’s Good!’**

May 20, 2016 12:59 PM

**Filed Under: garth brooks**

*By Radio.com Staff*

This morning, Garth Brooks called into New York station The Fan’s *Boomer and Carton* show, hosted today by Boomer Esiason and guest co-host Phil Simms, to talk about his upcoming concerts at New York’s Yankee Stadium.

Brooks noted that at 52, he’s grateful to still have a robust concert schedule (although the Yankee Stadium date will be his first New York show in decades), while Simms and Esiason have long retired from active gridiron duty.

The country superstar recalled his last New York show, which was at Central Park, and he mentioned that the weather cooperated that night. For the Yankee Stadium show he said, “You hope the weather’s good, but if not, it’ll make it more exciting and more cool.”

Brooks’ New York shows, which will feature his wife Trisha Yearwood as the opening act, take place July 8 and 9. Buy tickets here, and listen to his entire interview with NFL legends Boomer Esiason and Phil Simms here.

MLB REPORT

# Nats' Roark finally solves nemesis Marlins

Tanner Roark finally beat the team that kept beating him, pitching 6 2/3 innings to help the Nationals past the Marlins, 4-1, in Miami last night.

Roark (3-3) came into the game 0-3 in three starts versus the Marlins this season with an ERA of 8.40. Against the rest of the majors he's 2-0 in five starts with an ERA of 0.79.

Ryan Zimmerman and Michael Taylor homered to help Washington score all its runs in the second inning.

Roark had no trouble with slumping slugger Giancarlo Stanton, who finished 0-for-4 with three strikeouts, dropping his average to .214. He has struck out 12 times in the past four games.

**Braves 7, Phillies 1:** Freddie Freeman homered twice and drove in four runs and Nick Markakis also hit a home run to lead visiting Atlanta. The Braves entered the game with just 15 homers, last in the majors by a wide margin.

**Pirates 2, Rockies 1:** Starling

Marte and John Jaso had two hits each and made fine defensive plays to help Gerrit Cole navigate through seven shaky innings for host Pittsburgh. Cole (5-3) scattered 10 hits and a walk while not recording a strikeout in winning his second straight start. He pitched eight scoreless innings last Sunday to beat the Cubs in Chicago after failing to get past the sixth inning in his first six starts.

**Indians 4, Red Sox 2:** Jason Kipnis hit a three-run homer

and Corey Kluber (3-5) slowed down the majors' top-scoring team for seven innings as visiting Cleveland won its fifth straight. Boston's Jackie Bradley Jr. extended his hitting streak to 25 games with a solo home run. The Red Sox homered for a club-record 20th straight game, breaking their mark of 19 set in July 1996.

**Rays 7, Tigers 5:** Kevin Kiermaier broke a tie in sixth with a three-run triple and Steve Pearce homered in the eighth for visit-

ing Tampa Bay. Miguel Cabrera hit two home runs for Detroit.

**Rangers 2, Astros 1:** Colby Lewis pitched seven scoreless innings and Prince Fielder hit a two-run double for visiting Texas.

### ■ Lincecum an Angel

Tim Lincecum signed a one-year, \$2.5-million deal with the Angels. The two-time NL Cy Young Award winner, who threw a showcase for interested clubs May 6, is attempting to come back from left hip surgery. AP

newsday.com NEWSDAY, SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016 3A

Newsday  
5.21.16



## **Sources: Competition committee agrees to changes to strike zone, intentional walks**

2:42 AM ET 5.21.16

**Jayson Stark ESPN Senior Writer**

A new strike zone could be on baseball's horizon and the old-fashioned intentional walk could be a thing of the past after both were agreed to by the competition committee at Major League Baseball's owners meetings this week, sources said.

The potentially dramatic changes could be in effect by next season.

The committee agreed on a motion to effectively raise the lower part of the strike zone to the top of the hitter's knees, sources said. The current rules stipulate that the zone begins at "the hollow beneath the kneecap," but the change is a reaction to a trend by umpires to call strikes on an increasing number of pitches below the knees.

The change in the intentional-walk rule would end the traditional practice of requiring the pitcher to lob four balls outside the strike zone. Instead, a team could signify it wants to issue an intentional walk, and the hitter would be immediately sent to first base, sources said.

The two changes can't go into effect unless they are approved by baseball's playing rules committee, which is chaired by New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson and made up of a cross-section of baseball executives. Sources said the changes would also be presented to the MLB Players Association as part of negotiations for a new labor agreement. However, the playing rules committee isn't required to have the union sign off on the changes. So they could take effect next season whether or not the union agrees to them.

Both changes are designed to address concerns by commissioner Rob Manfred and others about pace of play and one of the commissioner's favorite terms, "pace of action." The end of the traditional intentional walk would eliminate dead time. However, the adjustment in the strike zone is designed to produce more balls in play, more baserunners and more action at a time when nearly 30 percent of hitters in the average game either walk or strike out, the highest rate of "non-action" in history.

Mets second baseman Neil Walker voiced support Friday night for raising the bottom of the strike zone.

"I think if you ask hitters, most of the complaints they would have would be about low strikes," he said. "They're probably the hardest to call for umpires, and catchers have gotten so good at presenting them."

However, he also said he thinks the new strike zone would lead to more walks rather than balls in play.

"As a hitter, when you see the ball out of the pitcher's hand and it's going to be down, you usually think about taking it, because it's harder to do damage with that pitch," he said. "Us as hitters, we want that ball up, thigh or mid-thigh."

Chicago Cubs manager Joe Maddon said he's in favor of anything that gets his team more walks but also said he isn't sure the proposed change to the strike zone would help put more balls in play.

"Guys might take more pitches, and you're still going to get a walk," he said. "It might benefit a team like us if they call it that way because the biggest thing about us would be an umpire that doesn't expand our strike zone. That's what we'd love to have.

"If you're going to shorten the strike zone, it can be counterproductive. If a guy is pitching down below that and we're just taking them, you're going to get less action. It's one of those things that you have to put it in play to answer the question."

Maddon also raised a concern about eliminating the traditional intentional walk.

"By taking that away, there is the potential that a wild pitch could occur that could impact the game. And I've seen it happen," he said.

The Cubs manager is among those who are less concerned about the pace of play.

"When it comes down to the game itself, I'm not so pent up on moments like that, however many seconds that takes to get that done," he said.



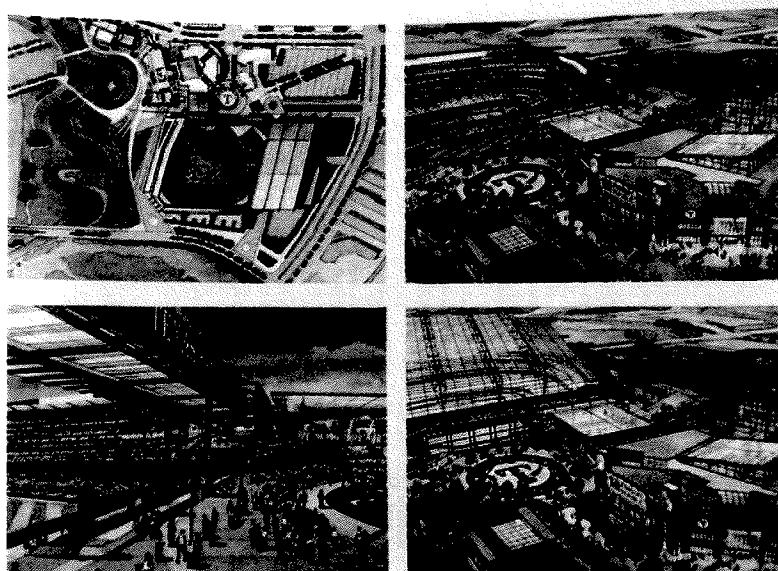
## The proposed Rangers stadium looks nice, unlike the idea behind funding it

Yes, tax dollars will almost certainly be involved, and that's too bad

by Dayn Perry

According to multiple reports, the Texas Rangers and the City of Arlington will soon unveil plans for a new ballpark. This is happening despite the fact that Globe Life Park has been in use since just 1994. The desire for a retractable roof to provide respite from the Texas summer, though, drives the new project.

As the Fort Worth Star-Telegram notes, the project is expected to cost around \$900 million. Here's a look at what almost a billion bucks will get you these days ...



Sure, seems nice enough. Also according to the *Star-Telegram*, taxpayers will be asked via referendum to pay for roughly half of that total cost (\$450 million or so). If recent local history is any guide, then the measure will be approved. Or, as Miami taught us, a team can still raid the public coffers without subjecting itself to inconveniences of direct democracy.

The larger point is that these financing deals don't make sense for the taxpayer. A lot of local governments are faced with crippling debt these days, but even those in a relatively healthy state shouldn't be indulging in this kind of corporate welfare. By now, though, the routine is familiar: Team officials and their public-sector valets will trot out tales of the economic development that will ensue once these public-private partnerships are up and running.



The problem is that the evidence says otherwise. This is especially the case for NFL stadiums, which are used at most 12 times a year for their primary purpose. Even MLB facilities, with their 81 or so home games per year, don't move the needle. Here's a passage from Roger Noll's and Andrew Zimbalist's seminal examination of the issue:

As noted, a stadium can spur economic growth if sports is a significant export industry--that is, if it attracts outsiders to buy the local product and if it results in the sale of certain rights (broadcasting, product licensing) to national firms. But, in reality, sports has little effect on regional net exports.

Sports facilities attract neither tourists nor new industry. Probably the most successful export facility is Oriole Park, where about a third of the crowd at every game comes from outside the Baltimore area. (Baltimore's baseball exports are enhanced because it is 40 miles from the nation's capital, which has no major league baseball team.) Even so, the net gain to Baltimore's economy in terms of new jobs and incremental tax revenues is only about \$3 million a year--not much of a return on a \$200 million investment.

Sports teams do collect substantial revenues from national licensing and broadcasting, but these must be balanced against funds leaving the area. Most professional athletes do not live where they play, so their income is not spent locally. Moreover, players make inflated salaries for only a few years, so they have high savings, which they invest in national firms. Finally, though a new stadium increases attendance, ticket revenues are shared in both baseball and football, so that part of the revenue gain goes to other cities. On balance, these factors are largely offsetting, leaving little or no net local export gain to a community.

In the excerpt above, they're largely talking about Camden Yards in Baltimore, which is often held up as the exception to any economic nay-saying. The problem is that even for Camden Yards, the effect is negligible at best. For other municipalities, it's worse than negligible.

Sure, there's probably an electoral cost to be borne by those elected officials who allow a signature sports franchise to leave town, but in reality it's a show of resolve. Handing over money to a private entity (or donating land or extending tax forgiveness or providing infrastructure or conducting a bond offering) is a form of welfare. However, said welfare is bestowed an entity -- a professional sports franchise -- that demonstrably doesn't need it. Means-testing, where art thou!

As a matter of principle, liberals should be opposed to lavishing private businesses with public subsidies, and conservatives should be opposed to the tax increases that enable these sorts projects. Yet they still keep happening. At some point, local leaders should pressure each other to sign a pledge of some sort that declares if pro sports teams want their own place of business, then they should pay for it themselves. Without the ability to play cities against each other, teams would be forced to do just that. However, that kind of "responsible collusion" will almost certainly never come to pass.

So we'll again be treated to folk tales of the jobs (seasonal, temporary) and wages (low) and revenues (generally shuffled around from existing ones) that ballpark projects will deliver. Those tales still won't be true, but the people who matter will go on believing them, or at least pretending to.

# Fastballs Linked to Elbow Injuries

By NICHOLAS BAKALAR

About a quarter of major league pitchers have had Tommy John surgery, and the reason for the epidemic has been unclear.

Various studies have suggested that pitching mechanics, the anatomy of a pitcher's arm, curveballs, pitching fatigue, pitch velocity or just pitching too many innings could be the problem. But according to research by doctors at the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, the explanation is none of the above. Instead, it is throwing fastballs, and throwing lots of them.

The researchers studied the issue by examining the records of 83 major league pitchers who had had Tommy John surgery, which involves replacing a torn ulnar collateral ligament in an elbow with a tendon from elsewhere in the body, and a comparison group of 83 who had not.

Data on all 166 pitchers was collected over two years, before and after surgery. Researchers looked at height and weight, whether the pitchers were right-handed or left-handed, a starter or a reliever, the number of innings pitched, a pitcher's age at surgery, years of major league experience and the type, number and velocity of

itches they had thrown. Then, to see exactly how they differed, researchers compared the ones who had injured their elbows and needed surgery to the ones who had not.

The two groups were very much alike. In both groups, the average age was 28, about 70 percent of the pitchers were right-handed, and about half were starters and half were relievers. The two groups pitched the same average number of innings, and the average height and weight were the same for those who had had surgery as for those who had not.

The average speed of their pitches did not vary either; in both groups the average velocity was about 91 miles per hour for fastballs, 78 for curves and 84 for sliders and changeups.

But one factor stood out: pitchers who had surgery threw fastballs 46.8 percent of the time, compared to 39.7 percent among those who had not had an operation. The researchers concluded that just throwing fastballs — irrespective of velocity — significantly increases the risk for injury and Tommy John surgery. None of the other factors they looked at made any difference.

The lead author of the study, Dr. Robert A. Keller, the chief orthopedics resident at Henry Ford, said that there had been biomechanical studies looking at the forces imposed by different pitches and that they showed that the fastball put the most torque on the shoulder and elbow.

"Pitchers who throw at their maximum speed, whatever that speed is, they're hurting their arms," Dr. Keller said. "The ones throwing fastballs are putting more force on their arms more often."

Many parents of Little Leaguers believe that the curveball is the culprit in arm injuries, and Dr. Keller said that the findings of his study may not translate to younger players.

"Professional pitchers have great mechanics and know how to throw a curve or a fastball," he said. "It may be that younger pitchers are at more risk because their mechanics are not as good."

But for major league pitchers, the researchers calculated that there was a 2 percent increase in the risk for ulnar collateral ligament surgery for every 1 percent increase in the number of fastballs they threw.

NY Times

5.21.16

# Reddick injures thumb in loss to Yanks

RICK EYMER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND, Calif. - Josh Reddick was trying to make something happen, hoping to put himself into position to score. He's likely to miss a month at minimum as a result of a fractured thumb.

"Frustrating isn't even the right word," Reddick said following the Oakland Athletics' 4-1 loss to the New York Yankees on Thursday night. "I'm ticked off more than anything. I was having a great season and now this. Something so simple can be so damaging."

Reddick, who hit a solo home run in the fourth for the A's only run, caught his thumb on Starlin Castro's spike stealing second base in the seventh.

"I had the green light at that point. I was trying to help the club win a game," Reddick said. "We were down a run. Unfortunately, those things happen."

Reddick's injury put a damper on what was a solid effort from right-hander Kendall Graveman (1-6), who beat the Yankees on April 20 for his only win this season, and suffered his fifth consecutive loss.

He gave up eight hits in 5 2-3 innings

with three walks and four strikeouts.

"That was the best sinker I've had all year, to both sides of the plate," Graveman said. "I have been working hard to stay on top of the routine between starts so I don't struggle before the game."

Ivan Nova pitched six innings for his second win since moving into the starting rotation, Carlos Beltran hit a two-run homer and the Yankees held on.

Oakland swept New York when the teams played in the Bronx but got little going against Nova and three relievers.

Nova (3-1) allowed one run and four hits in his longest outing this season

since replacing the injured CC Sabathia in the Yankees' rotation. The right-hander threw just 62 pitches, had three strikeouts and lowered his ERA to 1.65 in three starts.

The Yankees missed multiple opportunities to break the game open but took a 2-1 lead on RBI doubles by Beltran in the third and Hicks in the sixth.

Beltran hit his ninth home run of the season and the 401st of his career in the ninth.

The A's managed just three runners after Reddick's homer and hit into two double plays.

Lohud

5.21.16

# Lincecum signs with Angels

Ex-Giants pitcher's  
\$2.5 million deal  
is for one year

BETH HARRIS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

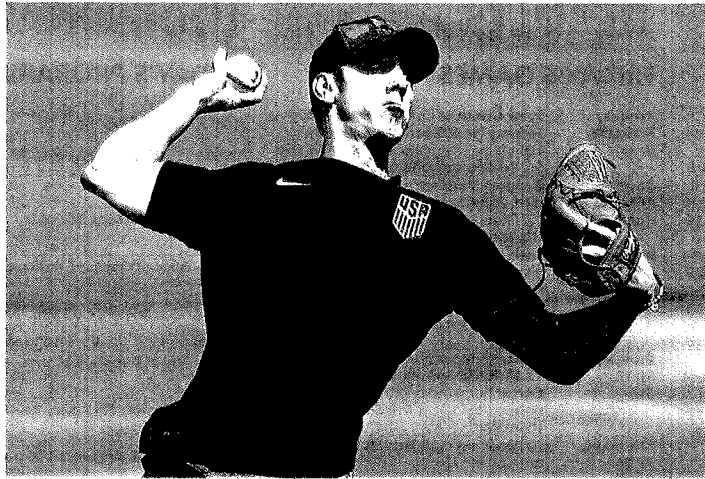
ANAHEIM, Calif. - Tim Lincecum signed a \$2.5 million, one-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels on Friday, giving the injury-plagued team additional depth for the rotation.

The two-time NL Cy Young Award winner is attempting to come back from left hip surgery. Lincecum didn't pitch after June 27 last year with the Giants because of degenerative hip problems.

He had surgery Sept. 3 and didn't sign with a team after finishing a \$35 million, two-year deal last season.

"I'm anxious, excited and a little nervous," Lincecum said by phone. "I'm pumped to see what I can do out there on the field. I know what I'm fighting for and that's to get back to a starting role."

General manager Billy Eppler said Lincecum would need 12 to 30 days to get ready. He will initially report to the team's spring training facility in Arizona, where he's been living for the last nine months.



Two-time NL Cy Young Award winner Tim Lincecum is attempting to come back from left hip surgery, signing a one-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels on Friday.

"The common denominator of these star-level players is they know their body really well," Eppler said. "We're relying a lot on the player."

"He'll tell us when he's ready because

he's earned that."

Lincecum's free-agent deal with the Angels includes \$1,175,000 in performance bonuses and \$500,000 in roster bonuses. He would receive \$25,000 for

making 11 starts, \$50,000 for 13, \$100,000 for 15, \$200,000 for 17 and \$400,000 each for 19 and 21 starts.

In addition, he would receive \$125,000 each for four, 30, 60 and 90 days on the active roster, excluding disabled list days spent due to a right hip injury.

Lincecum said his landing leg is stable and he has the freedom of motion for his unique delivery. Before the surgery, his biggest issues were lack of stability and strength as opposed to pain.

"Success will be being healthy at the end of this season and seeing where I'm at after that," he said.

The Giants were the only other team Lincecum has ever pitched for, and he said they showed some interest. However, his desire to start didn't match up with the Giants' plans.

"It is tough because I've had a lot of emotions and time built up with them," he said.

The 31-year-old right-hander went 7-4 with a 4.13 ERA in 15 starts last season. He threw a showcase for interested clubs May 6 in Arizona.

The Angels have 10 players on the disabled list including pitchers Garrett Richards, Andrew Heaney, C.J. Wilson, Huston Street and Cory Rasmus. Tyler Skaggs is recovering from Tommy John surgery and is on the minor league DL with Triple-A Salt Lake.

Lohud  
5.21.16



## JBJ extends hitting streak to 25 in loss

By Ian Browne / MLB.com | [@IanMBrowne](#) | 12:03 AM ET 5.21.16

BOSTON -- There is nothing cheap about the way **Jackie Bradley Jr.** is extending his hitting streak. He is doing it with authoritative swings against some of the toughest pitchers in baseball.

In Friday night's **4-2 loss** to the Indians, Bradley dropped the hammer on a 90-mph slider from **Corey Kluber** and nailed it into the seats in center field for a solo shot that was projected by **Statcast™** to land 417 away from home plate.

Bradley has hit in 25 straight -- the longest streak a Boston player has had in a single season since **Dustin Pedroia** in 2011. **David Ortiz** hit in 27 in a row over two seasons (2012-13). It is the longest hitting streak in the Major Leagues this season.

"He's in a dangerous position at the plate -- seeing the ball well, putting good swings on multiple types of pitches," said Red Sox manager John Farrell. "It's impressive, his hitting streak and the ability to go against the best pitchers in our league -- [Wade] Davis the other day to extend the streak, today against a very good starter in Kluber. Very good job by Jackie."

Bradley will let others be impressed by the pitchers he has success against. At the moment, he has the quiet confidence that he can hit anyone.

"You know, I'm not even thinking about names," said Bradley. "A lot of people are focused on the names. I'm just focused on me and the pitch and just trying to attack them as they're attacking me."

After pitching Bradley in the lower portion of the strike zone in his first at-bat, in the second inning, the Indians elevated to him the rest of the night.

Bradley didn't bite, working two tough walks, the latter in the ninth after he fell behind, 0-2, to Indians closer **Cody Allen**.

It was an example of the way Bradley is controlling his at-bats of late.

"I just wanted to stay locked in for the last at-bat," said Bradley. "I didn't want to lose. In my mind, I was going to give it everything I had. I didn't want to lose the game. I didn't want to lose that at-bat."

Bradley's streak is nine shy of Dominic DiMaggio for tops in Red Sox history (34 games in 1949).

The home run also had some additional significance. It was the 20th straight game the Red Sox have had at least one homer, setting a franchise record. The 1996 Red Sox held the previous record of going deep in 19 straight games.

In Wednesday night's win over the Royals, Bradley also extended the streak with a homer in his first at-bat.

The most remarkable thing about Bradley's streak is his extra-base rampage.

The missile against Kluber was Bradley's eighth homer during the streak. Of his 38 hits during the streak, 18 have been for extra bases. He also has seven doubles and three triples.



## Monkey Business: Theo Epstein Getting Kudos For Hot Starts By Both Cubs, Red Sox

Published May 20, 2016

This week "marks the purportedly significant 40-game one-quarter mark" of the MLB season, and the two teams with the highest-scoring offenses in the game -- the Cubs and Red Sox -- are "built on players mostly acquired" by regimes under Theo Epstein, according to Tim Healey of SPORTS ON EARTH. Eleven of the Cubs' 12 position players on the 25-man roster "entered the organization under Epstein's watch" after he joined the club in '11 as President of Baseball Operations. Meanwhile, for the Red Sox -- where Epstein worked as GM from '02-11 -- "seven of 13 of the team's hitters are Epstein guys" (*SPORTSONEARTH.com, 5/19*). In Boston, Dan Shaughnessy noted this year's Red Sox team "was largely built" by Epstein, as RF Mookie Betts, C Christian Vazquez and OF Jackie Bradley Jr. were all drafted by his baseball operations department. Epstein also "brought on board" international free agent SS Xander Bogaerts and "non-prospect" 3B Travis Shaw. Meanwhile, he was the "baseball godfather" of drafting 2B Dustin Pedroia and signing DH David Ortiz in '02 after he was released by the Twins. That marks seven of Red Sox' "nine everyday players" (*BOSTON GLOBE, 5/19*). Also in Boston, Eric Wilbur wrote Epstein is "in line for the same sort of hindsight praise" Orioles Exec VP/Baseball Operations Dan Duquette received in Boston after the '04 Red Sox won the World Series "with a roster of that former GM's remnants." Epstein is "already the front-runner to be named" MLB Exec of the Year for his work with the Cubs. However, considering that there is "every possibility that the two teams he helped build could eventually meet in the World Series, Epstein might have this year's honor under wraps" (*BOSTON.com, 5/17*).

**WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?** In Chicago, Mike Imrem noted this is the last season on Epstein's current contract and a new deal "hasn't been announced." Much of the "palm-sweating, head scratching speculation centers on why the Cubs aren't giving Epstein what he wants." It could be because they "can't give him what he needs." If the Cubs win the World Series this year, Epstein will "have overcome the Curse of the Bambino in Fenway Park and the Curse of the Billy Goat in Wrigley Field." Not much "would be left for Epstein to do here except more of the same." It is "doubtful that Epstein would leave for a challenge to build another team because no other challenge would be as challenging as the challenges he already conquered." He might have to "ponder whether he wants to stay in baseball forever" (*Chicago DAILY HERALD, 5/19*).

# Harvey won't skip turn

BY MARC CARIG  
marc.carig@newsday.com

The Mets huddled yesterday to begin the daunting task of reassembling Matt Harvey's shattered confidence. Their options ran the gamut.

Most were traditional, such as dispatching the embattled pitcher to the minors for a head-clearing sabbatical, a person briefed on the situation told Newsday. Others were more radical, such as emptying Harvey's locker, assembling the belongings into a pile and setting them ablaze.

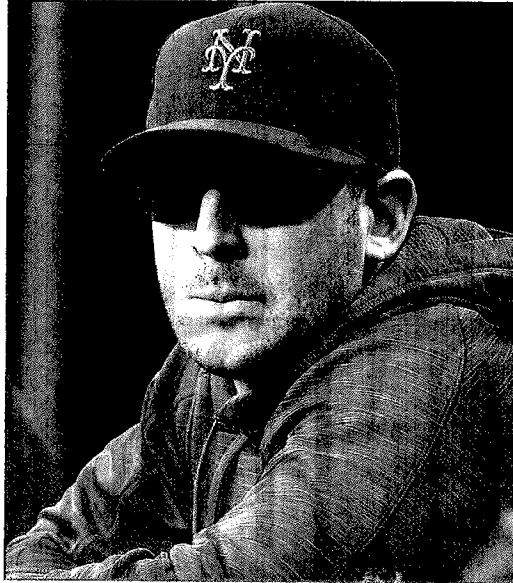
Some hoped that the gesture might symbolize a much-needed fresh start, and that he could rise from the ashes.

The Mets chose a laissez-faire approach, one that reflects their insistence that what ails Harvey is mental, not physical. At his insistence, Harvey will remain in the rotation, which means he will pitch against the Nationals next week.

Just as he did in Game 5 of the World Series, he talked his way into keeping the baseball. The Mets can only hope for better results this time around.

"We got as in-depth as you possibly can get," manager Terry Collins said of the decision before last night's series opener against the Brewers. "We dissected every angle there was. In the end, knowing this guy like we do, he wants to pitch. He wants to fight through it. He isn't going to run and hide. He wants to get out there. So we're going to do that."

The Mets have yet to decide exactly when Harvey will pitch again. His regular turn is Tuesday, though he could get an extra day's rest and pitch Wednesday. Collins also left open the possibility of having Harvey pitch the series opener Monday, on short rest, because



Struggling Matt Harvey is to pitch against Nationals next week.

he lasted only 61 pitches in Thursday night's meltdown.

"In this particular case, we really think he's got to get back on the horse as fast as we possibly can," Collins said. "We've got to get him back out there. He's angry about some things. Get him back out there, that's how we're going to go about it."

Harvey, 27, allowed a career-high nine runs (six earned) in a career-low 2 2/3 innings Thursday night. The outing got him booed off the mound.

Even Collins admitted that he was worried about how Harvey might respond the day after, but those fears were quickly erased. Though Harvey arrived at Citi Field yesterday with an ERA that has ballooned to 5.77, he insisted that

he remain in the rotation.

For all the talk of Harvey's inconsistent mechanics, or speculation about last season's innings load, the Mets have been steadfast in approaching Harvey's struggles as primarily a crisis of confidence. Some of the Mets' conversa-

tions focused on finding ways for Harvey to turn the page mentally. That included resorting to a controlled burn.

Mets reliever Bobby Parnell attempted that tactic last season. After a rough stretch, Parnell emptied everything from his locker (aside from his Mets uniform) and set fire to the contents, his way of creating a fresh slate.

Another suggestion involved having Harvey pack up his belongings from the clubhouse only to move right back in, another ploy to reinforce the notion of a new start.

It's unclear whether Harvey followed through on either tactic.

Meanwhile, Collins stuck to a familiar script, giving Harvey another public vote of confidence with what has become a familiar stump speech. With all the earnestness he could muster, with all the conviction of a true believer, Collins vowed that the Mets will make Harvey great again.

"This summer, it will happen again," he said, noting how fans chanted his name before the ninth inning of the World Series. "I told him that today. What he heard last November, he will hear that again this summer. But you've got to be able to build on what you're doing right now to get better to hear it. I think he can handle that."

## LOTTERY

**Pick 10:** 2, 5, 9, 11, 12, 18, 19, 22, 34, 38, 41, 46, 48, 60, 62, 66, 68, 69, 74, 77.

**Daily number:** 961.  
**Lucky sum:** 16.

**Win4:** 4401.  
**Lucky sum:** 9.

**Take 5:** 6, 24, 32, 35, 38.

**Midday daily:** 254.  
**Lucky sum:** 11.

**Midday Win4:** 9659.  
**Lucky sum:** 29.

**Wed. Lotto:** 19, 26, 42, 47, 49, 59.  
**Bonus:** 17.

**Fri. Mega Millions:** 19, 24, 26, 40, 68.  
**Mega Ball:** 8.  
**Megaplier:** 2.

**Thur. Cash4Life:** 10, 18, 37, 40, 57.  
**Cash Ball:** 4.

**Wed. Powerball:** 23, 25, 39, 54, 67.  
**Powerball:** 11. **Power Play:** 3.

DARK KNIGHT? NO CHOICE A37

Newsday  
5.21.16



## What's wrong with Matt Harvey? Scott Boras opens up on his client's struggles

The New York Mets would-be ace's era stands at a garish 5.77 after another poor outing Thursday. Agent Scott Boras spoke to us about Harvey's rough start.

By Ken Rosenthal @ken\_rosenthal May 20, 2016 at 2:05p ET

When I asked Scott Boras about struggling Mets right-hander Matt Harvey on Friday, he started talking about a pitcher who had a 6.55 ERA last May 30 before going on the disabled list with neck stiffness.

"If I gave you those numbers, you would have to say that this pitcher is in the dumps," Boras said. "His career path is altered. He's changed. He's someone who is in deep trouble and he's not the same.

"The numbers I just gave you are of a pitcher who just signed a \$175 million contract."

That would be another of Boras' clients, Nationals right-hander Stephen Strasburg.

"I've been through this many times with Tommy John pitchers," Boras said. "I'm just telling you on May 29 of last year, Stephen Strasburg came off a month of May when he had 1-3 record and (10.13) ERA, and his overall ERA was 6.55."

Strasburg, who spent more than three weeks on the DL and later missed more than a month with a left oblique strain, produced a 1.90 ERA in his final 10 starts and followed that with a 2.80 ERA in his first nine starts this season.

"This Tommy John dynamic carries with it unknowns," Boras said. "It's amazing that Harv and Stras pitched against one another (Thursday night). You go back a year ago and who's who?"

"I'm sitting on the phone (then) talking about Strasburg's career and no one is saying anything to me about Matt Harvey's brilliance and dominance. Now the roles are reversed, and the reality of it is that there are unknowns in going through the Tommy John scenario.

This Tommy John dynamic carries with it unknowns.



“Why are there unknowns? Because we had a pitcher from zero to (216) innings after a 17-month rehab. And by the way, I want to be clear. Matt Harvey wanted to pitch. The organization is not at fault.

“This is baseball. When an organization is in the playoffs and World Series, the whole thing, unless you’ve got remedies for it long before it happens, this is what you do.”

Boras then pointed to Harvey’s average fastball velocity, which is 94 mph this season, down slightly from 95.2 last season, according to Fangraphs.

Harvey’s swinging-strike percentage is down as well, but also only slightly, from 11.6 percent to 10.7. His ERA is 5.77, but his fielding-independent pitching measure -- or expected ERA -- is 3.66, not terribly off last year’s 3.05.

All this, even though Harvey hit a new low in his 9-1 loss to the Nationals on Thursday night, allowing nine runs in 2 2/3 innings, six earned.

“His velo is there. It’s definitely there,” Boras said. “When his velo is there, how is the league doing? The league is hitting .208 off him when he throws a 94-mph fastball and above.

“Last night he was throwing 94. But the reality of it is when he mislocates ... last night, what did (Daniel) Murphy hit out of the ballpark? A curveball. He hung a curveball.”

Boras would not say it, but the Mets also failed to make a number of plays behind Harvey on Thursday night, particularly on the left side of their infield.

Last night he was throwing 94. But the reality of it is when he mislocates ... last night, what did (Daniel) Murphy hit out of the ballpark? A curveball. He hung a curveball.

Strasburg has benefited from the Nationals’ improved defense -- Washington ranks eighth in the majors in defensive efficiency this season after finishing 21st a year ago. The Mets, on the other hand, have declined from eighth last season to 29th thus far.

Another question with Harvey, raised in several reports on Friday, is whether the pitcher is in optimal physical condition.

“This guy was at our sports fitness institute for six weeks,” Boras said. “And you know what? His lower half is one of the strongest in baseball of any pitcher. This is not his conditioning, believe me.

“You know why I know it? Look at his fastball velocity. He’s still got his velocity. (The issue is) command.

“We’re dealing with unknowns about why he’s not locating. All I can tell you is that with Tommy John guys there are times they don’t locate. Take a look at Strasburg last year.”



## Matt Harvey still has the weapons to succeed, but he needs to find them

11:25 AM ET 5.20.16

**Buster Olney** ESPN Senior Writer

Bryce Harper watched Matt Harvey crash into a wall of boos as the pitcher walked back to the dugout Thursday night and felt moved to say later that he felt bad for him.

Among the feelings in hitters that Harvey has generated -- anger, frustration, despair -- pity is not something he aims for. But there it is, after Harvey failed to get through the third inning, and today Harvey begins the search for solutions.

There is a reason that most coaches will wait until the day after a start to have a conversation with a pitcher who is struggling, so that some of the raw emotion of a terrible start has ebbed. When Mets pitching coach Dan Warthen and manager Terry Collins sit down Friday with Harvey, what they presumably will discuss is that he has a lot of weapons.

Harvey's fastball velocity is down early this season, for sure, by a little more than a mile per hour. But his fastball was clocked as high as 96 mph early in his start against the Nationals, and his average velocity of 94 mph this season is among the best 13 in the majors. His average velocity is better than that of Jake Arrieta or Clayton Kershaw. So it's not as if he is unarmed.

The execution of his secondary pitches might be the root of the problem, such as in the first inning, when Harvey intended to bounce a breaking ball to Daniel Murphy on an 0-2 pitch and instead hung a curve over the middle. A cement mixer, Roger Clemens used to call it. Murphy teed off for a two-run homer.

Some of the pitch selection was odd, such as when he reached a 3-2 count to the second batter he faced, Jayson Werth, and spun a slider rather than challenge Werth with a fastball on the outer edge. He walked Werth, the first domino to fall in this game.

And maybe Warthen and Collins can reassure Harvey with this, as well: The Mets' defense, which has been awful this season, absolutely crushed the right-hander in this game. Asdrubal Cabrera had a chance to turn a double play in the ugly third inning and fumbled the ball. Yoenis Cespedes was unable to reach a fly ball that almost all center fielders would reach. Left fielder Michael Conforto had a chance to make a play with a high degree of difficulty, when Anthony Rendon laced a missile to left, and he mistimed his jump. After Harvey left the game, third baseman David Wright bypassed chances to make aggressive, difference-making throws, instead opting for easier throws. If Harvey is suffering from a crisis of confidence on this team, he probably isn't alone.

The Mets rank 26th overall rank in defensive runs saved this season.

## Mets In Defensive Runs Saved

First basemen: Tied for 15th (-1 DRS)

Second basemen: Tied for 18th (-2 DRS)

Third basemen: 30th (-11 DRS)

Shortstops: Tied for 18th (-2 DRS)

Outfielders: Tied for 18th (-1 DRS)

One of the questions that Harvey and the Mets must answer in this period of self-examination: Is Harvey doing everything he can to prepare himself physically between starts?

If you are around the Dodgers on a day that Kershaw does not pitch, he is constantly on the move going through his routine of weights and sprints; he is a beast. The same is true with Arrieta, and the Nationals' Max Scherzer, the Giants' Madison Bumgarner. They are squared off, blocks of muscle, and seemingly giving themselves every chance physically to pitch well. Kershaw talks about this, about wanting to check every box in helping himself between starts, so that moment that he takes the mound is a culmination of a five-day process that builds to each of his outings.

This is what Harvey looked like four years ago, on the day of his major league debut. This is what he looked like in the third inning last night. Harvey is in good shape, but he looks like he has put on pounds that don't help him. For some pitchers, extra weight doesn't seem to matter, like CC Sabathia, or Harvey's teammate Bartolo Colon. But perhaps Harvey would be better served by veering onto the same path of preparation as Kershaw, Arrieta and Scherzer -- a place that probably isn't as far removed as it might have seemed last night, as he was jeered off the mound.

- From ESPN Stats & Information: The Nationals were 6-for-12 off Harvey's fastball on Thursday. Opponents are hitting .336 off his fastball this season, compared to .231 in his first three seasons.

## Matt Harvey With Fastball

	2012-15	2016
Opp BA	.231	.336
Miss pct	23%	17%
Avg FB vel	95.6	94.0

- Harvey induced four whiffs on 27 swings (14.8 percent) Thursday, his lowest miss percentage in a start since 2013 and the third lowest in his career. Harvey allowed a career-high nine runs in 2 2/3 IP, the first time in his career he didn't finish the fourth inning.

• After allowing six earned runs Thursday, Harvey is now sporting a 5.77 ERA this season. He had a 2.71 ERA last season. His 3.06 run increase in his ERA from last year is the fourth highest in the majors.

Largest increase in ERA from last season: Zack Greinke (3.42), Sonny Gray(3.11), David Price (3.08) and Harvey (3.06).

• Harvey had little to say after his rough outing, writes Tyler Kepner. The Mets need to rebuild his confidence, writes John Harper. Harvey has lived the life of a star, writes Mike Vaccaro.

• The Nationals have won each of Stephen Strasburg's past 13 starts, the longest such streak in franchise history:

### Most Consecutive Team Wins In Nationals/Expos History

2015-16	Stephen Strasburg	13*
2014-15	<u>Jordan Zimmermann</u>	12
1996-97	Pedro Martínez	11

\*Active streak

Strasburg improved to 7-0 this season, the fourth starter in franchise history to start a season 7-0 (and first since Pedro Martínez in 1997).

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### Notables

• In case you missed it, Oakland's Josh Reddick broke his thumb on this play and is out indefinitely. He was expected to be one of the more interesting outfielders in the trade market. The word "frustrated" doesn't cover what Reddick is feeling, he said.

• On Thursday's podcast: Keith Law on his first mock draft, perception of Jose Reyes in the market, and how the Yankees, White Sox, Phillies and Oakland should handle their trade options; Chris Singleton on the Dodgers, Giants and the Toronto-Texas fight fallout.

Thursday's Scoreboard Podcast.

• Chris Sale is having a perfect season, so far, and he was The Stopper for the White Sox Thursday, as Daryl Van Schouwen writes.

From ESPN Stats & Information: On Thursday, Sale threw his 10th complete game in the past four seasons (only Clayton Kershaw, with 15, has more). He improved to 9-0, the third pitcher in the expansion era (since 1961) to win his first nine starts in a season.

Won first nine starts with sub-2.00 ERA --single season since ER became official:

2016 -- Chris Sale, White Sox

1952 -- Sal Maglie, Giants

1929 -- George Uhle, Tigers

1919 -- Eddie Cicotte, White Sox

1912 -- Rube Marquard, Giants

Source: Elias Sports Bureau

- Tim Lincecum's base salary with the Angels, in a deal that will be announced later Friday, will be less than \$2 million in what he'll actually receive, a number that reflects the concern that teams had about Lincecum after seeing him work out. While there was a lot of media hype about Lincecum, no bidding war materialized.

And for the Angels, this is basically an audition, a chance to see whether Lincecum can help. If he does, he'll have a chance to make about \$1.7 million in incentives. If he doesn't, they'll move on.

- The Angels took the Freeway Series from the Dodgers. The Angels are not playing scared in spite of all of their injuries, writes Jeff Miller.

- Part of the narrative that has developed about MLB not suspending Matt Bush for hitting Jose Bautista the other day is that because Bush wasn't ejected by the game umpires, MLB had no precedent on which to base a suspension. Which is ridiculous; there is plenty of precedent:

- Ryan Dempster -- who was not ejected after drilling Alex Rodriguez in 2013, but was nailed with five games.

- Marcus Stroman in 2014.

- Cole Hamels in 2012.

- Kyle Farnsworth in 2008.

So MLB's decision to merely fine Bush for hitting Bautista on purpose, rather than suspending him, still doesn't make sense.

- Jose Reyes resumed his workouts at the Rockies' complex, as Matt Faye writes.

- The Dodgers lost again and the Giants won again, increasing the gap between the two teams to 3½ games, and L.A. has a lot of starting pitchers coming back from injury.

But a developing question is whether this is necessarily a good thing, because Dave Roberts and his staff will be left to integrate and evaluate a whole lot of pitchers who might need time to regain command -- Hyun-Jin Ryu, Brandon McCarthy, Brett Anderson, etc., in addition to Kershaw, Scott Kazmir, Kenta Maeda, Alex Wood and Mike Bolsinger, as well as prospects Julio Urias and Jose DeLeon.

It's possible that the high volume of options will turn into a good thing for the Dodgers, with the depth perhaps allowing the team to work through trouble spots, and bolstering the bullpen.

But the extra bodies could be hindrance too, because the Dodgers will need time and innings to sort through who can help and in what role. Spring training is an ideal time for something like that, because teams can use minor league games to give pitchers work. The regular season might not be, because it's a one-lane road, rather than three, and time could be lost in streamlining the pitching staff.

- The Giants, on the other hand, have an established rotation, fully defined and running smoothly, for now. They just completed their longest road sweep since 1913.
- We have the Giants and the Cubs on Sunday Night Baseball this week.
- The Dodgers need to give Urias a chance to develop.
- Jayson Stark doled out his quarter-mark awards.
- In the shadow of the Cavaliers, the Indians continue to gain momentum: They completed a sweep of the Reds this week.

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### Moves, deals and decisions

1. CC Sabathia is rejoining the Yankees' rotation, and a decision has to be made.
2. The Pirates summoned Wilfredo Boscan to the big leagues.

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### Dings and dents

1. Devon Travis is making progress.
2. Jhonny Peralta is ready to start his injury rehabilitation assignment. From Derrick Goold's story:

*Cardinals manager Mike Matheny said Peralta will start some at third base during his rehab assignment, so that when he returns there's one more way for Peralta and Aledmys Diaz to fit in the same lineup.*

*"It's a little different than your typical rehab stint, seeing as how he does have to figure out how to get yourself in playing situations, in play shape, which he hasn't been," Matheny said. "We've got something mapped out. It's always subject to change."*

*Peralta will move through several affiliates based on his and the team's schedule, and he'll have at most 20 days on his rehab assignment. During that time, the veteran infielder will mimic spring training.*

*He will ease back into games by playing partial games and getting days off. He'll advance over time to full games and four at-bats and then, possibly, increase the caliber of talent he's playing against. As he would do in spring training, Peralta will be trying to gain his timing at the plate*

and build strength in the surgically repaired left hand, his bottom hand at the plate. It's the same hand and a similar injury from which Yadier Molina returned this spring.

*Peralta, 33, has started 203 games in the majors at third base. The Cardinals acknowledged this past week that when Peralta returns they'll consider shuffling the infield to make room for him and their .376-hitting rookie, Diaz. Including Peralta, the Cardinals have five middle infielders on the roster who can each play as many as three positions. Diaz played third and second in the Arizona Fall League, and there was a time the Cardinals thought about developing him as a utility infielder.*

*Matt Carpenter has been an All-Star at third and second base, and early in his career with the Cardinals he played first base. Jedd Gyorko and Ruben Tejada, the latter of whom could get squeezed by Peralta's return, have both played second, third, and shortstop.*

*With Peralta at third, Carpenter could start at second or first. Diaz could be a righthanded-hitting complement to Kolten Wong at second base. It's possible to also mete out playing time in such a way that Peralta would get the rest the Cardinals planned to give him and get he and Diaz the same amount of starts every seven games. General manager John Mozeliak said Peralta's presence – and possible versatility -- adds to the "Rubik's cube" of a roster.*

3. Alex Rodriguez may not be ready to come off the disabled list Saturday, writes Erik Boland.
4. A.J. Hinch is hopeful Carlos Gomez can be back next week.
5. Craig Gentry is making progress.

#### **Thursday's games**

1. The Cardinals tried a new lineup, and romped.
2. Gregory Polanco has stayed red-hot.
3. Junior Guerra had a terrific outing against the Cubs and the Brewers won a series against Chicago.
4. Troy Tulowitzki got a big hit.
5. The Mariners took a series in Baltimore.
6. Jon Gray was hit hard.
7. James Shields was outdueled.

#### **AL East**

- The Yankees' bullpen trio looked unstoppable again.
- Zach Britton is an old-school closer.

- Dylan Bundy threw three innings.
- Curt Casali is getting his long-awaited chance in Detroit, as a member of the Rays.

### **AL Central**

- Terry Ryan is willing to take the heat for the Twins' poor play, writes Jim Souhan.
- Wild swings led to Eddie Rosario being demoted.
- Paul Molitor has the support of his GM, writes Mike Berardino.
- Jose Quintana has gotten better with experience.
- Adam Eaton likes to prove doubters wrong.
- Mike Clevinger's major league debut included some vomit, writes Zack Meisel.
- The Tigers must show their stripes soon, writes Bob Wojnowski.
- Sam Mellinger has three reasons why Eric Hosmer might threaten Steve Balboni's record.
- Dayton Moore says the Royals are fine.

### **AL West**

- With Rongned Odor's suspension looming, Jurickson Profar has been preparing at second base.

### **NL East**

- Erick Aybar had a chicken bone removed from his throat.
- The Nationals are off to the best start in team history.
- Andres Blanco is proving his worth to the Phillies.
- The Phillies struck gold again in the Rule 5 draft, writes Bob Brookover.
- It has been a mixed bag for the Marlins so far this season.
- Marlins' translators are playing a vital role.

### **NL Central**

- Joey Votto is seeing progress.



## NL West

- Jake Lamb has closed a hole in his swing.

## Lastly

- The Rangers and the city of Arlington are about to unveil plans for a ballpark with a roof, writes Evan Grant.
- Commissioner Rob Manfred strongly rebuked the Orioles' position in their on-going fight with the Nationals and Major League Baseball.

From Barry Svrluga's story:

*MASN, meanwhile, issued a statement saying Manfred's statement "ignores the fundamentals of the case." MASN pointed out that a New York court sided with the Orioles because of MLB's "pervasive conflicts of interest," and that "MASN and the Orioles never agreed to allow the RSDC to set the telecast rights fees at its sole discretion," but rather agreed that the RSDC must use a method for determining fees that the league had used for years.*

*"Regrettably, the Commissioner's statement again makes it clear that MASN cannot receive a fair, objective and impartial hearing before MLB or the RSDC on these matters," the statement concluded.*

- Manfred spoke generally about the state of the labor talks.
- Tim Baines writes about how baseball went off the rails in Ottawa.
- Miguel Cabrera has a personal brand logo.
- Fredi Gonzalez has started life after the Braves.

And today will be better than yesterday.



## **Jersey from Bryce Harper-Jonathan Papelbon scuffle for sale at auction**

8:09 AM ET 5.21.16

### **ESPN.com news services**

The jersey Bryce Harper wore when he got into a fight with Washington Nationals teammate Jonathan Papelbon is now for sale.

Online auction house Lelands is offering the game-used jersey, describing it as part of "the snapshot that best defined the dysfunction and disappointment of the Washington Nationals' 2015 season." The jersey is signed by Harper and comes with a certificate of authenticity.

The top bid as of Saturday morning was for \$4,831.53. The auction runs through June 17.

Harper and Papelbon tussled Sept. 27, as the Nationals were playing out the stretch of a disappointing 83-79 season after officially being eliminated from postseason contention the day before. They exchanged words as Harper returned to the dugout after flying out in the eighth inning. Papelbon reached for Harper's throat with his left hand and shoved the outfielder toward the bench with both arms. Teammates then pulled the pair apart.

After that game, both said the issue was resolved and likened the fight to brothers fighting. Papelbon was suspended four games by the Nationals for his role in the altercation, and Harper was held out for one game.

Lelands is also auctioning memorabilia from Jim Craig in its Summer 2016 catalog, including the "Miracle on Ice" goaltender's gold medal.

# On the up & Upton

**M**OST fantasy baseball owners don't forgive easily. If a player burns them, they don't look at them again, much like a person who never would give an ex a second chance.

There is no doubt Melvin Upton Jr. has torpedoed many teams over the past few seasons. It is time to have convenient amnesia. Forget about the poor stats the last few seasons. The Padres' outfielder should be owned in more leagues. He is 26.5 percent owned on ESPN and 37 percent owned on Yahoo.

Heading into Friday, Upton was batting .266 with 16 runs, five home runs, 16 RBIs and seven stolen bases. His strikeout rate was down to 24.7 percent, and his walk rate was 11.4 percent. His 34.7 percent hard hit rate is his best since 2007. Upton is valuable because of the steals alone.

Here are some other players to add:

**Steve Pearce, Rays:** He has eligibility at first and second base and outfield in many leagues. He hit 21 home runs in 338 at-bats in 2014. He was batting .301 with 14 runs, six home runs and 17 RBIs in 83 at-bats,

## Grab San Diego slugger despite past struggles

heading into Friday.

Pearce is crushing left-handers, so take note if you play DFS. He is hitting .444 (16-for-36) with five home runs and 13 RBIs against southpaws and is hitting .191 (9-for-47) with one home

run and four RBIs against right-handers. Pearce hit .327 with nine home runs and

18 RBIs in 98 at-bats against left-handers and .279 with 12 home runs and 31 RBIs in 240 at-bats against right-handers in 2014, so he showed he can be an every day player.

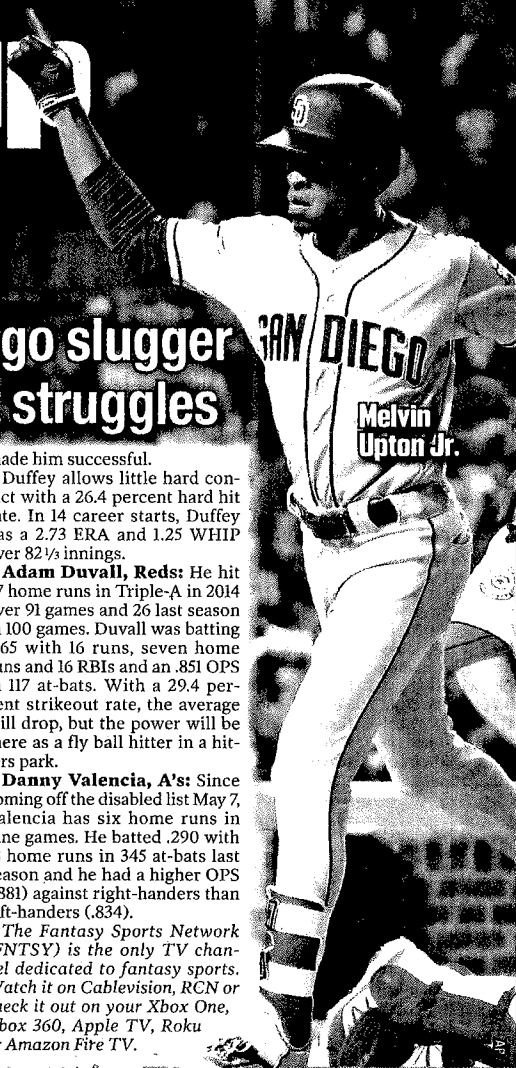
**Tyler Duffey, Twins:** Though all the highly regarded prospects get immediate attention and flopped in many cases so far, Duffey flies under the radar. In four starts, Duffey is 1-2 with a 1.85 ERA, 1.11 WHIP, 22.8 percent strikeout rate and 5 percent walk rate. Duffey averages 89.6 mph with his fastball, but the curveball, which he uses it 43.6 percent of the time, has

made him successful. Duffey allows little hard contact with a 26.4 percent hard hit rate. In 14 career starts, Duffey has a 2.73 ERA and 1.25 WHIP over 82 1/3 innings.

**Adam Duvall, Reds:** He hit 27 home runs in Triple-A in 2014 over 91 games and 26 last season in 100 games. Duvall was batting .265 with 16 runs, seven home runs and 16 RBIs and an .851 OPS in 117 at-bats. With a 29.4 percent strikeout rate, the average will drop, but the power will be there as a fly ball hitter in a hitters park.

**Danny Valencia, A's:** Since coming off the disabled list May 7, Valencia has six home runs in nine games. He batted .290 with 18 home runs in 345 at-bats last season and he had a higher OPS (.881) against right-handers than left-handers (.834).

The Fantasy Sports Network (FNTSY) is the only TV channel dedicated to fantasy sports. Watch it on Cablevision, RCN or check it out on your Xbox One, Xbox 360, Apple TV, Roku or Amazon Fire TV.



# FANTASY SATURDAY

## Dark Knight a fantasy Two-Face

By JARAD WILK

The Bat Signal is hanging over Gotham, but The Dark Knight is not responding.

Has he been abducted by the Joker's henchman? Did he try to solve too many of the Ridler's riddles last season? Has he been on a way-too-long bathroom break because his batsuit is far too tight?

Matt Harvey lasted just 2 2/3 innings on Thursday against the Nationals, the shortest start of his career. He allowed nine runs (six earned) while walking two and striking out just two.

Fantasy owners were expecting a Dark Knight of the Christopher Nolan trilogy. Instead, they are getting a Joel Schumacher abomination.

Not only is Harvey 3-6 with a 5.77 ERA, but he looks like a pitcher who cannot — and should not — be trusted as a key member of your fantasy rotation right now.

Harvey's fastball was topping out at 96 mph last season, according to Brooks Baseball. This season, it is averaging 94 mph. He is striking out a career-low 8.0 per nine innings (19.6 percent of the batters he faces). He has a career-low swinging strike rate (17.4 percent), and just 9.3 percent of his punchouts have come with the batter looking (his career average is 20.5 percent, and he was at 27.7 percent last year). Opponents are hitting .325 against him after hitting just .222 against him last year and .209 in 2013.

Harvey already has allowed 35 runs, something he didn't do until July 4 last season.

You can blame pitching 200-plus innings last season, Tommy John surgery side affects or his Bruce Wayne lifestyle. You drafted a superhero, but have gotten the equivalent of a drunk Bruce Wayne trying to take on all villains without his suit and gadgets.

This is not the superhero Mets fans rush to Citi Field to see on "Harvey Day." You wouldn't think about benching that guy.

But, at this point, you must. Don't trade him, have faith he will show up, at some point, when that Bat Signal shines every fifth day.

jwilk@nypost.com

### BIG HITS

#### Mike Napoli 1B, Indians

Raised his batting average from .205 to .241 by going 17-for-59 (.288) with three home runs, 15 RBIs, 12 runs scored and a .899 OPS in his first 15 games this month..

#### Chris Tillman SP, Orioles

Since suffering a loss on April 14, the right-hander is 5-0 with a 1.83 ERA, .191 opponent average and 42 strikeouts over his past six starts.

#### Travis Shaw 3B, Red Sox

In 22 games before Friday night, the 26-year-old was 27-for-85 (.318) with five homers, 20 RBIs, a stolen base, a 1.001 OPS and 18 runs scored.

#### Rubby De La Rosa SP, Diamondbacks

He has suffered just one loss in his past five starts, going 3-1 with a 1.93 ERA, 33 strikeouts and a .154 opponent average in that span.

### BIG WHIFFS

#### Michael Pineda SP, Yankees

Since winning his first start of the year, the 27-year-old is 0-5 with a 6.05 ERA and .311 opponent average over seven starts. He has allowed 50 hits, 26 earned runs.

#### Ben Revere OF, Nationals

Before going 2-for-5 with two RBIs Thursday night against the Mets, the 28-year-old had just five hits in his first 52 at-bats, a .312 OPS, 10 strikeouts and just one RBI.

#### Ender Inciarte OF, Braves

He was 13-for-56 (.232) over his first 14 games with just one extra-base hit, one RBI and no stolen bases (he was caught stealing twice).

#### Jerad Eickhoff SP, Phillies

The rookie is 0-5 with a 5.45 ERA and a .293 opponent average over his past six starts, allowing 21 earned runs on 39 hits in that span.

### QUICK HITS

● **Khris Davis** had been knocking the cover off the ball this month with nine homers and 20 RBIs in 16 games before Friday. The sudden power surge makes his .270 on-base percentage somewhat tolerable.

● **Jackie Bradley Jr.**, Boston's 26-year-old outfielder, has a 25-game hit streak — going 38-for-93 (.409) with eight HRs, 29 RBIs, one SB and 16 runs since April 24.

● **Shawn Tolleson** may have had 11 saves for the Rangers, but he had four blown saves (three this month). **Sam Dyson** will get a shot, but he hasn't been named "the closer." Keep an eye on **Jake Diekmann**, too. Speaking of the Rangers, **Rougned Odor** was offered free barbecue for life for clocking **Jose Bautista**. If he takes up Heim BBQ on their offer, the team will know where that odor in the locker room is coming from.

### TEAM NAME OF THE WEEK

**Wacha Flocka Flame**

Submit your team name to @NYPPost\_Roto



ROTO FILES  
Jarad Wilk

NY Post  
5.21.16



## MLB Transactions

05/20/16 New York Yankees optioned James Pazos to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders.

New York Yankees activated LHP CC Sabathia from the 15-day disabled list.

New York Yankees sent Phil Coke outright to Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders.

Los Angeles Angels designated RHP Danny Reynolds for assignment.

Detroit Tigers sent RHP Shane Greene on a rehab assignment to West Michigan Whitecaps.

Los Angeles Angels optioned Jefry Marte to Salt Lake Bees.

Los Angeles Angels sent OF Craig Gentry on a rehab assignment to Inland Empire 66ers.

Colorado Rockies optioned Scott Oberg to Albuquerque Isotopes.

Colorado Rockies recalled Jordan Lyles from Albuquerque Isotopes.

Colorado Rockies recalled Miguel Castro from Albuquerque Isotopes.

Colorado Rockies placed RHP Christian Bergman on the 15-day disabled list. Strained left oblique

Texas Rangers activated RF Shin-Soo Choo from the 15-day disabled list.

Atlanta Braves optioned John Gant to Gwinnett Braves.

Atlanta Braves selected the contract of RHP Joel De La Cruz from Gwinnett Braves.

Milwaukee Brewers signed free agent RHP Gage Smith to a minor league contract.

Miami Marlins activated RHP Edwin Jackson from the 15-day disabled list.

Oakland Athletics placed RF Josh Reddick on the 15-day disabled list. fractured left thumb

Oakland Athletics recalled Jake Smolinski from Nashville Sounds.

Tampa Bay Rays signed free agent C J.P. Arencibia to a minor league contract.

Milwaukee Brewers recalled Keon Broxton from Colorado Springs Sky Sox.

Milwaukee Brewers placed RF Domingo Santana on the 15-day disabled list retroactive to May 19, 2016. right shoulder strain

Cincinnati Reds sent Drew Hayes outright to Louisville Bats.

Cincinnati Reds placed RHP Tim Adleman on the 15-day disabled list. strained left oblique

Cincinnati Reds selected the contract of Steve Selsky from Louisville Bats.

Los Angeles Angels signed free agent RHP Tim Lincecum.

Arizona Diamondbacks signed free agent 2B Ed Lucas to a minor league contract.

Philadelphia Phillies traded 2B Ryan Jackson to Los Angeles Angels for cash.

Boston Red Sox recalled Noe Ramirez from Pawtucket Red Sox.

Boston Red Sox recalled Blake Swihart from Pawtucket Red Sox.

Boston Red Sox placed LF Brock Holt on the 7-day disabled list retroactive to May 19, 2016. mild concussion

Boston Red Sox placed RHP Carson Smith on the 15-day disabled list retroactive to May 15, 2016. right elbow soreness

Minnesota Twins sent RHP Kyle Gibson on a rehab assignment to Fort Myers Miracle.

Minnesota Twins sent SS Eduardo Escobar on a rehab assignment to Fort Myers Miracle.

Colorado Rockies optioned LHP Tyler Matzek to Modesto Nuts.

Kansas City Royals signed free agent LHP Kyle Bartsch to a minor league contract.

St. Louis Cardinals sent SS Jhonny Peralta on a rehab assignment to Peoria Chiefs.