



Press Clips

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FROM THE OC REGISTER**Shohei Ohtani takes his show on the road, with 2 homers to spark Angels' victory**

By Jeff Fletcher

CLEVELAND — Shohei Ohtani started strong on Friday night, and got better from there.

Ohtani had the best game of his major league career – his hitting career, anyway – to spark the Angels to a 7-4 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Friday night.

He hit two homers – one to left field and a monster shot to right – and he started the winning rally with a hit against a left-handed pitcher among his four hits. He also stole a base.

“That’s what Shohei can do,” Manager Mike Scioscia said. “He was dynamic in a lot of areas, running the bases and obviously driving the ball. That’s a great game.”

In order to snap their four-game losing streak, and a 10-game losing streak in Cleveland, the Angels needed plenty of strong performances, especially playing the game without injured Mike Trout.

Jaime Barría gritted through five innings, and four Angels relievers held the powerful Cleveland lineup to one run.

With the score tied 3-3 in the eighth, David Fletcher fought off a two-out, two-strike pitch for a go-ahead double. José Briceño beat out a dribbler for an infield hit to add a run, and then Eric Young Jr. added a two-run double to silence the crowd and put the Angels up by four.

But Ohtani started it all.

The first nine homers of his big league career had all been at home. That streak came to an end in his first at-bat on Friday, when he punched a line drive over the 19-foot-high fence in left field, for a two-run homer.

“It’s tough to get it out of that part of the park,” Scioscia said. “He hit it like a right-handed pull hitter.”

That homer also made him the first player in major league history to hit 10 homers and have 50 strikeouts as a pitcher.

In the third inning, Ohtani did it again, this time blasting a 443-foot shot into right-center, which tied the score 3-3.

“Our jaw dropped on that one,” Scioscia said. “That’s one of the longest we’ve seen here.”

Ohtani’s first multi-homer game came amid a bit of a slump. He had three hits in his previous 25 at-bats, with 10 strikeouts. Ohtani had also been carrying a .170 average against lefties.

When Ohtani was due in the eighth inning, with the score still tied, the Indians summoned lefty Oliver Pérez. Ohtani poked a single into left.

Scioscia said Ohtani is still learning what it's like to face big-league lefties.

"To make adjustments, you have to see the beast, what left-handed pitching is in the major leagues," he said. "He'll make a quick study and attack left-handed pitching better."

Ohtani has always shrugged off any talk of righties and lefties: "I am having better at-bats against righties and lefties."

After his single, he stole second. The Angels then intentionally walked Albert Pujols. After a groundout, Fletcher came to the plate with runners at the corners and he fell behind 1-and-2. He fouled off a couple pitches, then he fought off a hard slider at the knees, dropping it just inside the right-field line, for a double.

Briceño and Young then padded the lead, giving a more comfortable margin for the Angels bullpen to finish off an impressive effort.

Barría had worked around constant trouble to get through five innings. He was bailed out of the fourth with a diving stop by Pujols. After Barría was done, José Álvarez, Justin Anderson, Cam Bedrosian and Blake Parker held the Indians to one hit – a Leonys Martín solo homer against Parker in the ninth – to secure the victory.

"A great pick-up game for us," Scioscia said. "We had a rough series (getting swept in Tampa Bay). We turned the page, playing a good team. We had to play well to beat them and we did."

Mike Trout misses 2nd straight Angels game with sore wrist, hopes to play Saturday

By Jeff Fletcher

CLEVELAND — A jammed right wrist kept Mike Trout out of the Angels lineup for a second straight day on Friday, but he is expecting to be back on Saturday.

"I'm pretty sure I'm going to be able to play tomorrow," the center fielder said before Friday's game. "It feels a lot better than yesterday."

Trout was hurt when his hand hit the ground on a feet-first slide into third on Wednesday against Tampa Bay. He was the designated hitter that night and remained in the game, but he said he felt some enough discomfort to keep him out of the lineup on Thursday.

Trout said he might be able to pinch-hit later in Friday's game. Thursday's game was the first one all season that he didn't play. He had been bothered by a sore finger in June, but he was still able to DH.

MOVING UP UPTON

Trout's absence left the Angels with a new look at the top of the lineup. Justin Upton was moved to the No. 2 spot, followed by Shohei Ohtani's debut in the No. 3 spot.

Manager Mike Scioscia said putting Upton in front of Ohtani was done mostly because he wanted to split up the left-handed hitting Kole Calhoun and Ohtani. The Indians have three left-handed relievers – Brad Hand, Andrew Miller and Oliver Pérez – and Scioscia didn't want to have his two best left-handed hitters hitting consecutively.

However, Scioscia allowed for the possibility that moving Upton to No. 2 might be something they consider going forward.

"That's not the reason (for this switch), but you know sometimes inspiration comes from necessity," Scioscia said. "We'll see."

Although he went hitless in five at-bats, with four strikeouts, on Friday, Upton is still hitting .328 over his last 18 games. He's had a season-long issue hitting with runners in scoring position, though, batting .184 in those situations.

SURGERY FOR YOUNG

Outfielder Chris Young, who has been on the disabled list for a month with a hamstring injury, was diagnosed with labral tears in both hips, requiring a pair of surgeries.

Young underwent the repair on his right hip on Friday, and the surgery on his left hip will be scheduled.

Young, 34, hit .168 with a .615 OPS in 56 games with the Angels.

ALSO

Ohtani is still playing catch at a distance of about 90 to 105 feet, Scioscia said. Ohtani could still be a couple weeks away from getting on a mound for a bullpen session. ...

With the National Sports Collectors Convention ongoing in Cleveland this weekend, a representative from Bowman trading came by the ballpark with a unique autographed Ohtani card that will be auctioned in September. The card is expected to sell for about \$100,000.

UP NEXT

Angels (RHP Felix Peña, 1-2, 5.23) at Indians (RHP Corey Kluber, 13-6, 2.79), Saturday, 4 p.m., Fox Sports 1, KLAA (830 AM)

FROM LOS ANGELES TIMES**Angels' Shohei Ohtani rocks Cleveland with two homers in 7-4 win**

By Mike DiGiovanna

Shohei Ohtani spent a chunk of Friday afternoon in the visiting clubhouse at Progressive Field playing Super Smash Bros., the Nintendo crossover fighting video game, with teammate David Fletcher.

The Angels slugger had so much fun he turned Friday night's 7-4 victory over the Cleveland Indians into his own personal video game, smashing two home runs, one of them a prodigious 443-foot blast, and sparking a tie-breaking, four-run eighth-inning rally with a single and a stolen base.

Ohtani's power and speed, along with some clutch hits by Fletcher, Jose Briceño and Eric Young Jr., and some solid pitching, gave the Angels their first win in Progressive Field in almost four years. The Angels had lost 10 straight games here, their last win coming on Sept. 8, 2014.

"That's what Shohei can do, that's his talent," manager Mike Scioscia said. "He was dynamic in a lot of areas — running the bases, driving the ball. That was a great pick-up game for us after a rough series."

The Angels had lost four straight, including a three-game sweep at Tampa Bay, and pitching for the Indians Friday night was Mike Clevinger, the long-haired, hard-throwing right-hander who had a 3-0 record and 2.95 ERA in four career starts against the team that drafted him and traded him to Cleveland in 2014.

The left-handed-hitting Ohtani found Clevinger's fastball to his liking. He drove a low-and-inside 96-mph offering over the 19-foot-high left-field wall for a two-run homer in the first inning, a 374-foot poke that was Ohtani's first road homer and first opposite-field homer of the season.

Then in the third inning, Ohtani, who had a career-high four hits, obliterated a 94-mph, full-count fastball, blasting his 443-foot shot with an exit velocity of 111 mph to deep right-center field to tie the score 3-3.

"You have to watch him, man," shortstop Andrelton Simmons said. "I've played against Giancarlo Stanton. I play with Mike Trout. I played with Evan Gattis.

"I've played with guys who can do some special stuff, and whenever they're hitting, you don't want to miss their at-bats because they can do something special. When he hit that ball to right field, it was loud and far."

Ohtani's second homer made jaws drop in the Angels dugout, and Scioscia said it was "one of the longest we've seen here." But the manager thought Ohtani's first homer was even more impressive because it's so tough for a left-handed hitter to home run to left field here.

"It's tough to get it out to that part of the park," Scioscia said. "It's almost like a Green Monster out there, but it's normal distance, it's not short like Fenway. You have to hit it hard to get it out of that part of the park, and he hit it like a right-handed pull hitter."

Angels starter Jaime Barria gave up two runs in the first three innings but blanked the Indians from the third through fifth innings. Clean innings by relievers Jose Alvarez (sixth) and Justin Anderson (seventh) kept the score tied.

With one out in the eighth, Ohtani, who entered with a .170 average (nine for 53) and 22 strikeouts against left-handers, fought off a 90-mph inside fastball from left-hander Oliver Perez and stroked a single to left.

Submarine-throwing right-hander Adam Cimber replaced Perez. Ohtani got a green light from third-base coach Super Smash Bros and stole second. Albert Pujols was intentionally walked. Simmons grounded into a fielder's choice.

Fletcher fell behind in the count but was able to slice a 1-and-2 slider down the right-field line for an RBI ground-rule double and a 4-3 lead.

"I guess the more pitches you see against a guy like that, the better," Fletcher said. "I got to see quite a bit of him, and he finally left one out over the plate."

Luis Valbuena was intentionally walked to load the bases. Briceño beat out a slow roller to third for an RBI infield single and a 5-3 lead. Young banged a two-run double off the right-center field wall to make it 7-3.

Ohtani's stolen base changed the complexion of the inning. With him at first, the Indians would have pitched to Pujols, who is good in the clutch and a double-play threat.

"Shohei being aggressive ... it set the table for a bigger inning, which we needed," Scioscia said.

Cam Bedrosian retired the side in order in the eighth. Blake Parker gave up a solo homer to Leonys Martin before closing out the ninth.

Angels outfielder Mike Trout confident he will return to lineup on Saturday

By Mike DiGiovanna

A sore right wrist kept Mike Trout out of the lineup for a second straight game, but the center fielder is confident he will return Saturday night against the Indians.

"It's a lot better than it was [on Thursday]," Trout said. "I'm pretty sure I can play [Saturday]."

Trout suffered the injury on an awkward feet-first slide into third base in the first inning of Wednesday night's 4-2 loss at Tampa Bay, jamming his right hand into the ground as he tried to avoid a tag on a stolen-base attempt by sliding to the inside of the bag.

An X-ray and MRI test revealed inflammation but no damaged bones or ligaments. Trout, who is batting .309 with a 1.083 on-base-plus-slugging percentage, 30 homers and 60 RBIs, received two days of treatment. He said he did not plan to pick up a bat or try to throw on Friday.

“He’s much better than he was [Thursday] but still not at a point where he can go out and start a game,” manager Mike Scioscia said. “We’ll see if he’s available later ... but we want to err on the side of caution. When he feels he can do things with no restrictions, we’ll get him in there.”

In Trout’s absence, Scioscia moved Justin Upton to the second spot for the first time this season. Upton has hit third 82 times and cleanup 25 times.

Scioscia said the reason for the switch was to break up the two left-handed hitters at the top of the order, leadoff man Kole Calhoun and No. 3 hitter Shohei Ohtani, to counter Cleveland’s three left-handed relievers, Brad Hand, Andrew Miller and Oliver Perez.

Miller, who was dominant during the Indians’ 2016 World Series run, was activated Friday after missing more than two months because of right-knee inflammation. Hand was acquired from the San Diego Padres on July 19.

Scioscia did not rule out the possibility of keeping Upton in the second spot when Trout returns. Entering Friday, Upton had hit .355 (22 for 62) with a 1.049 OPS, four home runs and 13 RBIs in 17 games since July 12, but before that stretch, he hit one homer in 20 games. He was hitting .186 (21 for 113) with runners in scoring position on the season.

“Sometimes inspiration comes from necessity, so we’ll see,” Scioscia said. “There’s no doubt he’s getting on base better, squaring balls up better. He’s having good at-bats, drawing walks. The only thing in the last month is he hasn’t hit the ball out of the park as much.”

Sho me the way

Ohtani has extended his long-toss program to about 105 feet but still appears several weeks away from returning from a Grade 2 sprain of his ulnar collateral ligament to pitch, an injury the right-hander suffered in early June.

“There have been no setbacks ... but we’ll get an idea of exactly how he’s feeling in a couple of weeks, when he gets out to 180-200 feet,” Scioscia said. “Then we’ll see when the next step might come.”

Ohtani, who hit a two-run home run in the first inning and a solo shot in the third Friday night, is also a focal point at the National Sports Collection Convention in Cleveland this weekend. On display is a unique autographed Ohtani rookie card, signed by the slugger, that is expected to fetch about \$100,000 at auction in September.

Short hops

Outfielder Chris Young, who was placed on the DL because of a left-hamstring strain on July 4, was diagnosed with labrum tears in both hips. He underwent surgery to address his right hip on Friday and will have surgery on his left hip at a later date. Young hit .168 with a .615 OPS, six homers and 13 RBIs in

56 games with the Angels. ... With his next walk, Trout will reach 100 walks, 25 homers and 20 stolen bases for the third time in his career (2013, 2016). Toby Harrah (1977) and Carl Yastrzemski (1970) are the only other American League players to accomplish the feat.

FROM ANGELS.COM

Ohtani's career night (4 hits, 2 HRs) sparks win

DH goes deep for first two times on road in first multihomer game; scores game-winning run after stealing second

By Casey Harrison

CLEVELAND -- Shohei Ohtani has had a lot of success against the Indians, and he continued that remarkable trend with a career night in the Angels' 7-4 win over the Tribe at Progressive Field on Friday night.

The two-way standout finished a career-best 4-for-5 with two home runs and three RBIs. He also delivered a key one-out single in the eighth inning, which opened the door for a four-run rally to lead the Halos (55-56) over the American League Central-leading Indians (59-49), ending the Angels' four-game losing streak and a 10-game skid against the Tribe in Cleveland.

"That's what Shohei can do, that's his talent," manager Mike Scioscia said. "It's a great pickup game for us. We had a rough series [against the Rays], but we're turning the page against a good team. We had to play well to beat them, and we did."

Ohtani entered the contest slashing .294/.364/.595 against right-handed pitching, compared to .170/.254/.245 vs. lefties. He was sidelined with a UCL sprain in his right elbow earlier this season, which landed him on the disabled list from June 8-July 3.

Ohtani delivered the eighth-inning knock off left-handed specialist Oliver Perez. Perez was lifted for newly-acquired right-hander Adam Cimber, who was charged with three earned runs over one-third of an inning in the eighth.

Though Ohtani has struggled as of late, he said he's been working at changing his swing to break out of the slump. In three games against the Tribe this season, he's hitting .643 (9-for-14) with eight RBIs and six runs, and he said he hopes his hot hitting can carry over after the series ends.

"I'm not trying to think too much about righty-lefty, but I've been having better at-bats against righties and lefties," Ohtani said. "The ball has been going in the right direction and I'm starting to feel more comfortable."

The Angels sent 10 batters to the plate in the eighth to break a 3-3 stalemate. After reaching on a single, Ohtani stole second, forcing the Indians to intentionally walk Albert Pujols, whom Cimber had already given a 3-0 count. Andrelton Simmons reached on a fielder's choice, and David Fletcher delivered a go-

ahead double to score Ohtani and make it 4-3. Cimber then allowed two more intentional walks and two hits before getting pulled.

"That's a great eighth inning, and I think with Shohei being aggressive, that's a big run at the time," Scioscia said. "Obviously it set the table for a bigger inning, which we needed. ... They kind of just piggybacked off one other. You don't get to their bullpen often, but we did tonight."

Ohtani opened the scoring in the top of the first inning with a two-run homer over the left-field wall off Tribe starter Mike Clevinger. Cleveland's right-hander left a 96.1-mph fastball in the middle of the zone, allowing the left-handed-hitting Ohtani to go the opposite way. It was his first career home run on the road and 10th overall.

Ohtani added another homer in the third, a 443-foot solo shot to right off a 3-2 offering from Clevinger to tie the game at three runs apiece.

"Both [home run] pitches were pretty poorly executed," Clevinger said. "I mean, he's got tremendous power -- don't get me wrong. I still think if I executed like my third [at-bat] against him, he's not peppering the ball like he did in his first two. The first one was inside and he still put it the other way, so that's pretty impressive on his part."

Starter Jaime Barria lasted five innings, throwing 92 pitches -- 55 for strikes -- but was not awarded a decision after allowing three runs and six hits while walking two and striking out three. Though Ohtani's homer opened the scoring, Barria surrendered a pair of runs in the first -- allowing a leadoff walk to Francisco Lindor, who came home one batter later on a double from Michael Brantley. One hitter after Brantley, Jose Ramirez singled to tie the game at two runs apiece.

"I threw a lot of pitches in the first inning, then I made the adjustments I needed to make," Barria said.

Barria was charged with another run in the second after giving up back-to-back hits to Yan Gomes and Leonys Martin. Gomes knocked a one-out double and Martin delivered a run-scoring single to Kole Calhoun in right to make it 3-2.

Reliever Justin Anderson (3-2) picked up the win after a perfect seventh inning. The Angels' bullpen held Cleveland hitless after Barria's exit until the ninth, when Martin homered, marking his first home run with the Tribe since being traded from the Tigers on Tuesday.

Blake Parker, who gave up the homer to Martin, also gave up a single to Lindor, but was able to end the game with minimal damage.

MOMENT THAT MATTERED

Fletcher's clutch knock

Ohtani's single and subsequent stolen base set up the intentional walk to Pujols and a fielder's choice by Simmons. Fletcher (1-for-4) followed Simmons' knock with a double that sliced down the right-field line, allowing Ohtani to score to give the Angels their first lead since the first inning. Fletcher's double bounced into the seats down the right-field line just before Simmons rounded third, forcing the shortstop to stay put.

"I think David puts the ball in play, and I think that's one of the things we like about him, especially with guys on base," Scioscia said of Fletcher's hit.

SOUND SMART

Ohtani's four home runs against the Tribe marks the most he has struck against any Major League team, surpassing the two he hit against the White Sox on July 23 and July 25. Four of his home runs have had an exit velocity of at least 110 mph, and four have gone at least 440 feet.

HE SAID IT

"Our jaw dropped on that one, but we see Shohei hit balls hard. He got one elevated and that was one of the longest we've seen. It was a long way, but the one in left field was the one that was impressive, because it's tough to get it out to that part of the park. It's almost like a Green Monster out there, but it's normal length -- it's not short like in Fenway Park. I mean, you have to hit it hard to get it out to that part of the park, and he hit it like a right-handed pull hitter." -- *Scioscia, on Ohtani's home run-hitting ability*

UP NEXT

Right-hander Felix Pena (1-2, 5.23 ERA) will get the ball in a 4:10 p.m. PT contest on Saturday at Progressive Field. Pena was charged with the loss Sunday, after allowing seven earned runs, six hits and two walks in one-third of an inning. The Tribe will counter with ace Corey Kluber (13-6, 2.79 ERA), who gave up one run in 7 1/3 innings against the Tigers in his last start.

Ailing wrist keeps Trout out of Angels' lineup

Ohtani making progress on mound in throwing program

By Casey Harrison

CLEVELAND -- Mike Trout came into the visiting clubhouse at Progressive Field with his right wrist wrapped in medical tape on Friday, knowing the Angels would need to make due without his presence for at least another game.

The All-Star outfielder continues to heal from a right wrist contusion, and was out of the starting lineup for the second game in a row as the Angels open a three-game series with the American League Central-leading Indians. The Halos came into Cleveland looking to end a four-game losing streak.

In Trout's place, manager Mike Scioscia decided to start Eric Young Jr., hoping Trout might come off the bench.

"He's much better than yesterday, but still not [ready]," Scioscia said. "We'll start the game and see if he's available later. But he's gonna continue to get treatment. We'll see how it sets up."

Scioscia said he wants to err on the side of caution when using Trout, who's been day to day since exiting Wednesday's 7-2 loss to the Rays. The right-handed-hitting outfielder was held out of the lineup on Thursday, making Friday the third game he has missed all season.

Trout hurt his wrist and exited in the first inning after sliding into third base on an attempted steal on Wednesday. He tried to hook around the bag to avoid a tag from third baseman Matt Duffy, and put his right wrist down twice to brace himself as he slid.

X-rays and an MRI only revealed inflammation in Trout's wrist, and the outfielder said it's felt much better over the last couple of days as he continues to ice and compress it to reduce swelling.

"I'm a lot better than yesterday," Trout said. "I think today I'm getting the day off. Just come in tomorrow and hopefully play."

Trout's ailment is the first injury that's affected his playing time since last season, when he tore a ligament in his left thumb, sidelining him for six weeks.

Barring a setback, Trout -- who turns 27 on Tuesday and is batting .309 with a 1.083 OPS and 30 home runs in 109 games -- believes he'll be healthy enough to start in center field on Saturday.

"I'll just give it another day to heal," Trout said. "I want to play center. If I come in tomorrow and it feels good, then I'm gonna play."

Ohtani progressing

Scioscia also said Shohei Ohtani has made progress in a throwing program as the two-way phenom tries to work back to pitching form. Ohtani last pitched on June 6 and was placed on the disabled list shortly thereafter with a UCL sprain in his right elbow.

Scioscia said Ohtani is playing long toss from about 105 feet and threw two bullpen sessions while in St. Petersburg this week, with hopes of returning to the mound sooner rather than later.

"He's had no setbacks, but realistically speaking, hopefully in a couple weeks," Scioscia said. "Once he gets out there to 180 feet, 200 feet, we'll start to get an idea how he's feeling and we'll see when the next step might come. It's a continuing evaluation. It might take a while for him to get where he needs to be with long toss."

Ohtani was reinstated from the disabled list as a batter on July 3 and has hit in 22 games since, slashing .200/.257/.415 in that span. Though the 24-year-old rookie has struggled since returning from the DL, he's batting .294/.364/.595 against right-handed pitching, and hit third in the lineup Friday against Indians right-hander Mike Clevinger.

"Like any hitter, you go through cycles where you're not squaring the ball up," Scioscia said of Ohtani. "He's missed some pitches and he's hit some balls hard and clean, but there's also been some times where he struck out."

FROM THE ATHLETIC

How Kole Calhoun went from being historically bad to better than ever

By Brent Maguire

Kole Calhoun's start to the season was not only uncharacteristically poor for him but he was historically bad. After years of consistently producing well above-average numbers, Calhoun's numbers tanked.

Through the first two months, Calhoun was one of the worst everyday players in baseball based on numerous metrics. His stellar defense remained intact, but he was the worst hitter by wRC+ through May 31. After posting a 110 wRC+ from 2012 to 2017, Calhoun recorded a putrid 3 wRC+ through his first 185 plate appearances. His negative 1.6 Wins Above Replacement was tied for the worst in baseball with Chris Davis.

Calhoun was placed on the disabled list on June 2 with a right oblique strain, and there was plenty of discussion about alternatives to Calhoun moving forward. While it's hard to say if the injury was affecting Calhoun in a negative way, he has been a completely different player since coming off the DL.

His season completely flip-flopped (and the narrative surrounding him changed) on June 18, the day he returned to action. Calhoun singled twice in his first game back and then homered in each of his next two games to begin a sizzling hot stretch that is still going on.

The difference in production between the pre-disabled list Calhoun and post-disabled list Calhoun is remarkable.

	AVG	OBP	SLG	wRC+	fWAR
Pre-DL (185 plate appearances)	.145	.195	.179	3	-1.6
Post-DL (148 plate appearances)	.292	.358	.662	172	1.8

Calhoun's slugging percentage (.662) since his stint on the DL alone is better than his OPS (.519) during the first two months of the season. He was able to bring his production from historically bad territory to above replacement level in a month and a half. There are many driving factors to these changes, which can first be examined from a statistical standpoint.

The most noticeable change came in Calhoun's batted ball profile, which featured too many ground balls during his poor stretch. Calhoun had never been a notorious fly-ball hitter, but he also had never been someone who pounded more than half of his batted balls into the ground, something he did a ton during the first two months.

	Ground-ball rate	Fly-ball rate
Pre-DL trip	55.7%	27.5%
Post-DL trip	33.7%	45.9%

It's more complex than simply hitting more fly balls. Even though Calhoun was unable to churn out any production by hitting 55.7 percent of his batted balls on the ground, there was more going on with Calhoun's profile.

Looking into Calhoun's Statcast profile, other fairly obvious positive trends surfaced. Based on the batted ball profile changes highlighted above, it's no surprise that his launch angle has increased. His average exit velocity has also improved significantly, too.

	March/April	May	June	July	August
Launch angle (degrees)	10	5	17	18	15
Average exit velocity (mph)	88	87.2	91.5	92.4	94.7

Calhoun is lifting more baseballs, and he's hitting them with much more authority. After a month of May that saw him hit too many weak ground balls, he has raised his average exit velocity in each month since and has continued to get more baseballs in the air. Specifically, since the beginning of July, Calhoun is hitting hard baseballs at an elite rate.

Even more compelling is the fact that Calhoun has improved his productivity against all pitches thrown to him. While his xWOPA showed his production against fastballs (.353 xWOPA in March/April and .305 xWOPA in May) would improve, he was futile against breaking balls and offspeed pitches.

This changed after the month of June. Calhoun smashed three home runs against offspeed pitches and homered off a breaking ball in July and hit another HR against a breaking ball in August. After no home runs against breaking balls or offspeed pitches the first three months, Calhoun had hit five home runs going into Friday's series opener in Cleveland.

From a pure statistical standpoint, it's easy to see why Calhoun has improved due to his increase in more hard hit baseballs in the air. From a visual perspective, the changes in Calhoun's stance stand out immediately.

Right away, you'll note that Calhoun was more upright earlier in the year when he was having more issues. This really stands out when you view it from a side-by-side perspective. The new Calhoun has a little crouch and keeps his hands away from his body a bit more.

Calhoun is clearly more comfortable with this new stance, and it shows based on how free and easy it looks. The crouch takes attention away from the fact that Calhoun looks more comfortable and has better timing with his load and leg kick. The result has been far better production.

Calhoun's season looked lost two months ago. He has overcome some combination of poor mechanics, too many grounders and an injury to bounce back to a level he's never shown before. While the Angels have fallen far out of the playoff race, his resurgence has been a positive in a rather negative last few months for the club.

Kole Calhoun is back and looking better than ever.

FROM CLEVELAND.COM

Cleveland Indians fall to Los Angeles Angels, 7-4, as Shohei Ohtani homers twice

By Joe Noga

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- On a night when Cleveland Indians pitchers dominated just about every hitter in the Los Angeles lineup not named Shohei Ohtani, the Angels still managed to leave Progressive Field with a 7-4 victory.

Ohtani homered twice early and scored the go-ahead run in the eighth inning on David Fletcher's ground-rule double against Adam Cimber and Cleveland's revamped bullpen.

Oliver Perez (0-1, 1.62 ERA) suffered his first loss as Tribe relievers failed to keep the game tied at 3. Ohtani greeted Perez with a flare single to left with one out and came around to score on Fletcher's two-out double off Cimber just inside the right field line.

An RBI infield single by Jose Briceno and a two-run double by Eric Young Jr. pushed the Los Angeles advantage to four before Cleveland's Dan Otero got Justin Upton to pop out and end the inning.

"We had kinda what we wanted," Manager Terry Francona said. "With Cimber, I thought he deserved better. The ball hits the right field chalk line. A swinging bunt, mix in a couple intentional walks to get the right matchups and it ended up being a big inning. That obviously hurt our chances."

Leonys Martin, making his home debut after being acquired at Tuesday's trade deadline from Detroit, delivered a two-out solo home run in the ninth against L.A.'s Blake Parker to trim the Angels' lead to three.

Ohtani entered the game batting .556 (5-for-9) with two home runs and five RBI in his first two career games against Cleveland. He doubled his home run output in his first two plate appearances against Indians starter Mike Clevinger, driving an 0-1 pitch to the bleachers in left for a two-run shot in the first and tying the game at 3-3 in the third with a monster 443-foot solo shot to right center.

It was Ohtani's first multi-homer game, and the first two road home runs of his career. He added a base hit in the ninth for his fourth hit of the game, a single-game high.

Clevinger took a no-decision, scattering five L.A. hits and striking out six across six innings. He threw 30 pitches in the first inning, but settled in after Ohtani's second homer, setting down 11 of the last 12 batters he faced.

"I held it together," Clevinger said. "It seems to have become a trend in my last couple starts. One sequence, or a couple sequences in this matter, kind of ruin my day."

It was Clevinger's 13th quality start of the season and second career start without issuing a walk. Francona said Clevinger was solid against every hitter besides Ohtani.

"He made two pitches and mis-located both of them and he paid for it," Francona said. "He was really pretty good."

Francisco Lindor walked and scored on an RBI double by Michael Brantley in the bottom of the first against Angels starter Jaime Barria. It was Lindor's 93rd run of the season, leading all of baseball and putting him on pace to score 140. That would tie Earl Averill's franchise record set in 1931.

Jose Ramirez, who was named American League Player of the Month for July earlier this week, singled to right field, driving in Brantley and tying the score at 2-2.

Cleveland took a brief 3-2 lead in the second when Yan Gomes doubled and scored on an RBI single by Martin. It was Martin's first RBI since joining the club Wednesday in Minnesota.

Gomes would leave the game in the fourth with posterior right knee discomfort, according to the team. He was replaced by Roberto Perez behind the plate.

Welcome back

Reliever Andrew Miller, activated from the 60-day disabled list earlier in the day, pitched a scoreless seventh, making his first appearance since May 26. Miller retired pinch hitter Jefry Marte on a grounder to third before walking pinch hitter Briceño. After striking out Young, Miller got Kole Calhoun to fly out to right field.

"It was nice to get out there and get one under my belt," Miller said. "I wasn't near as crisp as I was the last couple of outings. It's probably expected. It's a process. It will come. But it was nice to have a scoreless inning and be back with these guys and hopefully contribute."

What it means

Los Angeles has won three of four meetings with the Indians this season. The Angels snapped a 10-game losing streak at Progressive Field dating back to August of 2015.

The pitches

Barria threw 92 pitches, 55 (60 percent) for strikes. Clevinger threw 97 pitches, 71 (73 percent) for strikes.

Thanks for coming

The Indians and Angels drew a sellout crowd of 35,242 to Progressive Field. First pitch was at 7:10 p.m. with a temperature of 82 degrees. It marks the sixth sellout this season, the third on a Friday night. The club announced that a few thousand tickets remain available for Saturday and Sunday games.

Next

The series continues Saturday as Corey Kluber (13-6, 2.79 ERA) takes the mound against Angels starter Felix Pena (1-2, 5.23). Kluber is 2-2 with a 3.99 ERA in six career starts against L.A., including a 1-0 mark at Progressive Field.

FROM SPORTING NEWS

Angels' Shohei Ohtani matches Babe Ruth again, tallies first multi-homer game

By Thomas Lott

Shohei Ohtani got a lot done Friday.

He went 4 for 5, blasted two home runs and became just the fourth player ever to hit double-digit homers and win multiple games in a season, according to Ryan Spaeder:

“Players with double-digit home runs and multiple wins in a season:

2018 Shohei Ohtani
1921 Babe Ruth
1919 Babe Ruth
1918 Babe Ruth
1888 Jimmy Ryan
1887 Jimmy Ryan
1886 Hardy Richardson”

Ohtani joins Babe Ruth, Jimmy Ryan and Harry Richardson as the only players in history to accomplish the feat.

Only Ruth and Ryan have done it more than once. Ruth did it three times.

Even better, Ohtani's stellar game helped lead the Angels to a 7-4 victory over the American League Central-leading Indians.

Ohtani is now batting .272 with 11 home runs and 28 RBIs on the season.

He is also 4-1 with a 3.10 ERA, however, he will not make another start this season as he continues to deal with a strain of his ulnar collateral ligament in his pitching elbow.

FROM NBC SPORTS**Chris Young to undergo left hip surgery**

By Ashley Varela

Angels outfielder Chris Young has been diagnosed with labral tears in both of his hips, according to an official statement from the team on Friday. He underwent surgery to repair the tear in his right hip this weekend and will need to undergo the same procedure on his left hip on an as-yet unspecified date in the near future. While the Angels didn't identify a projected return date for the outfielder, it seems highly unlikely that he'll take the field again in 2018.

It's been a rough road for Young this season. He missed four days with a hamstring strain in late June and aggravated the injury several weeks later while trying to track down a double in right field. After sitting out for just over a month's worth of games, it looks like the 34-year-old will finish the season with an underwhelming .168/.252/.363 batting line, six home runs and .615 OPS in just 128 PA.

Young isn't the only Angels outfielder sidelined with an injury right now, either. Mike Trout jammed his right wrist after sliding into third base during Wednesday's 2-7 loss to the Rays and has been held back for two straight games so far. He figures to be in good enough shape to take the field for Saturday's game against the Indians (or even pinch-hit on Friday, if necessary), but it remains to be seen whether the team will rush him back to the starting lineup or give him another day to recuperate.

FROM KYODO NEWS**Baseball: Angels' Ohtani homers twice, scores 3 runs against Indians**

Shohei Ohtani notched his 10th and 11th home runs of the season on Friday and logged his first four-hit game in the majors, scoring the tying and go-ahead runs to drive the Los Angeles Angels to a 7-4 win over the Cleveland Indians.

The Japanese rookie has now reached one of two milestones needed to become the first major leaguer since Babe Ruth to earn 10 pitching wins and hit 10 home runs in the same season. He needs six more wins on the mound to equal the all-time great.

Batting third as the Angels' designated hitter, Ohtani opened the scoring against Cleveland starter Mike Clevinger in the top of the first, giving the Angels an early two-run lead with a deep shot to left center at Progressive Field.

The Indians countered with three runs in the bottom of the first and second, but the 24-year-old Japanese cranked his second homer on a full-count against the Cleveland right-hander in the third to tie the game and earn his first major league multi-homer game.

In the eighth, Ohtani singled against Oliver Perez (0-1) and stole second with Albert Pujols at the plate.

After Adam Cimber, the Indians' fourth reliever of the game, intentionally walked Pujols, Ohtani scored on Andrelton Simmons' forceout grounder to short.

The rookie phenom singled to lead off the ninth but was left stranded. He grounded out in his other at-bat as Angels' reliever Justin Anderson (3-2) got the win.

The home runs were Ohtani's first on the road, with all of his previous nine coming at Angel Stadium. They were his third and fourth against the Indians, the most he has struck against any major league club.

Ohtani was cleared to start a throwing progression last month after being on the disabled list for nearly a month with an elbow injury in his pitching arm. In nine starts this season, he is 4-1 with a 3.10 ERA.