



Press Clips

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FROM THE OC REGISTER**Shohei Ohtani belts first major league homer in Angels' victory**

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — In a span of two days, Shohei Ohtani made this seemingly impossible challenge feel ... possible.

Just over 48 hours after Ohtani The Pitcher had a breakthrough performance, Ohtani The Hitter delivered a three-run homer as part of three-hit game.

After the Angels celebrated their 13-2 victory over the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday night, players were still marveling at what this 23-year-old is doing.

The skeptics, many of whom became emboldened during a spring training in which Ohtani's results weren't matching his promise, have been quieted significantly in the last few days.

Ohtani pitched six innings to pick up the victory on Sunday, retiring 14 of the last 15 hitters after all three runs came on one bad pitch.

Then on Tuesday, in his first game at Angel Stadium, he belted a homer and then blistered two other singles. He's now 4 for 9 in two games as the team's designated hitter.

Afterward, Ohtani humbly suggested the wind helped his first career homer reach the seats, and he acknowledged that two games proves little.

"What matters more is what happens after today," Ohtani said in Japanese. "It's fine when I'm able to take my own swing, but as I face more pitchers and I'm not able do that, that's when I have to step up to the next level. Today was great, but I look forward to preparing for my next game."

Ohtani's teammates – who gave him the traditional silent treatment after his first homer – could not be more thrilled with what's happened.

"There are a lot of unwanted and unnecessary negative comments about his game," Ian Kinsler said. "He didn't have a chance to prove himself. It's a lot of fun to see something like that from a guy who has a huge spotlight on him and obviously doesn't let it bother him. He's played extremely well the first week of the season. It's real exciting to see."

Justin Upton referred to Ohtani's moment on Tuesday as both "ridiculous" and "awesome."

Even though the Angels have had more than seven weeks together to get used to the idea of a player who pitches and hits, Upton said it's "still pretty special what he's doing. We're going to enjoy watching."

Ohtani, performing under the spotlight of two countries watching his every move, had shown no signs of frustration, and no lack of confidence as his results in spring training prompted some outsiders to wonder if he was up to this challenge.

Spring training, as the Angels said to whoever would listen, doesn't count.

Upon beginning the regular season, with his leg kick reduced to a toe tap, Ohtani had managed a hit in his first at-bat on opening day. Then he took four days off without seeing a live pitch, a necessary hiatus to focus on pitching.

Indians righty Josh Tomlin was waiting for him when he finally got into the batter's box again on Tuesday night, with the bases loaded in a 2-2 game in the first inning. Tomlin uncorked a wild pitch that pushed home the go-ahead run.

He was ahead of Ohtani, 1-and-2, and then he threw him a curveball, the type of pitch that seemed to give Ohtani trouble in spring training.

This time, Ohtani crushed it. The ball rocketed off his bat at 105 mph, carrying 397 feet and dropping just into the seats over the right-field fence. The Angel Stadium crowd erupted as Ohtani circled the bases.

He then stepped into the dugout and got the customary silent treatment, with his teammates feigning disinterest in his accomplishment. Ohtani seemed to appreciate the joke for a moment. He raised his hands as if to high-five invisible teammates.

Finally, the Angels relented and mobbed him, slapping him on the back and helmet. He then stepped out of the dugout to acknowledge the curtain call.

"I was really happy," Ohtani said. "It was great that I was able to hit my first home run at home and during a winning game."

Meanwhile, the milestone ball ended up in the hands of 33-year-old Indians fan Chris Incorvaia, who immediately stuck it in the glove of 9-year-old Matthew Gutierrez.

"He's an Angels fan; I'm an Indians fan; I knew he would appreciate it a lot more," said Incorvaia, who later met Ohtani, along with Gutierrez and his father.

They handed him the ball from the first of his three hits on Tuesday.

Ohtani added line-drive singles in two of his next three trips to the plate, including a 112.8-mph laser that was the Angels' hardest hit ball since last August.

"I think that Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has tonight," Manager Mike Scioscia said. "He showed the power and the ability to square up a baseball. He had a great night for us."

It was a pretty great night for many Angels, in stark contrast to the dreary 6-0 loss in the home opener on Monday.

The Angels hit five homers, including one by Mike Trout. It was the first ball to hit the portion of the right field wall that was in play before the club added a yellow line to make the park less pitcher-friendly.

Luis Valbuena and Upton also hit homers. René Rivera had a homer, also just over the yellow line, that was part of a four-RBI night. Albert Pujols had two more hits, climbing within 27 hits of 3,000.

The Angels pitchers combined to hold the Indians to just one hit, a Jose Ramírez two-run homer in the first inning against Garrett Richards. After that, Richards struck out nine on his way to 5-2/3 strong innings. His new curveball was effective enough that he threw 24 of them among his 102 pitches.

“If I can throw that pitch for a strike, it opens up a lot of different possibilities for me from at-bat to at-bat,” he said.

Richards responded from a sloppy first inning to strike out the side in the second, his emotions perhaps bolstered by the energy in the stadium from the Ohtani homer that gave the Angels a 6-2 lead.

“It was cool,” Richards said. “He’s a young kid. He’s got a lot on his shoulders. A lot of expectations. It was good to watch him go out and have fun and produce a little bit.”

Angels place Matt Shoemaker on the disabled list

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — Less than a week into the season, the Angels have already sent a second starter to the disabled list.

Matt Shoemaker was placed on the disabled list on Tuesday with a strained forearm, although that diagnosis could change since he hadn’t yet undergone an MRI. He is expected to have multiple tests “very soon,” he said.

Shoemaker joins Andrew Heaney, who is still out with elbow inflammation. Heaney could be back soon, though. He is scheduled to throw 80 to 90 pitches in a minor league game on Friday.

Shoemaker has been replaced by Parker Bridwell, who is scheduled to take his turn in the rotation on Friday.

Shoemaker said he’s not yet sure how concerned to be, since he hasn’t yet undergone the full battery of tests. He’s merely frustrated that, in the hours and days following his start on Saturday, he began to feel similar discomfort to the injury that cost him the second half of the 2017 season.

“I want to be out there playing,” he said. “I’m more frustrated than anything. The last two days have been pretty tough. Why am I having this feeling again? The concern is not that high. I just want to get it fixed.”

Last year Shoemaker had surgery in August to release the radial nerve in his forearm, the final step in a process that had seen him miss more than a month before surgery was elected.

“We decompressed the nerve and that fixed it, from then until now,” he said. “We don’t even know if that’s what it is again. It’s similar symptoms.”

He suggested there could be scar tissue from the surgery causing his latest issue. Shoemaker said he didn’t feel any problem throughout the spring or through most of his start on Saturday. Toward the end of his 5-2/3-inning start, he began to feel “a little bit of achiness, but nothing that was a red flag. Less than mild. I wasn’t even concerned with it. But later that night and the next day, it definitely felt worse.”

The latest Angels pitching injury shines a spotlight on what has been the team’s biggest problem the last few years.

General Manager Billy Eppler didn’t address it by getting any major league starters from outside the organization. He instead was counting on the improved health and depth from the group they had. When spring training began, the Angels had eight healthy major league starters.

Now, they have six, with Heaney perhaps back soon. Nick Tropeano is also healthy and available at Triple-A.

Scioscia said the Angels have looked from all angles to see if they can do something differently to keep the starters healthy. The most significant change is going with a six-man rotation, which gives extra rest to the starters.

“We’ve peeled the paint off everything you can possibly do from the medical side to the training to seeing how these guys’ strength is and their recovery,” Scioscia said. “Sometimes these things still crop up. You never have a team that goes through less than six to nine or 10 starters throughout a season at some point. Hopefully we’ll get guys throwing the ball the way they can and keep them healthy. That’s what we anticipate.”

Shohei Ohtani to make first home pitching start on Sunday vs. A’s

By Jeff Fletcher

ANAHEIM — Shohei Ohtani’s Angel Stadium pitching debut will be on Sunday, facing the same Oakland A’s team he beat a week earlier.

The Angels announced their rotation for the weekend, with Parker Bridwell scheduled for Friday and JC Ramírez for Saturday.

Ohtani, who allowed three runs in six innings against the A's on Sunday, will be pitching on six days rest. All but one of his outings since the start of spring training has come with at least six days rest.

Ohtani was in the lineup as the designated hitter on Tuesday night, his second regular-season start at DH.

ALSO

The Angels acquired right-hander Akeel Morris from the Atlanta Braves for a player to be named or cash considerations. Morris was optioned to Triple-A. Morris, 25, has pitched eight major-league innings over the past two years, with the New York Mets and Braves. He allowed six runs, with nine strikeouts. He has struck out 11.8 batters per nine innings over his minor league career, which is no doubt one of the reasons the Angels wanted him. In order to clear a spot on the 40-man roster for Morris, the Angels designated Troy Scribner for assignment. ...

Martín Maldonado was not in the lineup on Tuesday night, but Manager Mike Scioscia said it had nothing to do with Maldonado being hit in the hand by a pitch on Monday. He said Maldonado was scheduled to have the day off.

UP NEXT

Angels (Tyler Skaggs, 1-0, 0.00) vs. Indians (Corey Kluber, 0-1, 2.25), Wednesday, 1 p.m., Fox Sports West/KLAA (830 AM)

FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

It's a special moment for Shohei Ohtani as he clubs his first home run at Angel Stadium

By Dylan Hernandez

The stadium looked half empty, as was the case many times here last year and the year before that.

Only this wasn't the same place. There was a previously undetectable electricity, an unmistakable excitement.

Shohei Ohtani made Angel Stadium the place to be Tuesday night, a miracle last performed when the Rally Monkey first appeared on the video scoreboard here almost two decades ago.

A week after he singled in his first major league at-bat and two days after he won his first major league game as a pitcher, Ohtani stepped into the batter's box of his new home stadium for the first time.

He homered.

The three-run homer against Cleveland Indians starter Josh Tomlin was produced by the most elegant of left-handed strokes, a first-inning line drive that sailed into the sea of outstretched hands in the right field stands.

By the end of the Angels' 13-2 victory, Ohtani had three hits, each of them struck with a shocking degree of violence.

Somehow, through all of this, Ohtani has managed to radiate the innocent enthusiasm of a boy from rural Japan. In that regard, his teammates have helped.

After circling the bases and touching home, Ohtani returned to the bench to find the other Angels doing what baseball players do these days when a player hits his first home runs: Their eyes were on the field and their backs were turned to him.

"I didn't really know," Ohtani said in Japanese. "But when I got there, I thought, 'I wonder if it's something like that ...' "

Ohtani raised his arms and celebrated on his own, then reached over to his right and embraced Ian Kinsler from behind. Kinsler returned the embrace. In an instant, Ohtani was mobbed.

Ohtani high-fived Mike Trout and smiled.

"I was happy," Ohtani said.

There was another welcome-to-the-team experience after the game. As a completely unsuspecting Ohtani was conducting a postgame interview on the field, Kole Calhoun sneaked up behind him and emptied a cooler full of ice water on him.

"I had seen the ice water on television before," Ohtani said. "It was good. He got me, but it made me really happy."

The three-hit night included a second-inning single, a line drive that powered through the outstretched glove of second baseman Jason Kipnis. His third hit came in the eighth inning on another line drive, this one to center.

Ohtani was nonchalant about his achievements, but they were historic by nature. Before him, the last player to win a game as a pitcher and hit a first-inning home run within the next two days was Babe Ruth, who did it on June 13-14, 1921. The last rookie with three or more hits and one or more wins in his team's first six games of a season was Dutch Stryker of the 1924 Boston Braves.

So much for an adjustment period. So much for how he looked in spring training.

Only seven days ago, skeptical observers were counting down to when Ohtani would be demoted to triple-A Salt Lake or forced to abandon hitting.

Common sense dictated that it was hard enough to only pitch or only hit in the major leagues, that it was impossible to do both, that a hitter couldn't develop any rhythm when limited to a handful of at-bats every week.

Except conventional wisdom isn't applicable to every situation, to every person.

Ohtani could be the outlier. He certainly is physically.

He stands 6 feet 4. He throws a baseball faster than any player on the team. In batting practice, he hits them farther than anyone too.

And if Ohtani isn't the fastest runner on the team, he's a close second to Trout.

Even in the company of the top baseball players on the planet, he's a physical freak. He's the pitcher with a beard in Little League. He's the 13-year-old kid who can already dunk. He's a drug-free Josh Hamilton.

Observe him throwing and hitting for a while, listen to how his former instructors in Japan talk about his intelligence, take in how Mike Scioscia and others on the Angels describe his work habits, and performances like his on Tuesday start to feel inevitable, if not like the start of something more.

As for how he managed to develop timing at the plate without hitting in games, Ohtani said, "The games in which I pitch are part of my sense of rhythm. It's not something I just started."

The questions now about the possibilities: How many more games can Ohtani win? How many more home runs can he hit? How far will he hit them?

Ohtani will be the team's designated hitter again Wednesday.

Shohei Ohtani homers in first at-bat at home as Angels dominate Indians

By Jeff Miller

After all those frowning concerns, a dugout of smiles.

After all those doubts, an answer most definitive.

After all those grounders, the biggest of flies.

No way, Shohei!

One of the most anticipated rookies in baseball history, Shohei Ohtani delivered dramatically for the second time in three days, rewarding that anticipation this time with a three-run homer in his first Angel Stadium at-bat.

"That was ridiculous," Justin Upton said after the Angels' 13-2 victory over Cleveland. "It's awesome, man. Just in that situation ... first at-bat at home. ... You can't draw it up any better than that."

The arching first-inning drive came on an otherwise unsuspecting 74-mph curve from Josh Tomlin.

As the ball sailed over right-center and landed an estimated 397 feet away, the stadium boomed with noise and chaotic delight. Fireworks crackled overhead.

Ohtani touched home and, as he headed toward the bench, shook the hands of the next two scheduled batters — Rene Rivera and Zack Cozart.

Then, he arrived back in the dugout to find the only silent space around. The Angels, honoring a baseball tradition, flatly ignored their conquering teammate.

Finally, Ohtani broke the stillness by wrapping his arms around Ian Kinsler's shoulders and the Angels converged, giving Ohtani high-fives and back slaps.

With the crowd's roar rising again, Rivera put one foot outside the batter's box, delaying the game long enough for Ohtani to do quick curtain call, his helmet held aloft.

"I thought it was going to hit the fence," Ohtani said. "I'm glad it went into the stands."

Said Kinsler: "It's great to see something like that from a guy who has a huge spotlight on him."

All of this, after a spring training that saw Ohtani hit nothing but singles and not very many of them, a spring training during which he struggled with those very breaking pitches.

The lacking performance prompted speculation that he could start the season in the minor leagues, the Angels insisting they would stick to their plan and encouraging the outside world to be patient.

Turns out, there wasn't much patience necessary. In his first pitching start, on Sunday in Oakland, Ohtani beat the A's by limiting them to three runs — all in the span of three batters — in six often-dominant innings.

His first appearance on the mound at Angel Stadium is set for Sunday, against the same Oakland team. After the flair he has displayed of late, the anticipation for that start should now only increase.

This was Ohtani's second game as a designated hitter. In the Angels' season opener Thursday, he singled — a ground ball to right — in his first at-bat, and then made four rather routine outs.

In his second career DH appearance, routine was harder to find, Ohtani also lining a single off the glove of Cleveland second baseman Jason Kipnis and another single up the middle.

"He's got a lot on his shoulders in terms of expectations," winning pitcher Garrett Richards said. "It was good to see him go out there and have fun and produce."

Ohtani's theatrics highlighted a night when the Angels ended a 12-game losing streak to the Indians, a slide that equaled the franchise record for consecutive defeats to one team.

Upton, Rivera, Mike Trout and Luis Valbuena also homered, drives memorable in the moment but made more mundane by what Ohtani did.

Angels put Matt Shoemaker on the 10-day disabled list because of forearm strain

By Jeff Miller

Just six days into a season dependent on a healthy rotation, the Angels placed No. 2 starter Matt Shoemaker on the 10-day disabled list.

The right-hander has a strained forearm that he said felt "pretty similar" to the injury that ended his 2017 season in mid-June.

Though that sounds ominous, Shoemaker explained that he was optimistic this issue could be something no more significant than perhaps scar tissue.

"The concern isn't necessarily that high," he said. "I just want to get it fixed and be ready to go."

Shoemaker is scheduled to undergo tests to determine the severity of something he said he first felt toward the end of his 5 2/3-inning start Saturday in Oakland.

Initially, the discomfort was so minor that Shoemaker dismissed it. Later that night and into Sunday, he said his forearm "felt definitely worse," causing the team's medical personnel to become involved.

"I'm more frustrated than anything," Shoemaker said. "The last two days have been pretty tough. It's like, 'Why am I having this feeling again?'"

He made only 14 starts last season because of radial nerve compression in his right forearm. Shoemaker underwent surgery in August but returned to pitch in the Angels' instructional league in October and reported no problems through spring training.

The team opened the season with Andrew Heaney on the disabled list because of elbow inflammation.

Heaney is scheduled to throw 80-90 pitches in a minor league game Friday and could be ready to make his 2018 debut with the Angels after that outing.

Parker Bridwell was recalled from triple-A Salt Lake to replace Shoemaker on the roster and as the Angels' starter Friday at home against Oakland.

JC Ramirez will start Saturday, followed on Sunday by Shohei Ohtani, who will be making his Angel Stadium debut as a pitcher.

Morris acquired from Braves

The Angels acquired right-handed pitcher Akeel Morris from Atlanta in exchange for cash or a player to be named. Morris, 25, has appeared in nine big-league games in parts of two seasons. He was optioned to Salt Lake.

To make room on the 40-man roster, the Angels designated for assignment pitcher Troy Scribner.

Maldonado's rest was scheduled

Catcher Martin Maldonado didn't start Tuesday against the Cleveland Indians, but manager Mike Scioscia said that was the Angels' plan entering this series and was not related to Maldonado getting hit by a pitch in the hand Monday.

FROM ANGELS.COM

Ohtani hits 1 of 5 Angels homers in win vs. Tribe

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- The Angels put an end to their woes against the Indians in decisive fashion Tuesday night, as Shohei Ohtani's first career home run highlighted an offensive eruption that fueled a 13-2 win at Angel Stadium.

One day after being shut out for the first time this year, the Angels' lineup used five home runs to snap a 12-game losing streak against the Indians, setting up a rubber match in Wednesday's series finale.

Ohtani stole the show, crushing a three-run home run off Indians right-hander Josh Tomlin in his first at-bat at Angel Stadium to cap a six-run first inning and send the 35,007 fans into a frenzy. Ohtani, who finished 3-for-4 in his second start as the Angels' designated hitter, is the first player to earn a win in one game, then homer as a non-pitcher in his next game since Babe Ruth in 1921.

"When I hit it, I thought it was going to be off the wall, so I was running hard," Ohtani said through an interpreter. "But I'm glad it cleared the fence."

Mike Trout, Justin Upton and Luis Valbuena also homered off Tomlin, who was chased after allowing eight runs over three innings.

"I think we can score in a lot of different ways," manager Mike Scioscia said. "I think we're hitting well with guys in scoring position. I think we set the table well. We're going to drive the ball, maybe not to the extent we did tonight, which was exceptional. It was a great offensive night for us all the way from one-through-nine tonight, and it's a good win."

Angels right-hander Garrett Richards gave up a two-run homer to Jose Ramirez in a shaky first inning, but rebounded nicely after his offense gave him a 6-2 lead. He and the Angels' bullpen did not allow another hit, as Richards notched his first win of the season and collected nine strikeouts.

"I have to buckle down and stop the bleeding right there," Richards said. "That's what I tried to do, and allow the guys to get comfortable in the box and put up some runs."

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

First "new home run" at Angel Stadium: The Angels were the beneficiaries of the new lowered right-field-wall boundaries in the first, as Trout launched a 1-1 sinker from Tomlin off the scoreboard for his second home run of the season, which cut the Indians' lead to 2-1. With the home-run boundary lowered by 10 feet, balls no longer have to clear the wall to be considered home runs, though Bradley Zimmer still played Trout's shot off the wall.

"It was sick," Trout said. "I knew it had a chance. When I was running around first, I couldn't really tell where it hit, but the umpire signaled pretty quick."

Richards settles in: Richards recovered nicely after a shaky first inning, blanking the Indians for the rest of his 5 2/3 innings. After Ramirez's home run, the Indians were 0-for-17 against the 29-year-old right-hander.

"Obviously, the first [inning] was a little bit difference pace," Richards said. "Toward the second inning, I started speeding up my pace in between pitches and just started to attack guys. I'm still wanting to throw more strikes, still trying to limit the walks, but it was a great team win tonight."

SOUND SMART WITH YOUR FRIENDS

The Angels matched a franchise record with five different players hitting home runs. The last time the club accomplished the feat was Aug. 18, 2017.

MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

Rene Rivera also took advantage of the truncated home-run boundary in the eighth, when he capped the Angels' big offensive night with a two-run homer off Indians reliever Zach McAllister. The hit was initially ruled a double, but Rivera was credited with a home run after a crew-chief review determined that the ball hit above the yellow line on the right-field wall.

WHAT'S NEXT

Tyler Skaggs will make his second start of the season Wednesday, as the Angels close out their series against the Indians at 1:07 p.m. PT at Angel Stadium. Skaggs looked dominant in his season debut against the A's on Friday, pitching 6 1/3 scoreless innings to lead the Angels to their first win of the season. He is 0-2 with a 6.23 ERA in three career starts against the Indians.

Sho off! Ohtani hits first career HR

By Avery Yang

ANAHEIM -- It was a no-doubter.

In his first at-bat at Angel Stadium -- and just his second MLB start at designated hitter -- Shohei Ohtani hit his first career home run, a towering three-run shot to right field that capped the Angels' six-run first inning in their 13-2 win over the Indians on Tuesday night.

"Obviously, it felt really, really good," Ohtani said through an interpreter during his on-field postgame interview. "Not just my teammates, but my hitting coach and all of the staff have helped me out a lot. My success is due to them."

With a 2-2 count and runners on second and third, Ohtani sent an inside curveball from Indians starter Josh Tomlin well over the 18-foot right-field fence and several rows deep. Ohtani came to the plate with the bases loaded, but a wild pitch scored Kole Calhoun.

It was Ohtani's second career hit after he went 1-for-5 against the A's on Opening Day. He singled on the first pitch he saw in his Major League career.

Ohtani collected singles in the third and eighth to notch his first multi-hit game.

Angels place Shoemaker on 10-day DL

Bridwell recalled to take open spot in rotation, start Friday vs. A's

By Maria Guardado

ANAHEIM -- The Angels' rotation took another hit Tuesday, as Matt Shoemaker was placed on the 10-day disabled list with a right forearm strain. Parker Bridwell was recalled from Triple-A Salt Lake to take Shoemaker's place on the roster.

Shoemaker is the second Angels starter to land on the disabled list less than a week into the regular season, joining left-hander Andrew Heaney, who is on the mend from elbow inflammation.

Shoemaker, 31, said the issue first arose near the end of his season debut Saturday, when he earned the win after allowing three runs over 5 2/3 innings against the A's.

"I started feeling a little bit of achiness, but nothing that was even a red flag," Shoemaker said. "Less than mild. I wasn't even concerned with it. Later that night and the next day, I just kind of felt worse than previously."

Shoemaker also dealt with a forearm issue last year, which required season-ending surgery to release the radial nerve in his right arm. He said the symptoms are similar, though he added that the Angels still need to put him through multiple tests before determining a diagnosis.

"We decompressed the nerve previously, and that's the fix," Shoemaker said. "Being completely honest, that did fix it from then until essentially now. We don't even know if that's what it is now. The symptoms are a similar feeling. Where they decompressed that tunnel, that's completely clear, so maybe scar tissue from the procedure is in the area. We have to do all this stuff to figure out what it is."

Bridwell will slot into Shoemaker's rotation spot and is scheduled to make his season debut Friday in the Angels' series opener against the A's at Angel Stadium. The 26-year-old right-hander was a revelation for the Angels in 2017, going 10-3 and logging a 3.64 ERA over 121 innings.

Despite his success last year, Bridwell didn't make the Angels' Opening Day roster, as the club recovered most of its rotation depth after Garrett Richards, Tyler Skaggs, JC Ramirez, Heaney and Shoemaker reported to Spring Training healthy after missing large chunks of last season due to injury.

Aside from Shohei Ohtani, the Angels made no notable additions to their rotation over the offseason, as they were counting on improvements to come from a healthier staff. Only five games into the 2018 campaign, that plan is already being tested.

"We've peeled the paint off everything you can possibly do from the medical side to the training to seeing how these guys' strength is and their recovery," manager Mike Scioscia said. "Sometimes these things still crop up. You never have a team that goes through less than six to nine or 10 starters throughout a season at some point. Hopefully we'll get guys throwing the ball the way they can and keep them healthy. That's what we anticipate."

Worth noting

The Angels announced the rest of their rotation order for their upcoming series against the A's. Ramirez will follow Bridwell on Saturday, while Ohtani will make his first start on the mound at Angel Stadium in Sunday's series finale.

Ohtani, who was in Tuesday's lineup as the designated hitter against the Indians, notched his first career win against Oakland after allowing three runs over six innings on Sunday. The 23-year-old two-way phenom will again pitch on six days' rest.

Angels acquire RHP Morris from Braves

By Matt Kelly

The Angels acquired right-hander Akeel Morris from the Braves on Tuesday in exchange for cash considerations or a player to be named later. Los Angeles subsequently optioned Morris to Triple-A, and designated righty Troy Scribner for assignment to make room on the 40-man roster.

The 25-year old Morris is a former 10th-round draft choice of the Mets who came to Atlanta by way of a trade involving infielder Kelly Johnson in 2016. The righty has posted impressive swing-and-miss numbers in the Minors, striking out 10.2 batters per nine innings but also averaging 4.4 walks for Triple-A Gwinnett in 2017. Morris struck out nine of the 32 batters he faced over an eight-game stretch for the Braves last season while recording a 1.23 ERA.

FROM THE ATHLETIC

Shohei Ohtani's memorable start evokes a nod to, that's right, the Babe

By Steve Dilbeck

Legends start like this, which is sort of what the Angels were hoping when they unexpectedly won the Shohei Ohtani sweepstakes in the off-season.

If it was a comparatively minor financial gamble, it came filled with uncertainty and a major leap into the unknown. A two-way player was the stuff of Ruthian lore, not something seriously contemplated in 2018.

Yet there was the young Japanese star getting a base hit on the first pitch he saw on Thursday in Oakland and then winning his first start as a pitcher on Sunday against the A's, which as it turned out, was all a mere prelude.

He made his first appearance as a batter at home in Anaheim on Tuesday as a designated hitter and made it memorable, smoothly hitting a three-run homer to right in the first inning of the Angels' 13-2 victory over the Indians.

The 397-foot blast stunned Cleveland right-hander Josh Tomlin and electrified what had been a fairly placid crowd, who at least recognized history when they saw it.

The boyish-looking Ohtani circled the bases, touched home, was briefly congratulated at the on-deck area by Rene Rivera and Zack Cozart, and then as tradition demands, completely ignored by everyone in the Angels dugout.

"I didn't really know about the tradition, but I kind of figured it out once I came back to the dugout," Ohtani said.

The entire team was up on the benches along the top of the dugout rail, their backs to the jubilant 23-year-old as he walked down the dugout alone and completely ignored.

Ohtani couldn't take it for long, finally grabbing Ian Kinsler on the back of his shoulders and gently shaking him, a kid pleading for attention. Kinsler turned and the entire team suddenly engulfed him, leaping in near unison.

"We kind of made eye contact," Kinsler said. "I was trying to downplay it, looking in the stands, but he was too excited. I didn't say anything. He just wanted hugs. It was happy time."

Finally, he slipped back up the stairs for a brief curtain call. Home was going to be all right for one night.

"Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has tonight," said manager Mike Scioscia. "He showed the power and the ability to square up a baseball."

There was, naturally, an element of Babe Ruth to all this. Before Tuesday, the last player to win a game and then hit a first-inning homer as a non-pitcher in his next game was Ruth, on June 13-14, 1921.

Still to come on Sunday: Ohtani's first start in Anaheim.

In his second at-bat on Tuesday, he lined a hit off the glove of leaping second baseman Jason Kipnis. He was called out on strikes in his third trip but smoked another single in the eighth to finish 3 for 4.

After a challenging spring training, the square-shouldered Ohtani was off to a fairly remarkable start.

"The guy comes to a new country in a new league and is playing in spring training, trying to get ready for a season and he gets smashed about his hitting and pitching and everything he's trying to do," Kinsler said. "So for us as a team, it's great to see him have early success. A lot of unwanted, unnecessary comments about his game when he really didn't have a chance to prove himself. It's a lot of fun to see something like that from a guy who has a huge spotlight on him and obviously doesn't let it bother him."

Ohtani has a smooth, effortless swing that belies his natural power. He was sending baseballs 20 rows up into the right-field stands during batting practice without appearing to swing hard. His home run landed a couple rows up, and was ultimately retrieved by a nine-year-old boy, who gave it to Ohtani for a bat, signed balls and a pair of jerseys.

After the game, he was introduced to another recent major league tradition. While being interviewed by local TV on the field, outfielder Kole Calhoun snuck around and doused him with a cooler of ice water.

Ohtani looked stunned and uncertain what he was supposed to do, which would have been a first on the night.

"I've actually seen that on TV before," Ohtani said. "It finally happened to me and I was happy about it."

Anaheim was a happy place on Tuesday night, made so by the smiling Ohtani, the Angels' wunderkind off to what they hope is simply the beginning.

FROM ESPN .COM

Good Sho! Ohtani homers in 1st home AB, Angels top Indians

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- Shohei Ohtani got his first major league home run and his first celebratory ice bath. There could more on the way for the Japanese sensation.

Ohtani hit a three-run homer in his first Angel Stadium at-bat to help the Los Angeles Angels beat the Cleveland Indians 13-2 on Tuesday night.

"Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has tonight," manager Mike Scioscia said. "He showed the power. He showed the ability to just square up a baseball, and he had a great night for us."

Ohtani capped a six-run first inning by lifting a ball out to center on a 2-2 pitch from Josh Tomlin. He got the silent treatment from teammates when he returned to the dugout, but not from the crowd. After players broke character and jumped around Ohtani to celebrate, Mike Trout pointed to the field and instructed Ohtani to take a curtain call.

It was a tradition Ohtani wasn't familiar with. The postgame dousing, however, Ohtani had seen on television.

Kole Calhoun snuck up behind Ohtani after the game as he was about to give a television interview and dumped ice water all over the 23-year-old.

"It obviously felt really, really good," Ohtani said through an interpreter, drying himself as he spoke to the crowd.

Ohtani is the first player to win as a starting pitcher, then start and homer as a non-pitcher in his next game in the same season since Babe Ruth in 1921, according to STATS LLC. He is also the first player with four hits, a home run and a win in his first six games since Boston's Wes Ferrell in 1937, and the first

rookie with at least three hits and a win in his first six games since Dutch Stryker of the 1924 Boston Braves.

Trout, Justin Upton and Luis Valbuena also homered for the Angels. Rene Rivera had four RBI, including a two-run shot in the eighth.

Los Angeles' Garrett Richards (1-0) gave up two runs and one hit while striking out nine in 5 2/3 innings.

Jose Ramirez hit a two-run homer in the first for the Indians, but Tomlin (0-1) gave up eight runs and eight hits in three innings.

"It was obviously a tough start and he was never able to settle in," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "They all swung the bat good tonight."

Ohtani's shot would have been a grand slam, except Calhoun had scored on a wild pitch earlier in the at-bat. He finished 3 for 4, including a hard-hit liner for a single in the eighth. Statcast measured his last hit at 112.8 mph, the hardest-hit ball by an Angels player this season.

"After getting my first hit out of the way, I felt more comfortable and relaxed," Ohtani said. "And everyone around me was doing a good job too, making it tough for the pitcher. That was a factor."

The homer was Ohtani's second hit in the majors -- his first was in his first big league at-bat, at Oakland last Thursday. He also struck out the first batter he faced in his first start as a pitcher Sunday.

Ohtani will pitch against Oakland on Sunday in his first start at home.

"It's a lot of fun to see something like that from a guy that has a huge spotlight on him and obviously doesn't let it bother him, comes out and plays extremely well the first week of the season," Angels infielder Ian Kinsler said.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Angels: RHP Matt Shoemaker was placed on the 10-day disabled list with soreness in his right forearm. Parker Bridwell was recalled from Triple-A and will start Friday against the A's. Shoemaker was limited to 14 starts last season and had surgery last August to address nerve pain in his right forearm.

STREAK SNAPPED

The Angels ended a 12-game losing streak against the Indians, which was tied for the longest active mark in baseball.

UP NEXT

Indians: RHP Corey Kluber (0-1) starts Wednesday in the finale of the three-game series. Kluber went eight innings at Seattle on Thursday, giving up two runs in a 2-1 loss.

Angels: LHP Tyler Skaggs (1-0) did not give up a run in 6 1/3 innings in a 2-1 win over the A's on Friday. Skaggs is 4-1 in 11 career starts in March and April.

Real or Not? Dial Ohtani-mania up a notch after his first home run

By David Schoenfield

At approximately 7:54 p.m. West Coast time, the internet melted down.

In his first at-bat in front of the home fans in Anaheim, two-way wonder Shohei Ohtani swung at a 2-2 curveball from Josh Tomlin and lofted a fly ball to center field. Watching on television, it looked like a routine fly ball hit off the end of Ohtani's black bat, except the center fielder kept drifting back, the ball kept carrying and maybe the baseball gods lent a helpful hand at the last instant to push the ball into the first row of stands.

The home run was an impressive display of Ohtani's raw power that scouts have raved about -- yet it still felt unexpected and wonderful, a moment that makes you scream "Yes!" in unfiltered enthusiasm. That wasn't even the best part of the home run.

He swung with a slight twist of the hips, cocking his bat into position and following through with his front foot pointed to the mound instead of using the high leg kick he used in Japan, finishing off his swing like he was hitting a 2-iron at Augusta. He took off out of the box -- he wasn't immediately sure it was out -- and as he rounded third base tried to suppress a smile. As he crossed home plate and returned to the dugout, the Angels gave him the cold shoulder. That wasn't the best part.

Angels fans erupted in joy, jumping up and down, raising their hands over their heads in exultation and high-fiving their neighbors. They stood on their feet, gave Ohtani a curtain call and he hopped out of the dugout and tipped his helmet. That still wasn't the best part.

The best moment of the moment came after his teammates ignored Ohtani, a long-standing tradition when a player hits his first major league home run. Bench coach Josh Paul didn't even look at him as he stepped down into the dugout. Angels players remained lined up along the railing. Yet there was Ohtani, a smile as wide as the Pacific, waving his hands over his head in the empty dugout. He was so happy. He grabbed Ian Kinsler because he had to hug somebody. Finally, his teammates turned around and mobbed him.

That moment of pure happiness on Ohtani's face was beautiful. It was a five-year-old kid blowing out the candles at a birthday party. *That* was the best part. As David Ross said in the ESPN booth during the Angels' 13-2 win over the Indians, "Just a cool moment in baseball."

Will this two-way thing work? Ohtani is already the first non-pitcher to start on Opening Day and then start on the mound in the first 10 games of a season since 1919 -- when Babe Ruth did it. We've seen Ohtani pitch. Now we've seen him hit (he later added two hard-hit singles). A common refrain on Twitter was along the likes of: "I'd like to see him hit more home runs than he gives up and strike out more batters than he strikes out as a batter."

Given where we're with the specialization in baseball, that seems almost impossible. But now it sounds possible. Maybe Ohtani *can* pull this off.

Shohei Ohtani launches 3-run HR in first home at-bat for Angels

ANAHEIM, Calif. -- Sho Time is off to a powerful start in Anaheim.

Shohei Ohtani hit his first major league home run in his first home at-bat, and he took a curtain call after his three-run homer Tuesday night in the Los Angeles Angels' 13-2 win over the Cleveland Indians.

Ohtani capped a six-run first inning by lifting a ball out to center on a 2-2 count against Josh Tomlin. The Japanese two-way player got the silent treatment from teammates when he returned to the dugout -- but not from the crowd. After players broke character and jumped around Ohtani to celebrate, Mike Trout pointed to the field and instructed Ohtani to take a curtain call.

"It obviously felt really, really good," Ohtani said through an interpreter while drying himself as he spoke to the crowd after teammate Kole Calhoun surprised him with a bucket of icy water after the game.

Ohtani is the first player since the American League adopted the designated hitter in 1973 to start a game in a season as a pitcher and homer in another game as DH, according to Elias Sports Bureau.

The 23-year-old added two singles to end up with three hits, including a hard line drive in the eighth inning. Statcast measured the latter single at 112.8 mph, the hardest hit ball by an Angels player this season.

"Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has tonight," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "He showed the power. He showed the ability to just square up a baseball. And he had a great night for us."

Ohtani's shot would have been a grand slam, except Calhoun had scored on a wild pitch earlier in the at-bat. Ohtani finished the night 3-for-4 with three RBIs and two runs scored in the win.

"After getting my first hit out of the way, I felt more comfortable and relaxed," Ohtani said. "And everyone around me was doing a good job too, making it tough for the pitcher. That was a factor."

Ohtani will pitch against the Oakland Athletics on Sunday in his first start at home.

"It's a lot of fun to see something like that from a guy that has a huge spotlight on him and obviously doesn't let it bother him, comes out and plays extremely well the first week of the season," Angels infielder Ian Kinsler said.

Pat Neshek's snow day includes unwrapping prized Shohei Ohtani rookie card

NEW YORK -- As an early April snowstorm hit New York City on Monday morning, Philadelphia Phillies reliever Pat Neshek found a fun way to pass the time.

Opening packs of baseball cards, the avid collector unwrapped a rare gem and shared the news on Twitter.

"Ripping open packs in ny, I found it!!!!!! Ohtani #'d 1/69," the 37-year-old Neshek tweeted, along with a photo of his prize -- an autographed Shohei Ohtani rookie card from the 2018 Topps Heritage set.

Since the two-way phenom signed with the Los Angeles Angels in December, his cards and other autographed items have been highly coveted throughout the sports collectible industry.

This particular card was signed by the Japanese star in red ink, making it the rarer of two parallel groups of Ohtani autographs found within the set. Only 69 of this variation were produced, each one numbered individually. What makes Neshek's lucky haul extra special is that it's the first one in the group that the pitcher/sluggger signed, numbered "01/69".

Neshek often solicits autographs from teammates and opponents to add to his robust memorabilia collection. When he discovered the Ohtani card, though, he got a little flustered and accidentally placed it upside down in a protective case.

"Noticed how excited I was and put this in upside down ... brutal," he tweeted.

Ohtani autographed cards have been selling for a premium on secondary markets such as eBay, which is exactly where Neshek's discovery appeared to be headed.

"I'm going to give this to my dad to put up on eBay later this week, buy some more cases!" Neshek tweeted.

With listings ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,500 for the card, Neshek and his father might be able to purchase a whole bunch of boxes with their potential windfall.

A two-time All-Star who signed a \$16.25 million, two-year contract with the Phillies last offseason, Neshek is on the 10-day disabled list with a strained right shoulder. He was sent for an MRI in Philadelphia on Tuesday, the team said.

Philadelphia's scheduled game against the New York Mets on Monday night was postponed due to the wintry weather. It will be made up in July.

Angels place Matt Shoemaker on DL; recall Parker Bridwell

The Los Angeles Angels have placed oft-injured starting pitcher Matt Shoemaker on the 10-day disabled list because of a right forearm strain.

The move was made retroactive to Sunday. Right-hander Parker Bridwell was recalled from Triple-A Salt Lake to take Shoemaker's roster spot.

Shoemaker (1-0) gave up three runs and four hits in 5 2/3 innings against the Athletics Saturday. He struck out four and walked four while improving to 5-0 with a 2.38 ERA in his last seven starts against Oakland.

Shoemaker, 30, hadn't started a regular-season game for the Angels since June of 2017 as he underwent season-ending surgery to release the radial nerve in his right forearm. Prior to that, he was 6-3 on the season with a 4.52 ERA.

The 2017 injury marked the second straight year that Shoemaker's season ended prematurely. In September 2016, he took a line drive to the head that resulted in a fractured skull and required emergency brain surgery.

The Angels also announced Japanese two-way player Shohei Ohtani will pitch Sunday, his first start at home.

FROM MLB.COM

Shohei Ohtani hit a homer in his first at-bat at Angel Stadium and got the silent treatment in the dugout

By Adrian Garro

It didn't take Shohei Ohtani very long to get acquainted with his new home at Angel Stadium. Facing Cleveland's Josh Tomlin on Tuesday night in the bottom of the first inning, Ohtani deposited a pitch into the right-field seats for a three-run homer.

Not only was this the Japanese star's first Major League home run, but it came in his very first at-bat at the Angels' home park -- over the new and old right-field wall.

As you may recall, he also picked up his first Major league base hit in his first at-bat over the weekend in Oakland ... so he knows how to make an impression.

As is custom around MLB, his teammates treated him to another first upon his return to the dugout: the group silent treatment.

... before mobbing him and reveling in the blast as a team.

Welcome to the Sho(hei)!

Tuesday proved to be a great night for the young man who came down with the prized baseball, too:

The ball Ohtani hit for his first ML HR ended up in the hands of a 9-year-old boy. The boy and his father are to meet with Ohtani after the game. Pretty good day at the yard for the kid.

For a bit of context, Ohtani is now in extremely rare company after winning Sunday's game in his pitching debut and homering on Tuesday: Before Ohtani, last player to win a game and hit a first-inning HR within the next 2 days was Babe Ruth on June 13-14, 1921.

Paced by that Ohtani blast, as well as another first-inning homer from Mike Trout, the Angels won the game, 13-2.

The Japanese broadcast booth was extremely excited about Shohei Ohtani's first career homer

By Chris Landers

We saw a little bit of baseball history on Tuesday night: In his home debut at Angel Stadium, Shohei Ohtani -- just two days after going six strong innings for his first Major League win -- hit his first Major League home run.

Naturally, there was much rejoicing. From the hometown crowd. From his teammates ... eventually. From the nine-year-old boy who ended up with the ball:

But arguably no one was more excited for Ohtani's first dinger than the Japanese broadcast team that called the game -- and if you don't believe us, simply click play on the video atop this post and see for yourself. (We're particularly fond of their reaction to the silent treatment in the dugout, which is just about the happiest any pair of announcers has ever been.)

FROM SPORTING NEWS

Shohei Ohtani gives Angels fans glimpse of two-way potential in Ruthian performance

By Joseph D'Hippolito

ANAHEIM, Calif. — The 43,904 fans attending the Angels' home opener Monday night expressed their appreciation for Shohei Ohtani in a way perhaps never before seen in a major-league stadium.

His translator, Ipppei Mizuhara, received an enthusiastic ovation — by far the loudest when the Angels' trainers and auxiliary personnel were introduced.

When Ohtani himself was announced as one of the reserves, he received even louder cheers. Louder than those for manager Mike Scioscia. Louder than those for Albert Pujols. Louder than for every other Angel except Mike Trout.

When Ohtani played his first home game Tuesday night as a designated hitter, the 35,007 in attendance found a reason to cheer beyond the Japanese rookie's mere presence.

In the bottom of the first inning — in just his sixth plate appearance — Ohtani hit his first major-league home run, a three-run drive capping a six-run outburst in an eventual 13-2 rout of the Indians.

That homer was the first of three hits for Ohtani, who also lined two singles in going 3 for 4 with two runs scored. He struck out his other time up.

The 23-year old is the first player in 97 years to earn a victory as a pitcher (he beat the A's in Oakland on Sunday), then hit a home run in his next game as a non-pitcher. Babe Ruth accomplished that feat for the Yankees in 1921.

"Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has. He showed the power and the ability to square up a baseball. He had a great night for us," said Scioscia, who added that Ohtani will serve as the designated hitter in Wednesday's series finale against Corey Kluber, who won his second American League Cy Young Award last year.

Scioscia believes Ohtani's performance Tuesday could prove pivotal to his development as a hitter.

"What's going to help his batting is to square some balls up and hit them hard," he said. "I think that's what he needs to do. I think he's very confident. He knows his talent. He just needs to turn it into productivity, and that's going to take a couple of at-bats where he's hitting the ball hard. I know he wants to contribute at the plate."

After the season opener in Oakland, when Ohtani pulled the balls he hit in going 1 for 5 with a strikeout, the left-handed hitter made adjustments that sent his home run to right-center field and his second single to center.

"Pitchers here throw really differently compared to Japan," Ohtani said through Mizuhara. "One of the things I can do is watch videos and read scouting reports. That's one of the ways I can prepare myself and improve."

That diligence has impressed Scioscia.

"Mentally, he's way ahead of where you expect a guy in his first year in major-league baseball to be," he said. "He's very analytical. He has terrific poise. He just needs the practical experience to get out there and start to understand hitting off of major-league pitching and pitching to major-league hitters. He's handling everything very well."

The game was tied 2-2 in the first when Ohtani came to bat with the bases loaded against starter Josh Tomlin, a right-hander who keeps hitters off-balance despite a fastball that failed to surpass 88 mph Tuesday.

Tomlin started off Ohtani with two 84 mph cutters. Ohtani took the first one inside, and then fouled the second one down the right-field line.

Tomlin responded with two 74 mph curves. Ohtani swung at and missed the first one, but the second bounced past catcher Roberto Perez for a wild pitch that scored Kole Calhoun, giving LA a 3-2 lead.

"That made me feel more comfortable since we scored," Ohtani said through Mizuhara.

After fouling off another 85 mph cutter, Ohtani propelled Tomlin's 74 mph curve 397 feet into the first row of the stands in right-center field.

"When I hit it," Ohtani said through his translator, "I thought it was going to be off the wall so I was running hard."

When Ohtani returned to the dugout, his new teammates introduced to him an American tradition for rookies who hit their first home run: the silent treatment. Ohtani responded by giving phantom high-fives before going to starting pitcher Garrett Richards, pulling on his warmup jacket, hopping up and down and smiling.

Richards turned around and, with a big smile, hugged Ohtani, cueing the rest of the Angels to congratulate him by circling around him and patting him on the back. The rookie then walked to the top step of the dugout and doffed his batting helmet in response to his first curtain call.

In the third, Ohtani lined a single off second baseman Jason Kipnis' glove. In the fifth, he took a 90 mph fastball on the inside corner from reliever Dan Otero to strike out on three pitches. In the eighth, the rookie lined a 95 mph fastball from Zach McAllister into center field and came home on Rene Rivera's two-run home run.

"Obviously, after getting my first hit out of the way, I felt more comfortable and relaxed," Ohtani said through Mizuhara. "Also, everyone around me in the lineup was doing a good job, too."

Ohtani experienced another American baseball tradition after game. As a television reporter was asking him a question on the field, Calhoun sneaked behind the rookie and dumped ice water on him.

"I've actually seen that on TV before," Ohtani said through his translator. "It finally happened to me."

Angels' Shohei Ohtani slugs first major league home run

By Tom Gatto

Shohei Ohtani is now an early two-way success in the major leagues.

The Angels rookie pitcher/DH hit his first major league home run Tuesday night, a three-run shot to right-center field in the first inning against Indians starter Josh Tomlin.

Ohtani had come up with the bases loaded, but a wild pitch by Tomlin brought in a run. Ohtani capped the at-bat, his first in his home park, Angel Stadium, with his 397-foot big fly.

The dinger came two days after Ohtani turned in a quality start (six innings, three earned runs) and earned the win in his big-league pitching debut, vs. the A's in Oakland. This was his second start as a DH; he was 1 for 5 on Thursday in the Angels' season opener.

Ohtani later collected two singles Tuesday to finish 3 for 4 on the night.

The Angels signed Ohtani last December for just this purpose: to produce at the plate and on the mound.

FROM BLEACHER REPORT

Shohei Ohtani Hits 1st Career MLB Home Run in Home Debut vs. Indians

By Adam Wells

Shohei Ohtani dazzled fans at Angel Stadium on Tuesday with his first career home run in Major League Baseball.

In the bottom of the first inning, Ohtani launched a three-run homer off Cleveland Indians starter Josh Tomlin.

This was Ohtani's second start at designated hitter and his first at home. The Japanese sensation previously went 1-for-5 with a single in the season opener against the Oakland Athletics on March 29.

Ohtani's homer just cleared the fence in right field, which the Angels had lowered from 18 feet to eight feet during the offseason.

The bases were loaded when Ohtani's at-bat first started, but a wild pitch from Tomlin allowed Kole Calhoun to score from third.

Despite missing out on that extra RBI, the 23-year-old isn't likely to complain about the end result of his first plate appearance at home.

Early returns have been promising for Ohtani, who struck out six and allowed three earned runs over six innings in his first start against the A's on Sunday.

He's scheduled to take the mound again for his first home start on Sunday against Oakland.

The Biggest Early-Season Flaw Every MLB Team Needs to Address

By Jacob Shafer

The 2018 MLB season is scarcely off the ground. It's far too early to draw sweeping conclusions.

That said, let's take a glance at all 30 clubs and assess the flaws that have cropped up during the first several days of meaningful action.

The severity of these flaws will vary, depending upon the depth and expectations of the squad in question. All represent red flags, however—and they may get redder as spring cedes to summer.

American League West

Houston Astros: Left-handed relief pitching

The Houston Astros are the defending MLB champions and one of baseball's most complete teams. Their only weakness coming out of spring was a lack of reliable left-handed bullpen arms, and so far the results haven't been stellar.

Tony Sipp, the main southpaw in the Astros 'pen, has coughed up two walks and a run in 1.2 innings. It's too early to start thinking trade, but the 'Stros could go shopping at or before the July 31 non-waiver deadline, possibly targeting a top-shelf lefty such as the San Diego Padres' Brad Hand.

Los Angeles Angels: RHP Garrett Richards' performance

The good news for the Los Angeles Angels? After battling injuries last season, right-hander Garrett Richards emerged healthy from his Opening Day start against the Oakland Athletics. The bad news? The Halos' ostensible ace looked shaky.

In five innings, Richards yielded seven hits, including two homers, and four earned runs with four strikeouts and three walks. Shohei Ohtani showed flashes in his first start for Los Angeles on Sunday, striking out six in six innings, but the two-way Japanese import remains an enigma. The onus is on Richards to front the staff.

Fortunately, despite the mixed results, Richards' velocity sat at an average of 97.1 mph against Oakland, a tick above his career average of 96.2 mph. If he improves his command, Richards can be the pitcher the Angels need him to be.

Oakland Athletics: On-base versus strikeout tendencies

After defeating the Angels on Opening Day, the A's dropped three straight. That was largely due to an offense that whiffed too much and didn't get on base enough.

Collectively, Athletics hitters have struck out 43 times, fifth-most in the majors, while drawing 19 walks and tallying 41 hits. Needless to say, the first number needs to trend downward and the latter two upward if Oakland is going to sniff contention.

Seattle Mariners: RHP James Paxton's performance

Felix Hernandez showed flashes of his old, kingly self on Opening Day in 5.1 shutout innings. James Paxton was closer to a pauper.

Paxton, who was expected to be the Seattle Mariners ace in Hernandez's stead, yielded six earned runs and two home runs with four walks and four strikeouts in 4.2 uninspiring innings.

"I wasn't locating my fastball very well, and when I did, it was over the plate," Paxton said, per John McGrath of the *News Tribune*. "The off-speed pitches weren't there. The curveball wasn't consistent, the cutter wasn't consistent. Not a good day at all."

There are plenty of starts for Paxton to sort it out—but the M's need him to do so posthaste.

Texas Rangers: On-base versus strikeout tendencies

The Texas Rangers have suffered the same flaw as the A's, only more so. Texas hitters have struck out 51 times while drawing only 15 walks with 32 hits, "good" for a .271 collective on-base percentage.

Offense was supposed to be the Rangers' strong suit, and it still could be behind a cast of veterans (Adrian Beltre, Shin-Soo Choo) and youngsters (Joey Gallo, Nomar Mazara).

So far, so bad for the Lone Star State's *other* team.

****Article edited to include only AL West material.*

Each MLB Team's Player with the Most Superstar Upside

By Zachary D. Rymer

A new Major League Baseball season is in full swing. Do you know where your team's biggest potential star is?

No? Good. That means you might learn something here.

Our goal is to go team-by-team and focus on 30 players who have more superstar upside for 2018 than anyone else in their respective organizations. There are only a few ground rules:

- **No Current Superstars:** Anyone who's made an All-Star team or won a major award doesn't need to keep proving his star potential. We get it. They're good.
- **Prospects Are Allowed:** But they have to be really good and really close to making a difference in the majors in 2018.
- **Standards Vary:** Because some teams aren't as blessed with talent as others are.

At any rate, let's take it away.

Los Angeles Angels: Shohei Ohtani

Hey, have you heard that the Los Angeles Angels have a youngster who fancies himself as both an ace and a slugger?

Shohei Ohtani is ambitious like that.

The 23-year-old certainly looked the part of a two-way phenom in Japan, where he had a 2.52 ERA and an .859 OPS in five seasons with the Nippon Ham Fighters. He subsequently looked out of his depth in spring training, but he's already making up for that.

Although Ohtani wasn't flawless in his pitching debut, he opened plenty of eyes (and missed plenty of bats) with his high-90s fastball and disappearing split-finger fastball. He followed that up with his first career home run in his first at-bat at Angel Stadium of Anaheim on Tuesday.

It's early yet, but suddenly Ohtani's Babe Ruthy aspirations don't seem so outlandish.

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

FROM SB NATION

Shohei Ohtani hits first Major League home run in first Angel Stadium at bat

Josh Tomlin gave him a pitch he could rock, and he rocked it.

By Whitney McIntosh

Shohei Ohtani has done well so far in his first few Major League outings. He's not a Hall of Famer from Day One but no one should expect him to be. That's unfair. But he had a quality pitching start and has been respectable at the plate.

Now he has a home run on his stat line too, his first in MLB and an authoritative homer at that.

With the Angels already up 3-2 on Cleveland, Ohtani jacked a three-run shot to make the lead 6-2. Granted, it was a 74 mile an hour pitch from Josh Tomlin that was more than ready to get jacked up but it was still a great moment no matter how seemingly easy or hard it was to accomplish.

The celebration is even better. Of course his teammates gave him the silent treatment, as is tradition, and it almost seemed like he was worried they weren't going to celebrate with him at all. But after he tugged on some shoulders they "gave in" and celebrated him fully. The look on his face was so purely happy that it's hard not to root for him to do it again and again. Even if you're still smarting from not getting him on your team (/cough/ Mariners fans /cough/).

As of this moment, Ohtani has more home runs than Aaron Judge, J.D. Martinez, and Eric Hosmer. That *probably* won't last, but you never know! He's proving that he can handle Major League pitchers and Major League batters more than capably. Just in case you were still worried.

FROM FANGRAPHS

Shohei Ohtani Has Already Verified Something

By Travis Sawchik

After a shaky spring, Shohei Ohtani was basically as advertised in his first start on the mound — which is remarkable, since he was essentially advertised as the best pitching prospect in nearly a decade.

In his debut, Ohtani maxed out at 99 mph on the fastball and averaged 97.8 mph on the same pitch while also showcasing a darting, 90 mph splitter and breaking ball. If Ohtani can approximate anything like the 19.6% swinging-strike rate of his debut and continue to exhibit solid command, he will be an ace in short order.

Ohtani's fastball averaged 96.6 mph and 96.1 mph, respectively, his last two years in Japan. He posted 15.8% and 15.0% swinging-strike rates in his last two seasons in the NPB (his 2017 season was injury shortened). Our old friend Eno Sarris found that plate-discipline and batted-ball trends in the NPB and MLB are remarkably similar. While it's often folly to draw too much upon small sample sizes in April, it would appear as though Ohtani has verified that his power stuff is real.

Ohtani did more verifying Tuesday.

Part of Ohtani's legend, of course, is that he can also hit — or, at least, he could hit in the NPB. That's what makes him such a compelling player, and that two-way ability is what made Tuesday night so much fun for those interested in dreaming on Ohtani.

As if there was any reason doubt that Ohtani's power is real — which is a strange thing to doubt for a player who hit the roof of the Tokyo Dome — he put those reasons to bed on Tuesday night when he launched his first major-league home run off a Josh Tomlin curveball.

Perhaps Ohtani just used spring training to lower the astronomical expectations that accompanied him from Japan. If so, he raised them again on Tuesday. Ohtani's blast energized Angel Stadium to such a degree that reporters said the reaction of the jubilant crowd shook the press box.

Ohtani later singled off a Tomlin cutter:

And Ohtani also lined a single to center off a 95 mph fastball from Zach McAllister:

Hey, let's get carried away. Through six games of the season, Ohtani has a 257 wRC+!

Again, it's tough to make too much of any small-sample performance, but one thing we can take away from Ohtani's night is that the power — or, at least, the raw power — is legit and will sometimes transition into games.

Ohtani's single, recorded at 112 mph, represented the hardest-hit ball by an Angel since last August.

Way back in December, MLB dot com stalwart and FanGraphs alum Mike Petriello gained access to NPB Trackman data and found that Ohtani had topped out at 101.6 mph on the mound last season and recorded a top exit velocity of 111.1 mph off his bat.

So what Ohtani has proven in this small sample to begin the regular season is that his underlying skills, his throwing velocity, and exit velocity, are legit. By those power measures, he's as advertised.

The real glaring question has always been tied to his hit tool. Can he hit major-league pitching? How often will his raw power manifest itself as game power? There's significant doubt about how just an effective hitter he can be. There was swing-and-miss in Japan which figured to be exacerbated in the majors.

In touring Arizona this spring, I found the Angels, albeit biased, to be bullish on Ohtani The Hitter.

We'll see. What we've learned is the power is very real. Let's remember that Ohtani is just 23. He was one of the best hitters in one of the world's top non-MLB professional league just two years ago. Consider, for example, Clay Davenport's translation of Ohtani's 2016 NPB campaign, the batter's age-21 season: 324 at-bats, 14 home runs, 34 walks, 89 strikeouts, a .306/.367/.512 slash line, a 133 wRC+.

Said Mariners GM Jerry Dipoto of Ohtani on his his podcast this offseason:

"I've seen players hit a ball 500 feet and players throw a ball 100 mph. I've just never seen one player do both of those."

The promise was that Ohtani could consistently throw near 100 mph and crush home runs Stateside. In his first week in the majors, he's proven he can do just that. Not a bad first impression.

If he can do each consistently, there would be nothing more compelling in the game.

FROM KYODO NEWS

Baseball: Angels' Ohtani hits 1st MLB home run in 1st home at-bat

Shohei Ohtani announced his arrival as a two-way player in the majors on Tuesday with three hits and a three-run home run for the Los Angeles Angels in a 13-2 victory over the Cleveland Indians.

In his sixth at-bat in the majors, the designated hitter lined a drive to right center off a curveball from right-hander Josh Tomlin (0-1) in the bottom of the first inning, turning a 3-2 Angels lead into the start of a rout.

Ohtani went 1-for-5 in his major league hitting debut last Thursday and followed with a six-inning pitching victory on Sunday to quiet critics, who had slammed his inclusion on the Angels' major league roster after his dismal spring training.

Cleveland opened the scoring in the first on Jose Ramirez's two-run homer off right hander Garrett Richards (1-0), who went 5-2/3 innings to earn the win.

In the bottom of the first, Mike Trout homered to right center and Kole Calhoun's RBI single tied it. Luis Valbuena walked to load the bases with two outs for Ohtani. After Calhoun scored on a wild pitch, Ohtani reached down for a low curve ball and launched it into the outfield seats in right center.

"I didn't think it was going to go out, but the wind carried it," Ohtani said. "It felt great."

"I swung and missed at (Tomlin's) first pitch and thought, 'that's a heck of a curve,' and I really relaxed after a run came in on the wild pitch. I think because of that (wild pitch) he hung another a little and I put a good swing on it."

The rookie was given the customary silent treatment in the dugout before being mobbed by his teammates, then stepped onto the field when the Angel stadium crowd demanded a curtain call.

Solo homers by Justin Upton in the second and by Valbuena in the third made it an 8-2 game.

In his second at-bat, Ohtani lined to right off the glove of second baseman Jason Kipnis for a single.

With two on in the fifth after Anrelton Simmons' RBI double and Valbuena's second walk, Ohtani took a borderline pitch for strike three. But Rene Rivera, the Angels' back-up catcher, doubled in both runners to make it 11-2.

Ohtani led off the eighth inning with a line single, and scored on a home run by Rivera.

A former star slugger and ace pitcher for Japan's Nippon Ham Fighters, Ohtani said talking to superstar hitters like Trout and Albert Pujols had helped him improve his game, but that he has gotten help from others as well.

"Not just my teammates but the hitting coaches, all the staff, they all help me and make me feel comfortable, so my success is due to them, too," said Ohtani, who came to bat with the same walk-up music he had with the Fighters.

"I didn't have anything special in mind so I just kept the same one. Although the setting has changed, I was able to come up with more or less the same rhythm."

FROM USA TODAY

Shohei Ohtani hits first major-league homer in debut at Angel Stadium

Shohei Ohtani wasted little time giving the baseball world the first glimpse of what made him such a coveted player this past offseason.

Just two days after picking up his first major-league win on the mound at Oakland, Ohtani blasted a three-run home run on a 2-2 pitch by Cleveland Indians starter Josh Tomlin in his first plate appearance at Angel Stadium.

Ohtani actually came to the plate with bases loaded, but Tomlin threw a wild pitch to score a run one pitch before Ohtani's blast.

When Ohtani returned to the dugout he jokingly received the silent treatment from his Angels teammates before they mobbed him in celebration. Ohtani then addressed the home crowd's standing ovation with a wave from the top step.

Ohtani added a line-drive single off Indians second baseman Jason Kipnis' glove in his second at-bat in the third inning before adding another single in the eighth inning.

"After getting my first hit out of the way, I felt more comfortable and relaxed," Ohtani said through and interpreter. "And everyone around me was doing a good job too, making it tough for the pitcher. That was a factor."

The Angels beat the Indians 13-2, with Ohtani finishing 3-for-4 with three RBI and two runs.

“Shohei put on a display of the type of talent he has tonight,” Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. “He showed the power. He showed the ability to just square up a baseball, and he had a great night for us.”

Ohtani beat the Athletics on Sunday, working six innings and allowing three earned runs on three hits and one walk to go with six strikeouts. His biggest mistake came on a three-run homer by Matt Davidson in the second inning.

“It’s a lot of fun to see something like that from a guy that has a huge spotlight on him and obviously doesn’t let it bother him, comes out and plays extremely well the first week of the season,” Angels infielder Ian Kinsler said.

FROM NBC SPORTS

Shohei Ohtani hits first major league home run, receives silent treatment from teammates

By Bill Baer

Angels P/DH Shohei Ohtani made his home debut — as a DH — on Tuesday night against the Indians and he didn’t waste any time introducing himself to the L.A. faithful. The Angels had already scored a pair runs in the bottom of the first inning thanks to Mike Trout’s solo home run and Kole Calhoun’s RBI single. The bases were loaded when Ohtani stepped in to face Josh Tomlin, who uncorked a wild pitch that allowed another run to score, breaking a 2-2 tie. With the count 2-2, Tomlin hung a curve that Ohtani promptly deposited over the fence in right-center field for a three-run homer, bumping the Angels’ lead to 6-2.

As Ohtani returned to the dugout, he expected to receive hearty congratulations from his teammate. Instead, he got the silent treatment.

Really cool baseball moment.

FROM YAHOO! SPORTS**Angels rookie Shohei Ohtani hits first homer in majors**

By Tim Brown

ANAHEIM, Calif. – Shohei Ohtani stood Tuesday night on the top step of the third-base dugout at Angel Stadium, his helmet raised over his head, the crowd standing and shouting and applauding. He'd been ordered there by Mike Trout. Andrelton Simmons shoved him gently.

So prodded, the shy 23-year-old abided his first home curtain call, moments after his first home run, two days after his first pitching victory, with about as much humility as can be wrung from such an event.

With two runners on base in the first inning, Ohtani flicked a 2-and-2 curveball into the bleachers in right-center field. Urged forward by fans who'd come in part to see the two-way curiosity, the ball carried 397 feet. It left Ohtani's bat at 104.5 mph, or about 4.5 mph faster than his hardest fastball two days before. The last player to win a game as a pitcher and hit a first-inning home run within a two-day span? Babe Ruth on June 13-14, 1921.

After a puzzling spring training that led many to wonder if the talented and hyped Ohtani was big-league ready on either side of the ball, Ohtani had a hit in five at-bats as a designated hitter Thursday in Oakland, allowed three runs in an otherwise dominant six innings as a starting pitcher Sunday, and Tuesday batted eighth as designated hitter against the Cleveland Indians.

Against right-hander Josh Tomlin, Ohtani weathered a series of pitches on the plate's inner half. The early scouting report is to pitch Ohtani inside. Tomlin's sixth pitch was a curveball, inside and low. Ohtani drove it to the bleachers. Two innings later, Ohtani lined a cut-fastball into left field, off second baseman Jason Kipnis' glove, for his second hit in two at-bats. He finished his night with a single to center in the eighth inning. Ohtani is, for the moment, in the early days of April, a .444 hitter.

He'd arrived from Japan with a reputation as a power hitter. For the Nippon Ham Fighters, he hit 22 home runs in 323 at-bats (and posted a 1.86 ERA) in 2016, his last fully healthy season. Outside of batting practice, where the power was – and continues to be – as easy as it is startling, Ohtani showed none of that heft in spring games. In an effort to reset his timing, he substituted a toe tap for his high leg kick in the hours before the regular season began.

While Tomlin was not at his best Tuesday night (he gave up four home runs in three innings), Ohtani was taking his first at-bats in five days. The lack of regular at-bats is among the challenges for Ohtani, attempting to become baseball's first regular two-way player in nearly a century. He is scheduled to make his next pitching start Sunday afternoon at Angel Stadium.

FROM ABC NEWS**What have we learned about Shohei Ohtani so far?**

By Sam Miller and David Schoenfield

Have you caught Shohei Ohtani fever yet? After months of anticipation, we got our first regular-season look at the Angels' two-way star against major league competition, as Ohtani DH'd twice and then went six innings on the mound during L.A.'s season-opening series with the Oakland A's.

Now that Ohtani's quest is unfolding, we asked ESPN's David Schoenfield and Sam Miller to weigh in with their early -- emphasis on early -- thoughts after watching him in action.

Which is the real Ohtani? The one who struggled this spring or the one who showed flashes of brilliance during Opening Week?

Sam Miller: If by "struggled this spring" we're asking if he's a Double-A-caliber pitcher who will hit .125 in the majors, the answer was always going to be the other option. Ohtani has tremendous physical skills and has succeeded against high-level Japanese competition in large samples. A few games that don't count wouldn't make you doubt any of that.

Of course, if the question is "will he show flashes of brilliance?" -- that's begging the real question. We know he'll show flashes. His tools are too good not to. The question is whether he will have the stamina, the depth of skills and the ability to adjust that will allow those flashes to turn into a well-rounded star over the course of a long season and career. One week doesn't answer that. For now, I'll stick with "shrug, but I'm excited!"

David Schoenfield: There's a reason every team wanted this guy, and we finally saw why on Sunday. Ohtani dominated in Japan -- he had a 1.86 ERA in his last healthy season there in 2016 -- because he has ace-level stuff. He struggled with throwing strikes in spring training, and some of that might simply have been rust after he didn't pitch much in 2017 because of an ankle injury, plus adapting to a slightly different baseball. The fastball command might still be a work in progress, and his slider wasn't always sharp, but the splitter is deadly, and he showed great composure in settling down after Matt Chapman's three-run homer.

Which of his tools has impressed you the most so far?

Miller: The ability to get swinging strikes. He got 18 of them in his first start, which, by comparison, is more than Justin Verlander got in any start last year. Making major league batters swing and miss is hard to fake, even on a pitcher's best day.

Schoenfield: You know, his most impressive tool might be the one he'll use the least: his speed. During his DH outing on Opening Day, he hit one routine ground ball up the middle and nearly beat the throw. The man can fly, with Keith Law giving him an 80 speed grade on the 20-to-80 scouting scale. His raw power is 70. The point is Ohtani might be the best athlete in the majors, which bodes well for his ability to not just maximize his talent on the mound but also hit well enough to keep earning playing time at DH.

Which of his tools are you most concerned about so far?

Miller: As a DH, Ohtani is going to have to hit a lot to stand out. As a pitcher, he'll have to stand out as a DH to justify the extra strain a two-way role puts on him. Five at-bats are certainly not enough to judge his hitting -- and he did hit the ball hard, albeit on the ground -- but after the bad spring, after some critical evaluations from anonymous scouts, after seeing the challenges other Japanese hitters have had transitioning to the majors, it's not at all obvious that he has that kind of offensive ceiling, especially if it has to develop in a part-time role with lots of other distractions and physical demands.

Schoenfield: The same one that most scouts are skeptical about: his hit tool. After his rough spring at the plate, he appeared to consciously shorten his swing in the opener, which resulted in four ground balls to the right side (plus a strikeout). One bounced through for a hit, but to get to his power, Ohtani is going to have to prove that he can handle the hard stuff inside.

Which is more likely for Ohtani in 2018: hitting 20 home runs or winning 10 games?

Miller: Winning 10 games, easily.

Schoenfield: Winning 10 games. Even if the Angels stick to a six-man rotation all season, he should get 25 or 26 starts. The key will be keep his pitch counts low enough, like he did Sunday, for him to remain in the game for six or seven innings to get those decisions.

Which is more likely: Ohtani's 2018 features a stint in the minors or Ohtani's 2018 ends with a Rookie of the Year award?

Schoenfield: Rookie of the Year. After his spring performance, I suggested that the Angels had to consider starting him in the minors. His first start showed why that won't be necessary. There's always the chance he loses complete command of his fastball and has to be sent down, but he's probably here to stay, and he's certainly capable of a 3-WAR season just on the mound. Without any other obvious Rookie of the Year favorites in the American League, he could be the winner.

Miller: Rookie of the Year award. Ohtani is certainly one of the Angels' 10 best players, and that's probably conservative.

What is a 2018 stat line -- hitter/pitcher combined -- that would make Ohtani's rookie season a success, and will he get there?

Miller: 130 innings with a 3.80 ERA and a .770 OPS in 200 or so plate appearances. If he stays healthy, he should get there, though I wouldn't be shocked by an OPS 150 points higher or lower.

Schoenfeld: The Angels need him to produce on the mound. We have no idea what kind of patience Mike Scioscia will extend to Ohtani at the plate, so I think the success will be determined mostly by his pitching performance. Yu Darvish went 16-9 with a 3.90 ERA his first season with the Rangers, and though Ohtani won't pitch 191 innings like Darvish did, I think he can beat that ERA.

FROM THE WASHINGTON POST

Shohei Ohtani hits first MLB home run, then high-fives air in Angels' dugout

By Des Bieler

Shohei Ohtani's first MLB home run came in the first inning of his first home game with the Angels. He had to wait a little while, though, for the first teammate to celebrate it with him Tuesday, as Los Angeles players observed baseball convention by ignoring the Japanese star when he entered the dugout.

Even that was no problem for the uniquely versatile player, as Ohtani simply high-fived air. That amusing pantomime soon gave way to a swarm of delighted teammates congratulating Ohtani, who was then encouraged to step out of the dugout for a well-deserved curtain call at Angel Stadium of Anaheim during a game against the Indians.

Remember when Ohtani was struggling during spring training, prompting suggestions that he might be much better off starting the season in the minors? Yeah, neither does anyone else.

The 23-year-old rookie, who earned Babe Ruth comparisons in Japan by excelling both as a fireballing pitcher and a slugging outfielder, performed encouragingly well in his first MLB start on the mound Sunday. Playing on the road at Oakland, Ohtani allowed three runs and three hits over six innings, with six strikeouts to just one walk, getting the win in a 7-4 Angels victory.

In Los Angeles' season opener three games before that, Ohtani got a hit in his first MLB at-bat, although he went 0-for-4 after that while serving as the designated hitter. Those two appearances had accounted for his only action before Tuesday's game, when Ohtani made some more magic, this time in front of an appreciative home crowd.

After signing with the Angels for a relative pittance, due to MLB rules about his age and status as an international free agent, Ohtani had engendered more Ruth comparisons in the U.S., but mostly due being the first legitimate two-way player since the legendary slugger's early-career period. His two

games last week made him the first player since Ruth in 1919 to start as a non-pitcher on Opening Day and then get a start on the mound within his team's first 10 contests.

Tuesday's feat marked the first time an MLB player had won a game as a pitcher, then hit a first-inning home run within the next two days, since Ruth did it in 1921 (per Dylan Hernandez of the Los Angeles Times). Ohtani wasn't done, though, as he finished the game against the Indians with three hits in four at-bats, scoring twice and knocking in three runs, in a 13-2 Angels romp.

Just about the only thing that went wrong Tuesday for the former Nippon Ham Fighter was that his home run was not a grand slam, which it would have been had teammate Kole Calhoun not scored on a wild pitch from Cleveland starter Josh Tomlin while Ohtani was at the plate. Now, in just nine regular season at-bats, he has as many hits, and one more home run, than he had in 32 spring-training at-bats, when he notched a .125 average with a minuscule .347 OPS.

Ohtani also failed to produce good numbers as a pitcher in spring training, giving up eight earned runs in 2.2 innings over two appearances, for a 27.00 ERA and a ghastly 4.12 WHIP. In retrospect, the concerns those statistics raised have only served to show the deceptive power of small sample sizes, although perhaps the same could be said of his regular season numbers thus far.

If nothing else, the three appearances, particularly the two most recent ones following his debut, have shown that the MLB stage is hardly too big for Ohtani. Major league stadiums may also prove to be too small to contain his blasts, which would be just be fine with Angels fans and Ohtani's teammates, who likely have a few more post-homer pranks in store for him.

FROM BOSTON.COM

Morning sports update: Shohei Ohtani matched Babe Ruth with a rare feat Tuesday

By Mark Dunphy

Shohei Ohtani first since Babe Ruth to accomplish this feat

In his first start as a pitcher Sunday, Shohei Ohtani struck out the first batter he faced en route to a win over Oakland. In his first at-bat at Angel Stadium on Tuesday, Los Angeles's two-way star blasted a three-run homer that helped the Angels beat the Cleveland Indians 13-2. When Ohtani returned to dugout, his teammates gave him the silent treatment before breaking character and celebrating with the Japanese phenom.

Ohtani became the first player to win as a starting pitcher, then start and hit a home run as a non-pitcher in his next game in the same season since Babe Ruth pulled off the feat in 1921, per the Washington Post. The Babe was playing for the Yankees by that point, but Ohtani matched two other Boston accomplishments with his performance as designated hitter Tuesday.

He is the first player since the 1937 Red Sox' Wes Ferrell to finish his first six games with four hits, a home run, and a win. He's also the first rookie with at least three hits and a win in his first six games since Dutch Stryker of the Boston Braves in 1924. (Washington Post)

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

FROM CLEVELAND.COM

Angels' Shohei Ohtani does good impersonation of Babe Ruth in 13-2 win over Cleveland Indians

By Paul Hoynes

ANAHEIM, Calif. - If Shohei Ohtani really does turn out to be the next Babe Ruth, he'll owe a small thank you to Josh Tomlin.

Ohtani hit his first homer in the big leagues off Tomlin on Tuesday night as the Angels pounded the Indians, 13-2, at Angel Stadium. Tomlin, in his first start of the season, allowed a career-high four homers in just three innings.

It's hard to tell by the final score, but the Indians actually led 2-0 thanks to Jose Ramirez's two-run homer in the first off Garrett Richards. It ended Ramirez's season-opening 0-for-15 slump, but it did not provide near enough cover for Tomlin, who was pitching in his first game since March 25 in spring training.

The first inning lasted 38 minutes and featured 69 pitches. Tomlin threw 43 of them as the Angels hit two homers, scored six runs and sent nine men to the plate.

Mike Trout started the onslaught with a one-out homer. He came into the game hitting .556 (5-for-9) against Tomlin.

Justin Upton, Albert Pujols and Kole Calhoun followed with singles, Upton scoring on Calhoun's single to tie the score at 2-2. Andrelton Simmons, with runners at first and second, sent a bouncer to Ramirez at third. Instead of throwing to second to try and start a double play, Ramirez tagged Pujols coming to third and did not have another play.

Tomlin walked Luis Valbuena and went to a 2-2 count on Ohtani. Tomlin's next pitch, a 74 mph curveball, landed in the right field seats. The Angels signed Ohtani over the offseason after a bidding war among select MLB teams. Ohtani wants to pitch and hit at the same time in the big leagues and the Angels are giving him a chance.

He DH'd Tuesday night, but on Sunday he pitched six innings to beat Oakland. He struck out six and retired 14 of the last 15 hitters he faced. Tuesday was his second start as a position player. He went 3-for-4 with three RBI.

When Ohtani got back to the dugout after his homer, the Angels gave him the silent treatment. But then he jumped on Trout's back and the Angels mobbed him. Ohtani, 23, hit 48 homers in six seasons in Japan.

Tomlin (0-1, 24.00) allowed eight runs on eight hits in three innings. He allowed a homer in the second to Upton and a homer in the third to Valbuena. Otero started the fourth.

The contrast between Tomlin and Richards (1-0, 5.02) was hard to miss. Tomlin's velocity ranged from a 70 mph curveball to an 85 mph fastball. Richards, one of the hardest throwers in the big leagues when healthy, topped out at 97.6 mph. He missed most of last season with a biceps tendon injury.

Rene Rivera hit the Angels fifth and final homer, a two-run drive to right off Zach McAllister in the eighth. Ohtani scored in front of Rivera.

What it means

The Indians 12-game winning streak against the Angels is over. It was just the Angels second victory over the Indians in their last 18 games.

The pitches

Tomlin threw 77 pitches, 49 (64 percent) for strikes. Richards threw 102 pitches, 58 (57 percent) for strikes.

Thanks for coming

The Indians and Angels drew 35,007 to Angel Stadium on Tuesday night. First pitch was at 10:08 p.m. with a temperature of 65 degrees.

Next

Corey Kluber (0-1, 2.25) will make his second start of the season on Wednesday when he faces the Angels at 4:10 p.m. at Angel Stadium. Kluber was the Indians opening day starter and threw a complete game, but lost, 2-1, to Felix Hernandez and the Mariners.

FROM LARRY BROWN SPORTS

Shohei Ohtani gets silent treatment after first career home run

By Larry Brown

Shohei Ohtani clubbed his first career MLB home run with a 3-run shot to right field against the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday night. The two-way phenom was treated by his Los Angeles Angels teammates just like anyone else following a first career home run. That's right, Ohtani got the silent treatment.

Ohtani seemed confused at first by the silent treatment upon entering the dugout, but then he played along and gave some fake high-fives. Then he disturbed it all by grabbing a teammate to hug.

The scene was awesome. That was Ohtani's first career at-bat in front of the home fans in Anaheim, and it couldn't have gone better. He really appears to be putting the rough spring training behind him — quickly.