



Press Clips

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FROM THE OC REGISTER**Angels' Kole Calhoun hoping his days of hot and cold streaks are behind him**

By Jeff Fletcher

CHICAGO — When Kole Calhoun reworked his swing last winter — an ill-fated experiment — he was seeking consistency.

Although it took him a couple months of frustration and a new swing to get there, he has finally found that consistency.

The New Calhoun is coming up on three months' worth of at-bats, during which he has maintained his performance at the plate without the kind of roller coaster he'd been on in previous years.

Since Calhoun returned, he's only once gone three consecutive games without reaching base. He had come up empty in his first three trips on Sunday before knocking in the game's only run with a single in the seventh.

"I think he's been more than consistent; he's been terrific," Manager Mike Scioscia said. "There's consistent mediocrity and there's consistent brilliance. This guy's numbers are incredible, from the time he came back and started playing."

Calhoun's well-chronicled slow start amounted to a .145 average and a .374 OPS through May. While he was on the disabled list with a strained oblique, he cleared his mind and changed his swing.

Now with 293 plate appearances since returning, Calhoun has hit .277 with a .358 on-base percentage and a .542 slugging percentage, good for an OPS of .900.

Calhoun said his new swing is not only better, but it's easier to maintain because he has a firm grasp on exactly what he needs to do.

"I think I've got an idea what makes it good and what makes it bad," he said. "Every day there is some kind of little adjustment that's got to be made. It's part of the game. It's been good. Going forward, hopefully it's something I stick with."

The results have showed not just in how Calhoun is swinging, but also the pitches he's not swinging at it. He is seeing the ball well enough now that he's drawn a walk in eight straight games. Previously, the longest streak of his career was four games.

"There is no doubt Kole is seeing the ball better from where he was earlier in the season," Scioscia said. "That whole process is going to lead to walks. He's got a good eye. When he's on, he'll take a walk."

Calhoun's consistency over three months bodes well for the future, because it could be an indication that his new approach is more than a hot streak, but something sustainable.

“I think he’s put some major principals of hitting together that are fundamentally important,” Scioscia said. “He put them back into his swing. Sure, there are going to be adjustments along the way, but I think he has a better understanding of what he’s trying to do. He’s doing it better and all the boxes, like plate coverage and discipline, are starring to go in his favor.”

ALSO

When Mike Trout singled in the first inning, it ran his streak to 10 consecutive plate appearances reaching base safely. He struck out in his next trip. Trout’s career-best streak is 11 plate appearances, set last season. The Angels record is 12, set by Bobby Grich in 1982...

Shohei Ohtani, who bruised his right thigh on a home plate collision on Saturday, was in the lineup on Sunday and showed no issues. He hustled into second with a double in the eighth inning. He then tried to steal third, but was thrown out...

The Angels do not have a starter listed for Tuesday’s game, which means they will probably have another bullpen game. The Angels currently only have four starters who are stretched out enough to pitch five innings. They are likely to add Tyler Skaggs back into the mix sometime in the final three weeks of the season...

Andrelton Simmons was not in the lineup on Sunday, with a routine day off, Scioscia said. It left the Angels with an infield of Taylor Ward, David Fletcher, Kaleb Cowart and José Fernandez. All except Cowart made their major league debuts this season.

UP NEXT

Angels (RHP Jaime Barría, 10-8, 3.30) vs. Rangers (LHP Mike Minor, 11-7, 4.31), Monday, 7 p.m., Fox Sports West, KLAA (830 AM).

Dominant Andrew Heaney helps Angels finish sweep of Chicago White Sox

By Jeff Fletcher

CHICAGO — Andrew Heaney provided impressive bookends to the Angels’ 10-game trip.

Heaney struck out a career-high 12 over seven innings in the Angels’ 1-0 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Sunday afternoon, after working six scoreless innings to get the victory in the trip’s opener last week in Houston.

Heaney, who lowered his ERA to 3.98, gave up three singles and he did not walk a batter, making for one of the best of his 56 career starts.

“That’s a terrific game from Andrew,” Manager Mike Scioscia said. “As we continue to see him get his stamina as this year has progressed, he finished strong and might have had some more left in him.”

Heaney and Reynaldo Lopez were locked in a duel for six innings, with Lopez striking out 10, before the Angels finally got the game's only run against the White Sox bullpen in the seventh.

José Fernandez led off the inning with a single and eventually scored on a two-out hit by Kole Calhoun, against lefty Caleb Frere.

The run was all the Angels needed to finish the sweep of the White Sox and go 7-3 on the trip. They improved to 71-72, as they try to avoid a third straight losing season.

Heaney gave up a leadoff single to start the game, but that runner was erased on a double play to end the inning. Heaney retired all nine hitters over the next three innings, including seven strikeouts.

The next hitter to reach base against him was on ... a strikeout. Matt Davidson whiffed but got to first when the ball got away from catcher José Briceño.

The White Sox put two runners on that inning, but Heaney escaped with ... a strikeout of Adam Engel.

Heaney worked around another leadoff single in the seventh, recording his final strikeout, of Ryan LaMarre, to end the inning.

"It's not just the strikeouts, but the way he commanded counts and was effective in the zone," Scioscia said. "He pitched very well with his fastball in and out and elevated it and used his breaking pitch and changeup to keep those guys off balance all afternoon."

Heaney said his breaking ball was better than usual, so he leaned more heavily on it. That helped set up changeups and fastballs, which left the White Sox flailing.

Ty Buttrey worked the eighth, escaping with the help of a run-saving sliding catch by Justin Upton in left field. Buttrey has now allowed one run in his first 10-1/3 innings since the Angels got him in the Ian Kinsler trade.

Blake Parker got the first two outs of the ninth, but he gave up a hit and hit a batter. José Álvarez got the final out, stranding two runners, to pick up his first save in his league-leading 71st appearance.

It locked up the victory for Heaney, who has now made 27 straight starts without missing a turn ever since missing the first two weeks on the disabled list. Of the six starters the Angels planned to start the season with, Heaney is the only one left.

"Right now he's the lone survivor of what we thought our rotation was going to be," Scioscia said, "and he's going very strong."

FROM ANGELS.COM

Heaney sets career mark in K's in shutout win

By Maria Guardado and Max Gelman

CHICAGO -- In a season that has been torpedoed by a ceaseless wave of rotation injuries, left-hander **Andrew Heaney** has distinguished himself as the Angels' most reliable starter.

That trend continued on Sunday, when Heaney struck out a career-high 12 over seven scoreless innings to help the Angels complete a three-game sweep of the White Sox with a 1-0 win at Guaranteed Rate Field.

"That's a terrific game from Andrew," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "I think as we continue to see him get his stamina as this year's progressed, he finished strong, and he might have had some more left in him. Not just strikeouts, but I think the way he commanded counts, and the way he was effective in the zone. He really pitched very well with his fastball in and out and elevated, and then used his breaking pitch and changeup to keep these guys off-balance all afternoon."

Heaney opened the season on the disabled list with a bout of left elbow inflammation, but he has not missed a start since being activated on April 13. In his first full season back from Tommy John surgery, Heaney has logged a team-high 27 starts and 165 innings while pitching to a 3.98 ERA.

"He got a little setback at the end of Spring Training, but right now he's the lone survivor of what we had thought our rotation was going to be," Scioscia said. "He's been very strong."

The Angels (71-72) have now won five of their last six games after going 7-3 on their 10-game road trip to Houston, Texas and Chicago.

Heaney and White Sox right-hander **Reynaldo Lopez** matched each other with six scoreless innings to start the game before the Angels finally broke the stalemate in the seventh.

Chicago right-hander **Ian Hamilton** entered the game to replace Lopez, who allowed only a pair of singles to **Mike Trout**, but Hamilton fell into trouble after yielding a leadoff single to **Jose Fernandez** and walking **Kaleb Cowart** to put runners on first and second with one out.

After **Jose Briceno** struck out, White Sox manager Rick Renteria opted to bring in left-hander **Caleb Frare** to face the left-handed-hitting **Kole Calhoun**. The move backfired, as Calhoun delivered a two-out RBI single to right field to put the Angels on the board.

"They brought the lefty in, and I was looking for a pitch to hit," Calhoun said. "I got a fastball that got a lot of the plate, put a pretty good swing on it, and Fernandez was able to score."

Working effectively and efficiently, Heaney faced the minimum over the first four innings. He struck out **Matt Davidson** to start the fifth, but the ball got away from Briceno for a wild pitch, allowing Davidson to reach first base. **Yoan Moncada** later singled to put runners on first and second with two

outs, but Heaney extinguished the threat by striking out **Adam Engel** swinging on a sinker to end the inning.

"I was throwing some backdoor breaking balls better than I normally do, so I leaned on that more and then threw the changeup off that, and then was able to put a lot of guys away with some heaters late," Heaney said.

Heaney departed after allowing only three singles, walking none and throwing 96 pitches, including 70 for strikes. **Ty Buttrey**, **Blake Parker** and **Jose Alvarez** combined to pitch the final two innings to cap the Angels' eighth shutout of the season.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Upton bails out Buttrey with sliding catch: Buttrey relieved Heaney in the eighth and surrendered a leadoff single to Moncada, who then advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt by Engel to put the tying run in scoring position with one out. Buttrey struck out pinch-hitter **Daniel Palka** looking to bring up **Tim Anderson**, who shot a liner to shallow left field that was caught by a sliding **Justin Upton** for the final out of the inning.

"That's huge," Scioscia said. "There's a ball hit off the bat we thought was a base hit, and Justin got a great jump, came right in, and made a terrific catch. That keeps the momentum and the lead on our side, which is important."

Angels thwart White Sox's ninth-inning rally: Trailing by one, Chicago threatened in the bottom of the ninth after pinch-hitter **Yolmer Sanchez** singled and Parker hit Davidson on the helmet to put runners on first and second with one out. After Sanchez advanced to third on a lineout by Castillo, but Alvarez came in to strike out **Nicky Delmonico** looking to end the game. It was Alvarez's first save of the year.

"That's a big out," Scioscia said. "Jose's having a great year for us. He has a lot of appearances, his stuff is holding up very well, and he threw some good breaking balls to Delmonico at the end of that game there to win it."

HE SAID IT

"It doesn't mean much, but it's cool. I'm happy about it." -- *Heaney, on recording a career-high 12 strikeouts*

MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

Shohei Ohtani reached on a one-out double in the eighth and was originally called safe after attempting to steal third during an at-bat by Upton, but the White Sox challenged the call after replay showed that **Jose Rondon** appeared to tag him out before his foot touched the bag. The ruling was subsequently overturned, completing a strike-'em-out, throw-'em-out double play for the White Sox.

UP NEXT

The Angels head home to begin a three-game series with the Rangers at 7:07 p.m. PT and send rookie **Jaime Barria** (10-8, 3.30 ERA) to the mound. Barria is on an 11-inning scoreless streak and owns a 2.81 ERA in his last five starts. **Mike Minor** (11-7, 4.31) goes for Texas.

30 players better than their 2018 numbers*

By Will Leitch

Down years in baseball happen. Three years after he hit .370, Tony Gwynn hit .309, which, fine, is a great year for everyone who isn't Tony Gwynn, but you get the point. Even the best players take a step back before taking a step forward sometimes.

Thus, this week at The Thirty, we take a look at players you might have expected to have a better season than they have, for whatever reason, whether it's a slump, injury or just bad luck. These players are likely to bounce back next year: They're too talented not to. So don't give up on these guys yet.

WEST

Angels: Kole Calhoun

2016 OBP: .348 | 2018 OBP: .295

Remember when Calhoun was the worst hitter in baseball? He's got an OPS around .900 in the second half and seems primed to carry that over into 2018.

Astros: Derek Fisher

2017 Triple-A OPS: .967 | 2018 Triple-A OPS: .798

With all the young talent this team has, Fisher hasn't been able to hit enough to stick around, but he has classic post-hype sleeper potential.

Athletics: Daniel Mengden

2017 ERA+: 134 | 2018 ERA+: 96

With all the happy things the A's have had going this year, Mengden hasn't been one of them. But his FIP is just up a little from last year, and there's no reason he can't return to his 2017 form.

Mariners: Kyle Seager

2016 OBP: .359 | 2018 OBP: .265

Quietly, Seager has had the worst offensive season of his career, right at the time the Mariners could have used it most.

Rangers: Delino DeShields

2015 OPS: .718 | 2018 OPS: .585

DeShields has never been an offensive juggernaut ... but he's never been *this* bad, has he?

**Article cut to only include AL West-related material.*

Ohtani in lineup day after collision at home

By Max Gelman

CHICAGO -- While trying to score on a wild pitch, Angels designated hitter **Shohei Ohtani** collided with reliever **Thyago Vieira** at home plate in the ninth inning of Saturday's 12-3 win over the White Sox and was diagnosed with a right thigh contusion.

Ohtani is day to day, Angels manager Mike Scioscia said Saturday, but hit cleanup in Sunday's finale. He went 1-for-3 with a double and was caught stealing third base in the eighth inning.

"He was fine," Scioscia said after Sunday's 1-0 win. "He had no problem running. [**Welington Castillo**] made a really good throw on the stolen base at third. Didn't quite get the jump he was looking for, but he was running well. On the double in the gap, he was running really well."

Ohtani got up gingerly after the collision on Saturday, but was able to walk off the field under his own power.

He said Saturday through the team interpreter that he will be fine, and if "Scioscia's going to write my name, then I'll be ready."

Ohtani added that he wasn't sure at first where Vieira struck him, but after viewing the replay he said Vieira's "shin kind of got above my kneecap."

FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Heaney tosses 7 shutout innings, Angels top White Sox 1-0

By John Jackson

CHICAGO (AP) — Andrew Heaney began the season on the disabled list with an elbow injury. Now, the 27-year-old left-hander is on the verge of finishing with a slew of career bests.

Heaney tossed three-hit ball over seven innings and struck out a career-high 12, lifting the Los Angeles Angels over the Chicago White Sox 1-0 Sunday for a three-game sweep.

Kole Calhoun drove in the only run with a seventh-inning single. Mike Trout went 2 for 4 and finished the series 8 for 11 with two homers and five RBIs for the Angels.

Yoan Moncada had two hits for the White Sox, who have dropped five straight.

Heaney (9-9) allowed just three singles and didn't walk anyone. Ty Buttrey pitched the eighth, Blake Parker got two outs in the ninth and Jose Alvarez got the final out for his first save.

Heaney is 2-1 with a 1.89 ERA and 23 strikeouts in his last three starts. He has set career highs in wins, starts (27), innings pitched (165) and strikeouts (161) this season.

“That’s a terrific game from Andrew,” Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. “As we continue to see him get his stamina as this year’s progressed, he’s finished strong and might have some more left in him.”

After giving up a hit to Tim Anderson leading off the first, Heaney retired 11 straight. The streak was broken when Matt Davidson struck out swinging leading off the fifth but reached as the ball got by catcher Jose Briceno for a wild pitch. Only one Chicago runner reached second base against Heaney.

“I was throwing some backdoor breaking balls better than I normally do, so I kind of leaned on that more and then threw the changeup after that,” he said. “I was able to put some guys away with heaters late.”

Chicago starter Reynaldo Lopez threw six scoreless innings. He gave up two hits, struck out 10 and walked three before being lifted after 105 pitches.

The 24-year-old right-hander has allowed just two runs over 20 innings in his last three starts.

“I’m feeling good. I feel strong,” Lopez said through a translator. “My mindset in every outing is go at least six. If I can go more, that’s even better. Go at least six and try to finish strong.”

The Angels took advantage of Lopez’s departure by pushing across a run in the seventh. Jose Fernandez led off with a single against Ian Hamilton (0-1) and advanced on a groundout. With two outs, Caleb Frare came in to face Calhoun in a lefty-lefty matchup. The move didn’t work out as Calhoun singled to right to score Fernandez.

The White Sox threatened in the ninth.

Pinch-hitter Yolmer Sanchez led off with a single and moved to second on a wild pitch with one out. Parker then hit Davidson, and a flyout put runners at the corners.

Alvarez was brought in to face pinch-hitter Nicky Delmonico and struck him out to end the game.

WEB GEM

Justin Upton struck out in all four of his at-bats, but contributed with a sliding catch in left on a liner by Anderson to end the eighth. Moncada was on second and would have scored the tying run if the ball dropped in.

“When the ball was hit off the bat, we thought it was a base hit,” Scioscia said. “Justin got a great jump, came right in and made a terrific catch.”

TRAINER’S ROOM

Angels: OF/P Shohei Ohtani (bruised right thigh) started at DH on Sunday and went 1 for 3 with a walk. He was injured Saturday night when he collided with Chicago pitcher Thyago Vieira while sliding into home plate.

White Sox: 1B Jose Abreu (testicular surgery) took ground balls and ran sprints on Sunday. Manager Rick Renteria said Abreu may return to the lineup Monday night at Kansas City.

UP NEXT

Angels: RHP Jaime Barria (10-8, 3.30 ERA) starts Monday night in the opener of a home series with Texas. LHP Mike Minor (11-7, 4.31) goes for the Rangers.

White Sox: RHP Lucas Giolito (10-10, 5.85 ERA) pitches Monday night against the Royals and RHP Jakob Junis (8-12, 4.32) in the opener of a three-game series.

FROM MLB.COM

Davidson hopes he could be like Ohtani in '19

Infielder says he could incorporate more pitching into repertoire

By Scott Merkin

CHICAGO -- **Matt Davidson** was looking forward to facing **Shohei Ohtani** in Sunday's series finale against the Angels. But an MRI revealing a tear of Ohtani's ulnar collateral ligament took the two-way sensation out of the rotation and left him swinging the bat as designated hitter.

In some ways, and at a slightly different level, Davidson would like to have similar job responsibilities as Ohtani. The third baseman/first baseman/designated hitter entered Sunday with a .237 average, 20 home runs and 58 RBI. He also has made three scoreless relief appearances, albeit with the game out of reach, and fanned two in three innings.

If Davidson were to incorporate pitching into his 2019 repertoire, he doesn't believe training would have to necessarily change.

"Throwing program and getting your arm in shape would be the biggest thing," Davidson said. "I was pretty sore after that third outing.

"Just the intensity of doing that it's pretty tough when you give everything you got every pitch. It's pretty intense. But yeah, definitely, I would love to explore that."

When asked if he had talked to the White Sox about the future pitching add-on, Davidson said, "We haven't really gone anything too, I would say, formal.

"But we'll see what happens," said Davidson, who has done sides here and there and tried to play a little long toss since his last outing on Aug. 6 against the Yankees. "If the opportunity was given to me I think I would like to do it."

Even a couple of innings per month could help some in relieving the bullpen's workload. As White Sox manager Rick Renteria pointed out, there could be a logistics issue involved if Davidson was playing first base and he needed to warm him up to get in a game, for example.

At this point, Davidson can enjoy his two-way accomplishments this season and admire the high level of work turned in by Ohtani with both the bat and on the mound.

"It's really impressive," said Davidson of Ohtani. "He's obviously hitting really well. He pitched really well when he was healthy, too. It's cool to see. It's exciting. Wish we could have faced him.

"I think that's something in the future there will be a lot more guys doing it. Right now, there are so many utility guys who play tons of positions. It used to be solely kind of the bench role 10 years go. Now, some teams are switching guys every day almost. I could see that in the future."

Third to first

- **Jose Abreu** took grounders and did some sprint work prior to Sunday's series finale. Renteria is hopeful Abreu returns to the lineup Monday in Kansas City, after being out of action since Aug. 20 due to surgery relieving pain caused by testicular torsion.

"We are not trying to rush him," Renteria said. "We want to make sure he feels really good about where he's at and as soon as we are assured that he feels good and our guys in the medical staff feel good about it, then we will go ahead and proceed."

- The White Sox have yet to announce a starter for Tuesday's game at Kauffman Stadium, a spot previously belonging to **Michael Kopech**, who was **diagnosed with a significant tear** in his ulnar collateral ligament. In a pitching-related move, the White Sox outrighted right-hander **Tyler Danish** to Triple-A Charlotte. Danish finished 1-0 with a 7.11 ERA over seven relief outings for the White Sox this season. His move leaves the White Sox 40-man at 39.

FROM THE ATHLETIC

TA30: In this week's power rankings, time is running out for teams on the edge of the playoff race*

By Levi Weaver

Sometime soon, in the next couple of days, your local MLB team will have fewer games remaining in their regular season than your local NFL team. That's the way time works. If you want to look at it optimistically, this is a good thing for everyone: For those whose teams are going to the playoffs, it means an end to the buildup and the beginning of the postseason. For teams who are not, it means a merciful end to a disappointing year.

If you want to look at it pessimistically, it means we don't have many more TA30s this season, and I know you'll miss 'em. Let's savor what we've got while we've got it, shall we?

16. Los Angeles Angels, 71-72 (*last week: T-16*)

The doctors told Shohei Ohtani that he needed Tommy John surgery, so he stopped pitching and went out and started hitting home runs instead. You don't need a functioning UCL to hit, so Ohtani will spend the rest of the season trying to hit well enough to win a Rookie of the Year award. The bad news for Miguel Andújar and others: Now that Ohtani isn't pitching, he can DH every day if Mike Scioscia so decides. Meanwhile, Mike Trout continues to be Mike Trout, which means the Angels should probably try to put a ring on it if they want him to stay rather than bolting for the Yankees or Phillies when he hits free agency. Barring that, maybe they can sign him to an extension instead.

**Article cut to only include Angels-related material.*

FROM NBC SPORTS

Report: Angels to discuss contract extension with Mike Trout

By Bill Baer

The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal reports that, as a way to find out exactly where the organization stands with superstar outfielder **Mike Trout**, the Angels plan to discuss a contract extension. Rosenthal doesn't specify, but extension talks will almost certainly take place during the offseason, not during the final three weeks of the regular season.

Trout, 27, is under contract for two more years at \$33.25 million annually. Given the recent news about **Shohei Ohtani's** elbow and the age of some of the other players like **Albert Pujols**, the Angels are at a crossroads of sorts. If Trout doesn't want to sign an extension, the club could still make a strong attempt to compete for the next two seasons and hope he changes his mind about staying in Anaheim. Or the Angels could trade Trout to replenish the minor league system.

Trout is in the midst of what is arguably the greatest offensive season of his career. Entering Sunday's action, he's batting .314/.465/.623 with 33 home runs, 68 RBI, 92 runs scored, and 22 stolen bases in 539 plate appearances. Trout has **very clearly** been the best player in baseball since he started playing regularly in 2012. It is quite rare that a team would broach the idea of trading the best player in the game, but the Angels could potentially experience a third consecutive sub-.500 season. If their outlook doesn't improve significantly in a division that currently includes the defending World Series champion Astros, the upstart Athletics, and the talented Mariners, it may make sense for the Angels to look towards the future and explore trading Trout if he doesn't want to sign an extension.

FROM CBS SPORTS**Rangers' Minor makes second straight start vs. Angels**

Mike Minor and Jaime Barria are hoping to maintain their recent success on the mound when they go head-to-head Monday night in the opener of a three-game series between the Texas Rangers and Los Angeles Angels at Angel Stadium.

By STATS

Minor (11-7, 4.31 ERA) is 5-1 in his past six starts with a 2.78 ERA. The left-hander has been one of the few recent bright spots for the Rangers (61-82), who have lost four in a row and 10 of their past 13 games.

Barria (10-8, 3.30) is 4-1 with a 1.82 ERA in his past six starts for the Angels, who have won four in a row and seven of 10. Two of Barria's recent outings came against the Rangers, and he's 3-0 against Texas this season with a 0.86 ERA.

Minor is also scheduled to make his second straight start against the Angels after allowing two runs and three hits in five innings of a 4-2 win on Tuesday, his only decision against Los Angeles in four career appearances, including two starts. The Angels were 0-for-8 with runners in scoring position against Minor.

Minor was a starter his first five seasons with the Atlanta Braves, missed two seasons because of injuries and then made 65 appearances out of the bullpen for the Kansas City Royals last season. The Rangers acquired Minor in the offseason and they moved him back into a starting role.

Minor told MLB.com after his last outing that he's not surprised with his success as a starter but rather expected it.

"That sounds bad, but I think people didn't expect me to have a good season," he said. "They thought I should have gone to the bullpen and I wasn't cut out to be a starter anymore. It feels good to end it like this. Couple more starts to go, but it's coming together."

Minor brings a 1.10 WHIP in 25 starts into the series opener.

The only players in franchise history with a WHIP of 1.1 or lower and at least 25 starts are Ferguson Jenkins (1974, 1978), Bert Blyleven (1976), Nolan Ryan (1989-91) and Yu Darvish (2013).

"We couldn't have asked for it to work any better than it has," Rangers manager Jeff Banister told MLB.com. "He'll still get to 29 starts, which I think is an important mark for him to get to. It's important to continue that process with Mike and not push the envelope at all, so we still have a guy who is fairly fresh into the offseason, in good shape so that when we get to spring training next year, we can take the gloves off and let him run with it."

Barria beat the Rangers on Wednesday in Texas, blanking them on two hits for five innings.

"He had to work hard to get through five innings," Angels manager Mike Scioscia told MLB.com after that game. "We talk about Jaime, what his upside is -- even when he's not as crisp as he was maybe the other night in Houston, he's facing a tough lineup, and he puts up five zeros and gives us a chance to win."

Angels designated hitter Shohei Ohtani is getting a chance to hit every game with Albert Pujols sidelined with a knee injury, and he's 9-for-19 in his past five games with four home runs, a double, triple and 10 RBIs.

Ohtani knocked Minor out of the game with a home run to lead off the sixth inning on Tuesday.

FROM BLEACHER REPORT

Each MLB Team's Top Player Whose Best Days Are Over for Good

By Jacob Shafer

As the 2018 MLB season enters the stretch run, playoff races are heating up and stars are being born. Around the league, exciting up-and-comers such as Atlanta Braves outfielder Ronald Acuna Jr. and New York Yankees third baseman Miguel Andujar are streaking across the big league firmament.

As stars rise, others must fall.

With that in mind, let's look at one player on each MLB club whose best days are over for good.

Some guys listed below have at least a puncher's chance of proving us wrong. In many cases, however, the choices were as easy as they were painful for the teams and players in question.

American League West

Houston Astros: OF Josh Reddick

Most of the Houston Astros' stars are entering their primes and/or performing at a high level. As a result, we'll stretch and point a finger at outfielder Josh Reddick.

Reddick picked up stray MVP votes in 2012 with the A's and hit .314 with an .847 OPS last season with Houston. This year, the 31-year-old is hitting .243 with a .699 OPS and has an even-worse .216 average and .628 OPS since the All-Star break.

The 'Stros have enough talent to repeat without Reddick as a major contributor, but they still have to pay him \$26 million through 2020.

Los Angeles Angels: 1B/DH Albert Pujols

Albert Pujols is done for the season due to knee surgery. Long before that, his once-blazing star had faded.

Yes, he clubbed 23 homers and tallied 101 RBI in 2017 and hit 19 homers this season, showing flashes of his old three-time MVP form. However, he's 38 years old and is a one-dimensional player at best. His glory days are in the rearview mirror.

Up ahead? The \$87 million the Los Angeles Angels owe him through 2021, his age-41 season. It's going to be a painful end for an all-time great, and for his employer as well.

Oakland Athletics: C Jonathan Lucroy

The A's have been one of the coolest stories of 2018 and are on track for a surprise postseason berth. Veteran catcher Jonathan Lucroy, meanwhile, has been a fringe player.

He's gotten the bulk of the starts behind the dish for Oakland, but he's slashing .238/.290/.323. That's a far cry from the one-base machine who made All-Star teams in 2014 and 2016 and finished fourth in NL MVP voting in '14 with the Milwaukee Brewers.

Lucroy's savvy and veteran leadership may benefit the A's in October, but his star has faded.

Seattle Mariners: LHP Felix Hernandez

It's time to face facts: Felix Hernandez is the artist formerly known as King.

The six-time All-Star and 2010 AL Cy Young Award winner posted a 4.36 ERA last season while battling injuries. In 2018, that figure has ballooned to 5.55, and he was briefly demoted to the bullpen in August.

The M's appear destined to miss the playoffs for the 17th straight season, the longest active drought in baseball, and the seemingly irreversible struggles of their erstwhile 32-year-old ace are a big reason why.

Texas Rangers: 3B Adrian Beltre

Veteran Adrian Beltre is having a decent season for the Texas Rangers. The likely Hall of Famer is hitting .275 and has even occasionally dazzled on defense.

Not bad for a 39-year-old.

However, Beltre's batting average and OPS have each dropped roughly 30 points since the All-Star break. He's a poor fit for a last-place Rangers team that needs to rebuild, but he may not have enough left to bolster a contender going forward.

**Article cut to only include AL West-related material.*

Report: Mike Trout to Be Offered Contract Extension by Angels in Offseason

By Rob Goldberg

The Los Angeles Angels could start preparing for their future by discussing a new contract with star outfielder Mike Trout.

According to Ken Rosenthal of The Athletic, the team plans to offer a Trout an extension to help determine his long-term plans. However, his current contract won't be up until after the 2020 season.

The 27-year-old is set to make more than \$34 million in each of the next two seasons to close out the six-year deal signed in 2014 that runs through 2020.

Contract negotiations with Trout could help determine the future of the organization. If the Angels know he won't accept a deal of any kind, they could consider a trade to help start a rebuild.

Rosenthal broke down the possible strategy from opposing executives:

"One said the 'textbook' move, if Trout is unwilling to sign an extension, would be to trade him for perhaps the biggest package ever and move forward with a better future. Another seemed downright intrigued by the possibility, saying, "One of the best talents in the history of the game is rarely explored in the market. A team might be willing to do something absolutely insane to acquire him. We just don't know."

Trout is arguably the best player in baseball. He's finished in the top four of MVP voting in each of the past six years, winning the award twice. He has been just as good in 2018, entering Sunday with 33 home runs, a .314 batting average and a league-leading 1.088 OPS.

Unfortunately, his play hasn't led to much team success for Los Angeles, which entered the day with a 70-72 record.

The team is set to miss the playoffs for the eighth time in the last nine years.

While a trade could potentially fill several holes, the Angels clearly would prefer to re-sign him to a new deal.

FROM MLB TRADE RUMORS

Quick Hits: Gore, Trout, Zobrist, Orioles

By Mark Polishuk

After spending parts of five seasons in the big leagues, **Terrance Gore** finally collected his first Major League hit, notching a single during the Cubs' 10-3 loss to the Nationals yesterday in the first game of a

double-header. Though Gore has appeared in 55 games since the start of the 2014 season, he has only 16 career plate appearances due to his exclusive usage as a pinch-runner and late-inning defensive sub. Gore's speed made him a valuable roster piece during the Royals' two postseason runs in 2014 and 2015, and he'll likely see similar work for the Cubs down the stretch this season and potentially into October.

Here's more from around the baseball world...

- The **Angels** are expected to approach **Mike Trout** about an extension this winter, which The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal (subscription required) feels could determine whether or not the team would ever consider trading the game's best player. Management has been adamantly opposed to the thought of dealing Trout in the past, and the general feeling is that Arte Moreno wouldn't okay a Trout trade as long as he owns the Angels. If Trout declines an extension or gives an indication that he'll test free agency when his current contract is up after the 2020 season, however, Rosenthal feels that the Angels "would know where they stood" in counting the superstar outfielder as part of their long-term plans. The Halos could still just aim to build around Trout over the next two seasons or, conceivably, at least think about the possibility of a trade that could instantly add a lot of young talent to the Angels' organization. *"One of the best talents in the history of the game is rarely explored in the market. A team might be willing to do something absolutely insane to acquire him. We just don't know,"* one rival executive said about a potential Trout trade.
- As you might expect, **Ben Zobrist** has no regrets about signing with the **Cubs** in the 2015-16 offseason, the veteran super-utilityman tells The Athletic's Patrick Mooney. The decision has already led to one World Series ring for Zobrist, and unlike his other suitors that winter (a list that includes the Giants, Mets, and Nationals), the Cubs are still postseason contenders in 2018. Zobrist has strongly rebounded from a down year in 2017 to hit .313/.387/.458 over 443 PA for the Cubs this season, so it's fair to say that the team is also quite satisfied in its decision giving Zobrist a four-year, \$56MM deal that winter.
- The **Orioles** are lacking in multi-positional players, Eduardo A. Encina of the Baltimore Sun writes, giving the team yet another area to address as it enters a rebuild period. Not even any of the players acquired by the O's in their deadline deals looks like a candidate for such a role in the future, though the team will be looking at what **Jonathan Villar**, **Breyvic Valera**, and **Steve Wilkerson** can do at multiple positions.

FROM CHICAGO SUN TIMES

Shohei Ohtani draws praise from White Sox manager Rick Renteria

By Brian Sandalow

Count White Sox manager Rick Renteria among those impressed with the Angels' Shohei Ohtani.

“I think anybody who’s a fan of baseball likes to see somebody as exciting as he is,” Renteria said. “Once he’s recovered ultimately from whatever they do to correct his arm, it’s interesting to see a guy who can do a lot of different things. He can hit; he can run. Obviously he’s capable of pitching, so it’s a unique skill that he has on both sides of the baseball.”

When healthy, Ohtani has been a dynamic presence as a hitter and pitcher. Ohtani has 19 home runs and a .291 batting average to go along with a 129 ERA+ on the mound. On Sunday, he went 1-for-3 with a double and hasn’t skipped a beat as a hitter since the news that he likely will need reconstructive elbow surgery.

He’s not expected to return to the mound until 2020, but Ohtani’s success has led some to wonder whether more two-way players are coming in the future. Renteria didn’t rule it out.

“I guess if you’re that talented, maybe that’s an option that a club can take,” Renteria said.

As for how a two-way player would work out of the bullpen, Renteria had some logistical questions and used Matt Davidson as an example in a hypothetical situation.

“Matty’s playing first base, and I got to get him ready to pick up an inning,” Renteria said. “When do I find the time to get him ready to put in that inning? It depends on if they’re in the lineup on that particular day, so there are some logistics aspects to it that might be an issue. As a starter, obviously you know he’s going to start that day. So that would be the only thing that you would have to consider.”

Abreu is close

On the disabled list since Aug. 22 after surgery on his lower-abdominal/groin area, Jose Abreu appears close to a return. Renteria said Abreu is “feeling good” and was hoping he’d be back in the lineup Monday.

“As soon as we are assured that he feels good and our guys in the medical staff feel good about it, then we’ll go ahead and proceed,” Renteria said.

Closing in

James Shields is 13,, innings away from a 200-inning season. Renteria praised Shields for his work ethic, his example to his younger teammates and his ability to take the ball when needed.

“If he can get to 200 innings, we’d be extremely happy for him,” Renteria said.

‘Tough news’

Reynaldo Lopez had a predictable reaction to the Michael Kopech news.

“As a teammate, you are always rooting for your guys, rooting for your teammates,” Lopez said. “He was doing great. It was tough news. We were all a little down after the news, but we are supporting him. We have his back.”

“He’s a very talented pitcher, and we are very confident that he’s going to come back stronger.”

The Sox haven’t announced who will start Tuesday in Kopech’s place.

FROM THE JAPAN TIMES

Shohei Ohtani stretches hit streak to seven games as Angels sweep White Sox

CHICAGO – Shohei Ohtani extended his hitting streak to seven games when he doubled in the Los Angeles Angels’ 1-0 victory over the Chicago White Sox on Sunday.

Ohtani doubled to right-center in the eighth inning at Guaranteed Rate Field to cap a 1-for-3 day after he struck out swinging, drew a walk and flied out in his previous at-bats.

His Angels teammate Kole Calhoun hit an RBI single in the seventh to break a scoreless deadlock after Ian Hamilton (0-1) relieved Chicago starter Reynaldo Lopez and got himself in a one-out, two-on jam.

Los Angeles starter Andrew Heaney (9-9) pitched three-hit ball over seven innings while striking out a career-high 12 for the win. The Angels completed a three-game sweep of the White Sox.

At Coors Field, Kenta Maeda worked a scoreless eighth as the Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Colorado Rockies 9-6.

Maeda relieved Caleb Ferguson after the lefty allowed a leadoff homer to Charlie Blackmon in the eighth that cut the Dodgers’ lead to 8-6. Maeda got three outs and took the mound again in the ninth, but he was pulled after Ian Desmond reached on a leadoff single.

“I feel bad for leaving the mound with a runner on base in the ninth, but other than that it was a good outing overall. I think I worked a key inning,” Maeda said.

FROM THE DALLAS NEWS

The 3 elements of Bartolo Colon's rare baseball legacy, as told by figures from Big Sexy's MLB career

By Gerry Fraley

He is the last Expo.

He is the last player to appear at Tiger Stadium.

He is the all-time winningest pitcher from Latin America.

Most of all, Bartolo Colon is a cheerful man of the people. Consider this moment from the Rangers' trip to Oakland in August.

As Colon reached the door to the visitors' clubhouse at The Coliseum, two workers shouted his name. Colon stopped, grinned when he spotted the workers and warmly greeted them.

The men, who declined to give their names, said they developed a friendship with Colon when he pitched with the Athletics in 2012-13. It continued when he moved on to new clubs.

"He seems very shy and reserved," said Los Angeles Angels manager Mike Scioscia, who had Colon on his club in 2005-07. "But when you're around him, you find out he's very funny and has a great sense of humor. Everyone loved him."

The final chapter could be at hand for Colon. He is 45 years old and has a 5-plus ERA for the second consecutive season. On Saturday, Rangers manager Jeff Banister removed Colon from the starting rotation.

If this is the end for Colon after one season with the Rangers and 21 years in the majors, this is how he will be remembered:

Art of pitching

Colon long ago developed the habit of putting intricate and colorful designs on a baseball the day after a win. It was a form of relaxation.

During his time with Oakland, Colon would take his marking pens and do the artwork in the office of Nick Paparesta, the head athletic trainer.

One day, Paparesta complimented Colon on his impressive artistic skills. The next day, Paparesta found six of the baseballs on his desk. From then on, Colon made sure to do a baseball for Paparesta.

"Bartolo is the type of guy that somehow, some way finds a way to be everyone's best friend," Paparesta said. "Teammates, coaching staff, everyone. His personality and charisma are awesome.

"He's an easy guy to work with, a great guy to work with. He's great with people."

The baseballs remain in Paparesta's office as a tribute to Colon.

Funny guy

Colon has a big sense of humor.

Some of it is pure slapstick.

Colon gets a kick out of sneaking up behind teammates and startling them with a tap on the shoulder. Or smacking the foam roller he uses to keep his back loose to make a loud noise.

"He's 45 going on 12," former Minnesota teammate Chris Gimenez said.

Some of it is subtle and is designed to help the target relax.

With Minnesota last season, Colon watched young third baseman Miguel Sano strike out at a staggering rate. When Sano returned to the bench after yet another whiff, Colon asked to see his bat.

Colon grabbed a baseball and tapped it against the barrel of Sano's bat. Hit the ball with the bat, Colon was saying.

Sano got a hit in his next at-bat.

"He took the ball and said, 'Hit it here, hit it here,' Sano said. "He's a great man. He sees how we're doing. He tries to help people out, on and off the field."

Minnesota manager Paul Molitor watched the Colon-Sano episode. To Molitor, it was the essence of Colon.

"He doesn't take himself too seriously," Molitor said. "I think at times we all get a little too tightly wound about who we are and where we are in the game. [Colon's humor] takes a little pressure off."

Colon is at his best on game-day. Most starting pitchers pull back into another world when it is their day. Colon goes the other way, talking to everyone who comes close.

Colon started Oakland's opener against Seattle at Tokyo in 2012 and retired the first 12 batters faced. After the fourth inning, he returned to a quiet dugout.

That would not do.

"Shhhh! I have a perfect game going," Colon shouted before breaking into a belly-laugh.

Catching breaks

By all rights, Colon should have a few detractors.

He revived a career stalled by elbow and shoulder injuries by undergoing stem-cell treatment in the Dominican Republic in 2010. The procedure was legal, but Major League Baseball investigated because the doctor involved advocated the use of human growth hormone in some instances.

Colon was among the players caught up in the Biogenesis scandal of 2013. Colon served a 50-game suspension in 2012 for the use of synthetic testosterone, a performance-enhancing substance.

In 2015, Colon was the subject of a civil suit for failing to support two children fathered outside his marriage.

Colon got a pass each time. No one stays angry with Big Sexy.

"He's very likable," said Cleveland manager Terry Francona, who had Colon with Boston in 2008. "You see him on the street and he looks like us. People relate to that."

Impressive longevity

Los Angeles Dodgers manager Dave Roberts broke into the major leagues with Cleveland in 1999 as an outfielder. His teammates included Colon, in his third major league season.

"He's the same guy as he was then," Roberts said. "Jovial. A great teammate."

There was one more thing.

"I'm shocked he's still pitching," Roberts said. "If I had to pick one guy from that team who'd still be playing, he would not have been on the list."

What enabled Colon to continue?

The stem-cell treatment in 2010 essentially gave him a second career. Injuries limited Colon to 47 starts in 2006-09, and he missed the 2010 season.

Colon began working in the fields of Altamira, Dominican Republic, at age 9. He has mentioned working as a youth as enabling him to have a lengthy career.

Colon is far more athletic than his barrel-chested body suggests. He is the best fielder on the Rangers' staff this year.

Scioscia said Colon shares a trait with another thick-bodied pitcher who lasted well into his 40s: Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan. Each was able to repeat his delivery.

For Colon, that meant the ability to throw strikes with the sinking fastball.

"Bartolo is a great athlete, and it showed up in him being able to repeat a delivery for so many years," Scioscia said. "That's what kept Bartolo so good."

That is how Bartolo Colon will be remembered: Beloved teammate, impish character, outstanding pitcher. A rare combination.

FROM NBC SPORTS CHICAGO

Mike Trout's South Side slugfest sparks thoughts of White Sox rebuild yielding its own offensive superstar

By Vinnie Duber

It's overzealous to imagine that any rebuild will produce a superstar as good as Mike Trout.

Baseball's best player did his thing this weekend on the South Side, most notably with a five-hit, five-RBI, two-homer game Saturday night.

But while the White Sox rebuilding effort likely won't yield one player that does everything Trout does and as well, there are players either already playing in the majors or still developing in the minor leagues that have superstar potential and superstar expectations. Other successful rebuilds have produced multiple superstars: The Cubs have Kris Bryant, Anthony Rizzo and Javy Baez, while the Houston Astros have Jose Altuve, Carlos Correa and Alex Bregman. Those top-billed players are of course surrounded by plenty of others who make those teams championship caliber.

The White Sox are trying to accomplish the same kind of thing.

We've seen that the mere presence of a once-in-a-lifetime player like Trout does not a perennial contender make. The Los Angeles Angels have played in a grand total of three playoff games and won none of them during Trout's career, now in its seventh season. But what if the White Sox are able to stick one of the game's best hitters in their lineup every day?

"Anybody would be happy to have the type of talent," manager Rick Renteria said before Sunday's game. "I'm sure that someday soon we'll be able to do something like that and be very happy that we're in that position."

The most obvious candidate to achieve superstardom is Eloy Jimenez, baseball's No. 3 prospect and the top-ranked prospect in the White Sox loaded farm system. Jimenez already has monster expectations after turning in a .337/.384/.577 slash line to go along with 22 home runs and 75 RBIs in his first full season in the organization. The fan base seemed to welcome each homer and extra-base hit this summer with calls for his promotion to the big leagues.

Fans - and most likely the White Sox front office, too - have been dreaming about slotting Jimenez into the middle of the batting order ever since he was acquired in the Crosstown swap with the Cubs last summer, and he figures to make his way to the majors relatively soon. The kind of power bat he swings could make for the kind of home-run show Trout put on Saturday night.

While fans have perhaps decreased their expectations for Yoan Moncada during his strikeout-heavy 2018 campaign, the White Sox second baseman is not far removed from top-prospect status and superstar potential. The team still believes he can achieve it, and the frequent flashes of brilliance coupled with Moncada's still-young age of 23 make it look anything but impossible.

Trout has led baseball in on-base percentage in two of the last three seasons, owning the American League's highest mark in that third one. He entered Sunday's series finale with a staggering .465 on-base percentage in 2018. Well, that's the attribute the White Sox point to when talking about Moncada, who had a .377 OBP with Triple-A Charlotte last season and a combined .407 OBP in the Boston Red Sox system in 2016. This season, despite a .223 batting average and a major league leading 193 strikeouts, he still boasts an on-base percentage above .300, thanks in part to a team-high 58 walks.

Now those numbers are hardly Trout-esque, but they do highlight what the White Sox believe is the best part of Moncada's game, a part that could power him to eventual superstardom, even if he hasn't exactly blown the doors off his first full season in the majors.

"This kid's got a world of hitting ability, blessed with fantastic tools, power," general manager Rick Hahn said last week. "The plate discipline's one of the things that's tough to teach, and he already comes with that. So the things that we do have to teach in order to decrease those strikeouts a little bit down the road, that's a workable project."

Heading back to the minors, there is another position player who could one day be a White Sox superstar: Luis Robert. Just 21, the Cuban-import center fielder still has only played 50 minor league baseball games in the United States. Thumb injuries limited his first full season in the White Sox organization, and he finished the year without a home run. But he's been talked about as a player with many tools, with rave reviews about his speed, his glove and his bat.

The power, too, is expected to return, simply a side effect of the thumb injuries.

"I do think one thing to keep in mind about Luis is as we see all the time with thumb or wrist or hand injuries, that it does take a little time for the power to come back, and I think we've seen that," Hahn said. "He's swinging the bat well, we've seen that plus hit tool. The power hasn't quite been there yet this year, but with two DL stints for a hand and for a thumb injury, that's not a shock. I look forward to seeing where he's at next spring."

Is Robert heading for big league superstardom? It's way too early to tell at this point, considering he's played just 32 games at Class A Winston-Salem and is still so young and so inexperienced. But he's ranked as the organization's No. 3 prospect and as the No. 25 prospect in the game, and if the batting practice shows he put on during spring training are any indication, the guy can do some special things with the bat.

It goes to show how insanely good Trout is that discussions of each of these young White Sox reaching superstar status revolve around one or a few of the skills that Trout displays on a daily basis. Jimenez, Moncada and Robert reaching their potential and becoming among the game's best hitters could still place them nowhere near Trout. That's hardly a knock against them.

The White Sox, of course, would prefer to have multiple stars, if not super, on their roster if it means competing for championships on an annual basis, as opposed to the Angels' situation, steaming toward another postseason-less campaign while Trout is once again in the conversation to win the AL MVP. And of course there's the possibility of the White Sox producing one or more pitching superstars. Michael Kopech, Carlos Rodon and Dylan Cease all have their own batches of star-level expectations and could lead a star-studded rotation.

Having a Trout might be out of the question for the White Sox - and 28 other teams around the game, for that matter - but they could be developing their own superstar right now to lead the team from rebuilding mode to contention mode. And once contention mode arrives, having a bona fide, one-of-the-best-in-the-game superstar in the thick of that lineup could mean the difference between contending for a championship and winning one.