



WHITE SOX HEADLINES OF September 23, 2018

"White Sox can't corral Cubs behind Giolito" ... Max Gelman, MLB.com

"Anderson 1st Sox SS to record 20-20 season"... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"In My Words: Reinsdorf on Hawk" ... Jerry Reinsdorf, MLB.com

"Moncada, Renteria not focused on strikeouts" ... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"Yoan Moncada's late-season surge reminding quick-to-react fans that calling him a 'bust' is a horrible idea" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"Tim Anderson's eventful day at the yard ends with shot at Joe West: 'Everybody knows he's terrible'" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"White Sox's Yoan Moncada hoping to continue strong finish" ... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune

"Jose Abreu's return to the White Sox doubtful this season" ... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune

"White Sox' Tim Anderson joins 20-20 club, calls umpire Joe West 'terrible'" ... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun Times

"Renteria looks at big picture, thinks big for White Sox" ... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun Times

"White Sox lose Crosstown Cup in unmemorable fashion" ... James Fegan, The Athletic

White Sox can't corral Cubs behind Giolito

By Max Gelman / MLB.com / September 22, 2018

CHICAGO -- The White Sox-Cubs rivalry can be fraught at times, with both fan bases expressing extreme passion. Given the unusual timing of the Crosstown Cup's second series of the year and the first Guaranteed Rate Field sellout of 2018, White Sox fans surely wanted to play spoiler after Friday's series-opening win.

Saturday night's contest didn't go as well for the South Siders, however. Although Lucas Giolito gave up a first-inning home run and the White Sox came back to tie, a misjudged fly ball by Ryan LaMarre in the fifth contributed to the loss. That non-error resulted in a game-changing Daniel Murphy RBI double and a three-run fifth, proving key in the 8-3 loss to the Cubs.

"I took two steps in, and then it just disappeared in the lights. When it came back out, it was high and still had some steam on it and I couldn't really recover," LaMarre said. "I take full responsibility for it, but just hope to learn from it and don't put yourself in that position."

"It's not the first time I've been pitching and an outfielder lost it in the lights," Giolito said. "When you lose a ball, you lose a ball. There's nothing you can really do."

Giolito, much like Reynaldo Lopez the night before, hit a bump in the first inning, serving up a two-run homer to Javier Baez and putting the White Sox in a hole before they came to bat. Baez attacked Giolito's first pitch, an 82.7-mph changeup that didn't sink, prompting "M-V-P" chants from the visiting fans and hefty counter-cheers from the Sox faithful.

Following that homer, Giolito breezed through the next several innings. The young right-hander retired 12 of the next 13 Cubs batters, sitting in the low 90s with his fastball and using his offspeed weapons to great effect. Giolito finished the night with 6 2/3 innings, registering 10 swinging strikes on his changeup and slider combined.

"I didn't think I had great stuff, I just though my sinker was moving a lot, and so we kind of realized that after the first inning, maybe the second inning, and we're just playing off of that," Giolito said. "A few of the base hits were kind of those running sinkers in on their hands, and they just kind of popped it over into the outfield. It is what it is."

After the Baez home run, the White Sox jumped on an opportunity to close the gap. Avisail Garcia drove in a run in the bottom of the first with an RBI single after a Baez throwing error allowed Yolmer Sanchez to advance to second, and Tim Anderson slugged his 20th home run to lead off the third inning.

Things went south for the White Sox in the fifth. After Kyle Schwarber and David Bote recorded consecutive one-out singles, Murphy poked his fateful line drive to left field. LaMarre took a couple steps in, froze and the ball sailed over his head and rolled to the wall to score Schwarber. Ben Zobrist followed with two-run single up the middle, putting the White Sox behind for good.

Giolito said the only pitch he would've taken back from Saturday's outing was that single to Zobrist, when Giolito said he hung a curveball ahead in the count.

"That's just a situation, learning experience for me," he said. "If things aren't going the way you want it to behind you, you kind of bear down and take the weight, and I didn't do that there and it kind of ended up costing us the game."

"This is a day when I think numbers aren't as accurate as they might seem," manager Rick Renteria said. "I thought Gio was navigating that [fifth] inning. And in spite of all that, he still kept working and did a nice job, got us through the [6 2/3] innings of work. And you're right. The line looks a little worse than it probably should have been."

The White Sox chipped away at the lead in the sixth inning on Matt Davidson's two-out RBI single, but they couldn't bring home another run. The Cubs tacked on three insurance runs in the ninth to put the game out of reach.

SOUND SMART

Anderson became the first shortstop in White Sox history to record 20 home runs and 20 stolen bases in a season. More >>

MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

Anderson was ejected for the second time this season, after a replay review in the ninth inning of a Baez slide at second base on a fielder's choice. The White Sox challenged that Baez had attempted to interfere with a potential double play by reaching out to grab Anderson's legs, but the call was confirmed. Anderson appeared to ask second-base umpire Joe West for an explanation, and the conversation ultimately escalated to an ejection, which drew Renteria out of the dugout and led to his ejection.

UP NEXT

The White Sox wrap up the Crosstown Cup on Sunday at 1:10 p.m. CT, sending Carlos Rodon (6-6, 3.22 ERA) to the mound. Rodon has followed up a successful August with a string of lackluster September starts, carrying a 5.25 ERA in 24 innings this month. Kyle Hendricks (12-11, 3.58) goes for the Cubs.

Anderson 1st Sox SS to record 20-20 season

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / September 22, 2018

CHICAGO -- Tim Anderson became the first shortstop in White Sox history to produce 20 home runs and 20 stolen bases in the same season with his solo blast off Jon Lester leading off the third inning of Saturday's 8-3 loss to the Cubs.

But the White Sox shortstop was not around to see the end of the South Siders' first sellout this season, played before a crowd of 39,724. Anderson was ejected by second-base umpire Joe West after an

Anthony Rizzo fielder's choice grounder led to an insurance run due to Anderson's throwing error on the back end of the play in the top of the ninth.

Replays show Javier Baez, who had just picked up his 110th RBI with a single to left, moved his right hand out into Anderson's path as he was sliding into second although he didn't appear to make contact. White Sox manager Rick Renteria challenged the outcome, but even after replay confirmed the call of no interference, the disagreement between Anderson and West continued into the Kris Bryant at-bat.

Anderson was ejected for the second time this season and third in his career. Renteria also was ejected by West, marking his sixth this season and the 19th of his career.

"I didn't say much, and he threw me out," Anderson said of West. "It's OK. I asked him a question and he kind of got [angry] at me. I asked him if he saw [Baez] reach for my leg in the replay. He asked me if I was going to argue that and I said, 'No, I was just asking a question.' And after that I didn't say anything else. He started barking at me. Kept staring me down. I gave him [the] 'Why you keep looking at me?' Did that twice and threw me out."

The home run by Anderson was his 10th at home this season and tied the game at 2. He has 26 stolen bases, which represents a career high along with the 20 home runs, as does his 63 RBIs. No White Sox player has ever produced a 30-30 season, with Magglio Ordonez's 31 homers and 25 stolen bases in 2001 coming the closest.

That drive marked Anderson's first extra-base hit and first RBI lifetime against the Cubs.

"It means a lot. It's a very special moment for me," said Anderson of 20-20. "I'm just glad my family was here to enjoy it and see it. It's a great accomplishment. I'm honored and blessed to be able to do that.

"I've been able to take my game to another level. I just have to continue to grow and just keep learning and keep working hard."

In My Words: Reinsdorf on Hawk

By Jerry Reinsdorf / MLB.com / September 22, 2018

When you get older, you're always amazed about how fast time seems to go. How things that happened years and years ago seem like yesterday. It truly seems like yesterday that I first met Ken Harrelson.

I remember so vividly when Harry Caray left, and we were looking for a whole new TV crew after the 1981 season. We narrowed it down to Don Drysdale and Hawk. We figured we only could afford one of them. Eddie Einhorn and I couldn't decide, so we stuck our necks out and hired both of them.

What I remember from meeting Hawk for the first time is that he wasn't at all like his public image. Going in, my only impression of him was of the Nehru jackets he wore as a player. I quickly realized this was a very serious guy who wanted to do a good broadcast. He was articulate, and it was obvious that he had a little bit of a flair -- which we thought would make him interesting.

Don and Hawk really got along on the air and off. They shared a lot of the same opinions. One guy was a pitcher and the other was a position player. I liked that they complemented each other.

In 1986, we made Hawk the general manager. During the course of the 1984-85 seasons, we had a lot of conversations. After having won the division in 1983, we weren't able to compete. We found our farm system was very, very weak. Drysdale and Hawk would point out to us all the things that were wrong with the system. Remember, Eddie and I were relatively new as owners. It takes you five, six years to learn this business. It was obvious what they were telling us was right, but it was a mistake to make Hawk the GM. There's an analogy I like to use. If you go to your intern, and he says you need heart surgery, you don't let him perform the surgery. You want a heart surgeon. With Ken, I made the mistake of letting the guy who diagnosed our problems try to solve them. From the standpoint of talent evaluation, he was

good. He's always been good. However, he just didn't have the experience of running an organization. A general manager has to do a lot more than make trades. In retrospect, it was unfair to put him in that job.

After that season, Hawk went to New York to broadcast for the Yankees for a couple of years. Then, he contacted me and said he wanted to come back.

I didn't like homerism in the booth when I got here in 1981. With the announcers I listened to growing up - Red Barber, Mel Allen -- you knew they wanted your team to win, but they never said, "C'mon, let's get a hit." When Drysdale and Harrelson first came here, I asked them not to be homers. And that went over like a lead balloon. So when Hawk came back, we turned him loose. That's what the market wanted.

What stands out for me is the passion in how Hawk calls a game. How hard he roots. How into the game he is. He is the ultimate fan. Hawk definitely takes losses hard. Before a game, he'll often come into my office. A lot of times, he's still living last night's game.

Hawk also knows how the game is played. I always wanted announcers to be able to teach the game. Hawk teaches you the game. Steve Stone teaches you the game. I grew up with Red Barber and Mel Allen, and they taught you the game. I got to Chicago, and there weren't any announcers who taught you the game. Harry wasn't a teacher. Hawk is great at teaching you the nuances of the game.

A lot of Hawk's phrases just kind of evolved. "Put it on the board" comes from golf. "Yes" is something that came out spontaneously the first time. I don't think he ever set out to have these phrases. Remember, Hawk is a Southern guy from Savannah, Ga.

There really are two sides to him. I don't think it is a secret. In the public, there's Hawk. In private, he's Ken. When entertainers are on, they become different people.

When he comes into my office, it's always Ken. He doesn't talk with Hawkisms. We talk about the game. We talk about family. He's just an ordinary guy. He's got family joys. He's got family problems. No matter who you are, famous or not, everyone has the same joys and the same problems.

In life, you only have a few really good friends. All Hawk wants from me is what he thinks would be good for me. There's no agenda. He only wants what would be in my best interests. I know he never would betray me, and he knows I never would betray him.

I can't imagine why Hawk hasn't won the Ford Frick Award (an honor presented annually for excellence in baseball broadcasting by the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum). It doesn't make any sense. Not to take anything away from the guys who have won the award, but nobody has made an impression on the public the way Hawk has. He deserves the award.

I probably won't believe Sunday will be Hawk's last telecast. It's going to take a while to sink in. There are certain things in life, when they occur, it doesn't seem possible. When Franklin Roosevelt died -- I was 9 years old -- it didn't seem possible that he wouldn't be the president anymore. You think someone like Hawk is going to be around forever, but it doesn't work that way.

I don't know how he is going to keep it together for the last broadcast. There's going to be a lot of tears. But he's still going to be around. He's going to be associated with the White Sox in an ambassador role.

The Hawk may be going away, but Ken's not going away.

Moncada, Renteria not focused on strikeouts

By Scott Merkin/MLB.com/September 22,2018

CHICAGO -- Say the phrase "single-season strikeout record" to White Sox second baseman Yoan Moncada and manager Rick Renteria, and neither individual has much of a reaction.

At a Major League high of 207 entering Saturday night's game against the Cubs, Moncada is unlikely to surpass Mark Reynolds' MLB record of 223 set in 2009 with Arizona, or the White Sox record held by Adam Dunn with 222 in 2012. But even if he gets close, Moncada sticks to his season-long view of it being part of the learning process.

View Full Game Coverage

"I never thought about that," said Moncada through interpreter Billy Russo. "I just tried to play my game, enjoy the game, do the things I can do to help us win games. I don't like to strike out, but I never thought about that record."

"The only talk about it is when you guys ask me about it. I don't talk to him about it," Renteria said. "I talk to him more about his approaches. [White Sox hitting coach Todd Steverson] talks to him about his approaches, how he's attacking a particular pitcher and what he's going to do and then reinforce when he does have good at-bats, even though the outcome might not be a good outcome."

Those outcomes have been quite positive since Moncada reached a low mark, average-wise, of .217 on Aug. 23. He had a .320 average and .815 OPS over the next 25 games, including seven doubles, one triple, one home run and 14 RBIs.

Moncada has made an adjustment by elevating his hands in the approach leading in part to his improved results but credits continued hard work at the core of the change. The 23-year-old recently said the 2018 season was a good one for him regardless of the numbers because his first full year became a true learning experience.

This strong finish still gives Moncada a good feeling going into the offseason.

"Yes, I think so," Moncada said. "If I keep applying the things I learn every day I can improve, and I can be a very good player. I'm pretty confident I can be that baseball player that everybody thought I can be, and the great baseball player I know I can be."

Abreu still out of action

Jose Abreu continues to heal from an infection in his right thigh caused by an ingrown hair. Renteria said there's a chance Abreu could return before next Sunday's last home game, but there's also a chance Abreu won't play again this season as he works through the lingering pain.

"He's got a pretty significant healing process he's got going on with that thigh right now," Renteria said. "He's here and you'll see him around. We're trying to keep him limited to what he's doing and let that thing heal. But we'll see how it goes the next few days. I know we've only got a few more days left."

Thrill of the rivalry

With crowds surpassing 30,000 expected all weekend, the thrill of the Cubs/White Sox rivalry continues to filter down to the participants involved in the games.

"That was the closest thing you can get from a regular-season game to a World Series game," Moncada said of Friday's 10-4 victory over the Cubs. "It was a real nice feeling. I could feel it."

"I know that the feelings run strong on either side. I've learned that from both sides. I have a particular perspective on that," said Renteria, who also has managed the Cubs. "But it's a good thing. It brings out the fan in everybody. I think the competitive juices from every fan, the South and the North, are here."

The games coming in the second-to-last weekend of the season also allows a rebuilding White Sox team playing better baseball over the last two months to serve as a spoiler for a Cubs team trying to solidify its playoff spot.

"I enjoy it, I know the guys have a lot of fun with it because the fans are out, they're cheering, booing, whatever the case may be," Renteria said. "But they're out here supporting their team and it's nice to have them."

Leury returns

Outfielder Leury Garcia was reinstated from the 10-day disabled list after being placed there on Aug. 21 with a strained left hamstring. The active roster increased to 33.

Yoan Moncada's late-season surge reminding quick-to-react fans that calling him a 'bust' is a horrible idea

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / September 22, 2018

Yes, Yoan Moncada leads baseball with 207 strikeouts. Yes, Yoan Moncada ranks fourth in baseball with 19 fielding errors. Yes, in no way did Yoan Moncada live up to the ridiculously high expectations that came with his first full season in the major leagues.

But in no way is Yoan Moncada a "bust."

Quick-to-react White Sox fans across the social-media landscape have voiced their frustration with what has undoubtedly been a disappointing campaign for the guy who just last year was the top-ranked prospect in the game. Some have taken to making outrageous declarations on the 23-year-old's career, dubbing him a "bust" of a prospect. A number of frustrated Twitter-using fans have used the terribly uncreative "Bustcada" nickname.

But Moncada, whose prospect ranking and rather visible tool set have made him a focal point of the White Sox rebuilding effort, is giving those quick-trigger fans reason to rethink their statements here in the final stretch of the 2018 season.

In his last 25 games entering the second of three against the Crosstown-rival Cubs on Saturday, Moncada slashed .320/.371/.443 with nine extra-base hits including seven doubles, 14 RBIs, 12 runs scored and eight walks. That includes a trio of three-hit performances in a week's time.

The numbers at season's end will still be below those sky-high preseason expectations, but these last few weeks have shown why the White Sox, despite all those strikeouts, still have sky-high hopes for Moncada's long-term success.

"This is my first whole year in the majors. I learned a lot," Moncada said through a team translator Saturday. "I think if I keep applying the things I learn every day I can improve and I can be a very good player. I'm pretty confident I can be that baseball player that everybody thought I can be, and the great baseball player I know I can be."

The most surprising improvement of all, perhaps, has been Moncada having success batting right-handed. The season-long numbers against left-handers are not good: a .213/.289/.305 slash line with two homers and 10 RBIs. But in that last-25-game span, 11 of his 31 hits have been against lefties, with a .379 batting average against southpaws.

"In reality, I've been feeling really comfortable hitting from the right side," Moncada said. "Just having more repetitions, facing more lefties, getting better results, has helped. I feel very, very comfortable from that side. I'm just trying to work every day. I credit that success the last couple of weeks to work I've done all season. When you work harder, sooner or later, the results are going to be there. I think that's the big key."

Of course, the No. 1 reason no one should be giving up on Moncada's ability to turn into a star is time.

Moncada is just 23, and like many of the White Sox young major leaguers, he's still developing, not yet a finished product. The lack of results during much of this, again, first full season in the majors can be

chalked up as to-be-expected growing pains. We've seen the same kinds of things from Lucas Giolito, Reynaldo Lopez and Tim Anderson, and those three have shown their own flashes of brilliance as they work toward reaching the level the White Sox envision they can.

And while some Twitter-using fans have found a way to heap pressure on the young Moncada from the outside, the truth is that there's no rush for any of these youngsters to start playing at an All-Star level. The team's ongoing rebuild allows them all the time they need to develop at both the major league and minor league level.

After all, in three years, what will it matter that Moncada struck out a lot or didn't hit as many home runs as anticipated in a losing season that was expected to be a losing season? It's what he does when the team shifts from rebuilding mode to contention mode that will matter.

The White Sox and Moncada have the blessing of time as they develop into what they hope to be in the future.

"He's still young," manager Rick Renteria said. "He's still learning how to play the game. He's still becoming a baseball player."

With the better results at the plate over the last month, Moncada's strikeout rate has also declined, meaning the most glaring negative aspect of his season is unlikely to reach an all-time level of negativity. Moncada entered the White Sox last nine games of the year with 207 strikeouts, 16 away from matching baseball's single-season record of 223 (and 15 away from the franchise single-season record of 222, set by Adam Dunn in 2012).

There was a time this season when striking out 16 times in nine games was a very real possibility. But Moncada struck out 28 times during the 25-game stretch discussed throughout this writing, putting him on pace for about 10 or 11 the remainder of the season.

"I never thought about that," Moncada said. "I just tried to play my game, enjoy the game, do the things I can do to help us win games. I don't like to strike out but I never thought about that record."

Fans and observers alike will surely latch on to Moncada's strikeouts this offseason, and this isn't to say they're nothing to worry about at all: He's probably going to have one of the top-five highest single-season strikeout totals in baseball history.

But the way he's finishing this season — and if you look around, many young White Sox players are finishing their seasons in similarly positive fashions — is a great sign that development is happening, that the waiting game is paying off, even if it's in small doses, for those who have exhibited the necessary patience during this rebuilding process.

Tim Anderson's eventful day at the yard ends with shot at Joe West: 'Everybody knows he's terrible'

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / September 22, 2018

Talk about an eventful night at the ol' ballpark for Tim Anderson.

It looked like it was going to be a day worth celebrating for Anderson, whose developmental progress reached a milestone during the third inning of Saturday's Crosstown matchup with the Cubs. He hit his 20th home run of the season, becoming the first White Sox shortstop ever to have a season with at least 20 homers and at least 20 stolen bases.

A heck of a feat, one that should stand out when White Sox fans and observers spend the offseason discussing whether or not Anderson truly is this franchise's shortstop of the future.

But the ump show came and overshadowed all that.

The Cubs were in the process of extending their lead in the ninth inning, putting things out of reach, when the White Sox attempted a double play on an Anthony Rizzo groundball. Anderson got the force out at second base and attempted the turn in the presence of a sliding Javy Baez. His throw went nowhere near first base, going down as an error that allowed another run to score.

After the play was over, Rick Renteria challenged, spurring a review to see if Baez violated the rules by reaching his arm out in an attempt to impede Anderson from making the play. The review determined Baez did not do that. Anderson disagreed, and a conversation with famed umpire Joe West followed.

"I asked him a question, and he kind of got pissed at me," Anderson said of his interaction with West. "I asked him if he saw him reach for my leg in the replay. He asked me if I was going to argue that, and I said, 'No, I was just asking a question.' And after that I didn't say anything else. He started barking at me. Kept staring me down. I gave him, 'Why you keep looking at me?' Did that twice and threw me out."

Anderson was ejected, and he was visibly livid on the field, screaming at West in the immediate aftermath of the ejection. Renteria came out after Anderson started making his way toward the dugout, still yelling, and was ejected, as well.

Now, White Sox fans are no stranger to West, who famously — or infamously, if you're a White Sox supporter — called a couple of balks on Mark Buehrle and ejected both Buehrle and Ozzie Guillen in a 2010 game against the Cleveland Indians, sending announcer Hawk Harrelson into an on-air rant against West: "He's becoming a joke to the umpiring profession."

But the White Sox are far from the only team to have their run-ins with West. Anderson was obviously familiar with West's reputation, taking a shot after the game.

"I don't have much to say about him. Everybody knows he's terrible," Anderson said. "But I didn't say much and he threw me out. It's OK."

Additionally, Anderson was adamant that Baez did indeed move his hand in violation of the sliding rules at second base — and added the review officials in New York to his criticism list.

"Yeah, definitely. You could see it in the replay," Anderson said. "That's just one of the many that they missed in New York, I guess."

And so an eventful night for Anderson.

His criticisms of the officials will undoubtedly overshadow his joining the 20-homer club and standing alone in the White Sox 20-20 club. But those are just further examples on Anderson's growth as a player this season.

Yes, the error he made on that play was his 19th of the season, putting him among the league leaders in that category after he led baseball with 28 fielding errors last season. But he now has career highs in home runs, RBIs, stolen bases, doubles and walks. And his fielding has been noticeably improved over the last month or so, a result of the work he's put in with Joe McEwing.

This weekend, Anderson generated headlines with an argument with an umpire. This winter, he'll be generating discussion by what he's done on the field. And the latter has been impressive.

"I've been able to take my game to another level," he said. "I just have to continue to grow and just keep learning and keep working hard."

White Sox's Yoan Moncada hoping to continue strong finish

By Phil Rogers/ Chicago Tribune / September 22, 2018

Moncada hasn't played in a World Series but he believes he knows what it will feel like when he does.

It will be something like this weekend's White Sox series against the Cubs at Guaranteed Rate Field, with a chill in the air and stands packed with frenzied fans.

"I think this is the closest thing you can get to a World Series game from a regular-season game," Moncada said Saturday. "It's a real nice feeling. I can feel it."

Optimism is one of Moncada's great traits. The 23-year-old Cuban is a strong believer in what he and the Sox are doing, and a strong finish to his first full season in the major leagues is rewarding his faith.

Moncada was hitless in Saturday's 8-3 loss to the Cubs after going 3-for-4 in the Sox's victory Friday. He has nine hits in his last 21 at-bats and is hitting .310 in his last 26 games. He's looking exactly like the guy whom the Sox expected to get from the Red Sox in the Chris Sale trade.

"I credit that success the last couple of weeks to work I've done all season," Moncada said through Sox interpreter Billy Russo. "When you work harder, sooner or later, the results are going to be there. That's the big key."

Moncada is far from a complete package, of course.

"As you know, I'm always looking for more ways for him to improve," countryman Jose Abreu said. "He has plenty of room to improve and get better, to develop."

Moncada leads the majors with 207 strikeouts, on pace for 219, only four short of Mark Reynolds' major-league record. His OPS is down from .750 a year ago, which looked like the starting point for a great career.

Moncada went through a horrible stretch in the middle of the season. He hit .197 with 118 strikeouts in a 76-game stretch from May 27 through Aug. 23 before a mechanical adjustment that hitting coach Todd Steverson suggested clicked for him.

Moncada is holding his hands higher, which Steverson believes puts his swing on a better plane.

"That's a part of the solution," manager Rick Renteria said. "The rest of it continues to be approach and understanding the opposition and staying within yourself."

Renteria never stopped writing Moncada's name on the lineup card when he was struggling. It was easier to keep playing Moncada, he has said, because the second baseman never seemed to get down on himself.

"This is my first whole year in the majors," Moncada said. "I learned a lot. I think if I keep applying the things I learn every day I can improve and I can be a very good player. I'm pretty confident I can be that baseball player that everybody thought I can be, and the great baseball player I know I can be."

Jose Abreu's return to the White Sox doubtful this season

By Phil Rogers/ Chicago Tribune / September 21, 2018

Jose Abreu could miss the rest of the season as he battles to recover from an infection in his right thigh.

Manager Rick Renteria confirmed Saturday that Abreu has not healed enough to be cleared to play. It's possible he could get back, Renteria said, but with only four home games left it may be more likely he will be shut down for the season.

"He continues to heal, (is) still sore, still being treated," Renteria said Saturday. "He has a pretty significant healing process he has going on with that thigh right now. He's here and you'll see him around. We're trying to keep him limited to what he's doing and let that thing heal. But we'll see how it goes the next few days."

Abreu was elected to be the American League's starting first baseman in the All-Star Game despite a down season, hitting .265 with 22 home runs and 78 RBIs. He has played in only six games since Aug. 21, when he underwent a testicular procedure.

Abreu is under Sox control for his age-32 year but can be a free agent after next season. He's hopeful the Sox will extend his contract but general manager Rick Hahn has been noncommittal.

Extra innings: The White Sox activated Leury Garcia, who had been on the disabled list since Aug. 21 with a strained left hamstring. ... Sister Mary Jo Sobieck of Marian Catholic, whose appearance went viral after she threw the ceremonial first pitch Aug. 18, was back for another first toss Saturday night. ... Tim Anderson's home run third inning made him the fifth 20/20 player in Sox history, joining Alex Rios (2010, 2012), Ray Durham (2001), Magglio Ordonez (2001) and Tommie Agee (1966). ... The Indians' Corey Kluber will be going for his 20th victory Monday night at Guaranteed Rate Field.

White Sox' Tim Anderson joins 20-20 club, calls umpire Joe West 'terrible'

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun Times / September 22, 2018

It was a good-times, bad-times kind of Saturday night for Tim Anderson, who with his home run against Jon Lester in an 8-3 loss to the Cubs became the only White Sox shortstop to hit 20 homers and steal 20 bases in a season.

"It means a lot," Anderson said. "It's a very special moment for me. I'm just glad my family was here to enjoy it and see it."

Anderson, upset that a sliding Javy Baez was not ruled out at second base for reaching toward his leg on a double-play attempt that resulted in a throwing error — the play was unsuccessfully challenged for interference by manager Rick Renteria — also was ejected in the ninth inning by second-base umpire Joe West.

Renteria also was tossed.

Tim Anderson of the White Sox watches his home run against the Cubs during the third inning on September 22, 2018 at Guaranteed Rate Field in Chicago, Illinois. (Photo by David Banks/Getty Images)

"I don't have much to say about him; everybody knows he's terrible," said Anderson, who was ejected for the second time this season. "But I didn't say much, and he threw me out. It's OK."

Anderson was visibly upset, waving his arms after his verbal encounter with West, and had to be pushed away by Renteria.

"I asked [West] a question, and he kind of got [angry] at me," Anderson said. "I asked him if he saw him reach for my leg in the replay. He asked me if I was going to argue that, and I said, 'No, I was just asking a question.' And after that, I didn't say anything else. He started barking at me. Kept staring me down. I gave him, 'Why do you keep looking at me?' Did that twice and threw me out."

Anderson is four stolen bases shy of joining outfielders Alex Rios in 2010 and Tommie Agee in 1966 as the only Sox to have 20 homers and 30 stolen bases in a season.

The Sox have never had a 30-30 player. Magglio Ordonez with 31 homers and 25 stolen bases in 2001 came the closest.

Giolito goes deep

Right-hander Lucas Giolito was pretty good after allowing a two-run homer to Baez in the first. He finished with five runs allowed in 6²/₃ innings but deserved better, getting stung by left fielder Ryan LaMarre's misplay on Daniel Murphy's liner that was scored a double. It was the key blow in a three-run inning that broke a 2-2 tie.

"It was a misread and a mistake, and I feel terrible," LaMarre said.

Rodon's got next

Carlos Rodon (6-6, 3.22 ERA), who would rank third in the American League in opponents' batting average (.197) and eighth in ERA with the required innings pitched, was eager for his start Sunday as soon as his last one — four earned runs in seven innings against the Indians — ended.

"Two things," Rodon said. "We play the Cubs. And something clicked on those last three changeups I threw to [Jose] Ramirez. I want to build off that.

"I wasn't happy about that start, but as far as the season goes, coming back from shoulder surgery, I'm happy with the innings I've eaten."

This and that

Renteria isn't sure if Jose Abreu, who is being treated for an infection in his right thigh, will play before the season ends next Sunday.

† Outfielder Leury Garcia (strained left hamstring) came off the disabled list.

† Sunday's series finale will be the last game for broadcaster Ken Harrelson, who is working the entire series.

† The crowd of 39,724 was the first sellout of the season at Guaranteed Rate Field.

Renteria looks at big picture, thinks big for White Sox

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun Times / September 22, 2018

As Rick Renteria gets close to winding up his second season as the White Sox' manager, another with 95 losses — or more — quite likely, he envisions the day when these days are long forgotten, when the rebuild will have come together.

"Do I think about what it's going to feel like to win 100 games? Yes, I do," Renteria said. "But you also have to think about winning as many as you can to get into the postseason and make a postseason run."

Talk about thinking big.

"Maybe for most people it's laughable [to think that way]; they say, 'Come on, you're full of b.s.,'" Renteria said before a game against the Indians in Cleveland last week. "But that's OK. The only ones who have to believe is us. We have to stick together believing in us. If there is a fray or doubt, eliminate the doubt."

Rick Renteria looks on in the third inning while the White Sox play the Detroit Tigers at Comerica Park on August 15, 2018 in Detroit, Michigan. (Photo by Gregory Shamus/Getty Images)

A second consecutive season approaching 100 losses has allowed some doubt to creep in, though, even with a farm system ranked fourth in baseball by MLB Pipeline. For the key building blocks on the major-league roster — shortstop Tim Anderson's improving defense and Yoan Moncada's good finish at the plate notwithstanding — a little more was probably expected. On the pitching side, Carlos Rodon, Reynaldo Lopez and Jace Fry are three thumbs up with Lucas Giolito a mixed bag. And the injury to Michael Kopech, their top pitching prospect who had Tommy John surgery that will force him to miss all of next season, was a huge blow.

"He's a big part of what we are in the future and what's going to be in the present," Renteria said. "It's going to hurt a little. We're going to have to make an adjustment in the organization and fill a void."

From a performance standpoint, Renteria said he gives his team "a C-minus or D." For effort, they get A's.

And if and when he is managing when the team is ready to win, effort will still be in demand, which means players run everything out or take a seat.

"You're still going to have to bust your butt," Renteria said. "You're going to hustle. You don't win without doing those things. I don't think you can [change]."

"Forcing a guy into an error because you're taking a hard turn at first or driving in a run by using the proper side of the field, that's just good baseball. That's not just me."

"Look at all the clubs who've won in the last five years — Giants, Royals, Indians, Cubs — every single one has done something that is consistent: They've all pushed the envelope on the bases, run the bases a certain way, used the proper side of the field when needed, played the little game. All of them won with pitching and defense."

Renteria has one more year left on his contract, but all signs point to him being around past next year.

"Am I hopeful I'll be around?" he said. "Yes, I am. But I can only control what I can control — what is going on in here."

With prized outfield prospect Eloy Jimenez adding pop to his lineup and perhaps a capable free-agent pitcher or two added to the mix for next year (we might know more of what general manager Rick Hahn has planned when he talks next week), the Sox should open 2019 with a more competitive roster.

But that 95- to 100-win dream is well down the road. Player development will be the theme — again — next year.

"Everybody says you have to learn how to win," Renteria said. "No kidding. That's a keen sense of the obvious. But it takes a lot of things to come together. You need not only players with talent but players who execute with that talent. And they all have to buy into a certain way of how to play the game. That's what we're trying to establish now."

White Sox lose Crosstown Cup in unmemorable fashion

By James Fegan / The Athletic / September 22, 2018

On this beat, and certainly this half of the season, I've tried to stick to writing about things that only matter to the future of the franchise. That means forgoing writing up a lot of games, and certainly forgoing writing

up a lot of losses, especially when the reason for the loss doesn't seem like it will be very memorable in 2020.

The sight of a beleaguered Cubs team posing for photos with a Crosstown Cup trophy that is slowly shedding its association to a deadly oil spill, on the White Sox's home field does sort of feel like a moment for reflection on the state of things. But I admittedly struggle to place an 8-3 loss that turned on Ryan LaMarre overrunning a Daniel Murphy liner to left in a disastrous three-run top of the fifth inning, and flew out of range when Rob Scahill and Jeanmar Gómez couldn't hold the line in the top of the ninth, into a large, more meaningful context.

Lucas Giolito went from almost certainly facing Ben Zobrist with runners on first and second and two outs, to a run in and two more runners in scoring position with one out. Allowing Zobrist to bounce a curveball up the middle and break the game open is admittedly on Giolito, but a final line of 6 2/3 IP, 7 H, 5 ER, 3 BB, 5 K, HR is more troubling than the on-field performance. If we were still holding out for signs of ace potential being realized from the former top pitching prospect in baseball, this would not be a compelling entry. But as far as showing he's still trending up toward being a serviceable member of the 2019 rotation, 13 swinging strikes on 108 pitches will do fine. He didn't throw particularly hard (94.5 mph was his max), but he did enough to set up an increasingly reliable changeup.

"When I go out there and I look up and I'm seeing 91-92 mph, it actually makes my sinker move more, just whatever way it's coming out," said Giolito, who relied primarily on his two-seam fastball. "It's not the first time I've been pitching and an outfielder lost it in the lights. When you lose a ball, you lose a ball. There's nothing you can really do. The one pitch, if I could take one pitch back from the outing, it wouldn't be the (Javy) Báez home run, it would actually be the curveball I threw to Zobrist after that happened that scored the runs. I think I had him 0-2 or 1-2 and I ended up hanging it and got the base hit up the middle."

LaMarre was halfway out of the locker room when he was asked to detail how a split-second mistake contributed to the team's 93rd loss of the season. He calmly placed his bag down and even explained that rather than a pure case of losing the ball in the lights that his teammates made it sound like, he had made the mistake of coming too far in that was merely compounded when he lost track of Murphy's liner, and burned away all his time to recover from his error. Even being the consummate professional who has hit surprisingly well over a scattered 31 games of playing time, as a 30-year-old reserve outfielder, LaMarre could play spotless baseball down the stretch and find himself on the outs in the offseason. And given that the White Sox happened to place a laser focus on the quality of their left field defense by holding Eloy Jiménez down for it, it's fair to ask if he should be on the sidelines already anyway. Or maybe just in center field; right-lefty matchups are important after all.

The White Sox leadership would offer that the home field of Gigantes del Cibao in the Dominican Republic, or the back fields at Camelback Ranch, are more ideal spots to work Jiménez's defense up to par than in front of the 39,000-plus jeering and often brawling fans Saturday night. And it's less that everyone on the current big league roster is unimpeachable in their performance as trying to avoid preventable hiccups in Jiménez's acclimation to the majors. But as Scahill floundered in the ninth and Gómez labored to clean it up for him — as Ryan Burr closes in on a week since his last appearance and Thyago Viera reaches two — the by-product was the Sox's only sellout crowd of the season watching a game that was more about biding time until next year or 2020 than anything else.

Tim Anderson, one of the few core pieces fans have gotten to watch on a daily basis during these lean years, and as such, a testament to trusting players to work through their worst moments in the majors, fittingly provided most of what catharsis there was to be had. He ripped a Jon Lester cutter on his hands down the left-field line in the third inning to seal the first 20-home run, 20-stolen base season from a White Sox shortstop in franchise history, and he raged at baseball's universal object of scorn, Joe West, after he was ejected for arguing with the crew chief that Báez had tried to break up a double play in the ninth by sticking his hand out to impede Anderson's leg. In truth, his best moment might have come after the game was over.

“Everybody knows he’s terrible,” Anderson said with a smirk. “I asked him a question and he kind of got pissed at me. I asked him if he saw him reach for my leg in the replay. He asked me if I was going to argue that and I said, ‘No, I was just asking a question.’ And after that I didn’t say anything else. He started barking at me. Kept staring me down. I gave him, ‘Why you keep looking at me?’ Did that twice and threw me out.”

Hawk Harrelson didn’t even provide the fans with a final burst of rage at West for old times’ sake, since the two are friends now, and he didn’t get his win that he asked Giolito and Carlos Rodón to provide for his send-off, putting it all on Rodón for Sunday. Nobody got much out of this loss — Anderson may yet get some “20/20” jewelry from ownership — other than the knowledge that it’s over and thus more meaningful games are a day closer.

“My bad, Hawk,” Giolito said as Harrelson passed through the locker room for the second-to-last time. It’s OK, though. We won’t remember this one for too much longer.