



**Minnesota Twins Daily Clips**  
**Monday, July 2, 2018**

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**International signing day: Top prospect tracker**

**Jesse Sanchez | MLB.com | July 2, 2018**

Welcome to July 2, the start of the international signing period, and the date unofficially known in baseball circles as "international signing day." It's the day careers are launched and the lives of teenage ballplayers across the globe are changed forever.

**2018 Draft**

- International Signing Tracker
- Top 30 Int'l Prospects
- Best of the rest
- Top 30 Int'l Prospects breakdown
- July 2: What you need to know
- How Atlanta got Acuna when everyone else missed
- Top 5 ways teams secure int'l talent
- Top 30 lists: 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013

As is the case every year, what happens between today and when the period ends June 15, 2019, can help change the trajectory of a franchise. Consider this: Five of the top six prospects in the game -- Braves outfielder Ronald Acuna Jr., Blue Jays outfielder Vladimir Guerrero Jr., White Sox outfielder Eloy Jimenez, Padres outfielder Fernando Tatis Jr. and Nationals outfielder Victor Robles -- were all signed during the international signing period. Players like Yankees infielder Gleyber Torres and Nats outfielder Juan Soto were also acquired through the international market, and more talent is on the way.

In addition to prospects from traditional baseball hot spots like the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil and the Bahamas, there are also prospects from places like Europe, the Caribbean islands and Asia who have registered and will sign during the period. In all, more than 950 prospects signed during the previous international signing period that started July 2, 2017. That number could increase during the 2018-19 period because there are thousands who have registered to become eligible.

Below is a look at which players from MLB Pipeline's Top 30 International Prospects list have agreed to terms with clubs, and for how much. Unless otherwise noted, clubs have not confirmed the deals.

The market is still to be determined for players like No. 9 Osiel Rodriguez, No. 14 Sandy Gaston and No. 29 Denny Larrondo, who have yet to agree to deals. Kevin Alcantara, who is ranked No. 10, Eduardo Garcia (No. 20) and Alexander Ramirez (No. 24) will not be eligible to sign until after July 2 when they turn 16.

Follow @JesseSanchezMLB and @MLBPipeline for all of the details.

1. Diego Cartaya, C, Venezuela - Dodgers More »
  2. Marco Luciano, OF, Dominican Republic -- Giants (\$2,600,000)
  3. Misael Urbina, OF, Venezuela -- Twins (2,750,000)
  4. Orelvis Martinez, SS, Dominican Republic -- Blue Jays (\$3,500,000)
  5. Richard Gallardo, RHP, Venezuela -- Cubs (\$1,000,000)
  6. Gabriel Rodriguez, SS, Venezuela -- Indians (\$2,100,000)
  7. Noelvi Marte, SS, Dominican Republic -- Mariners
  8. Starlyn Castillo, RHP, Dominican Republic -- Phillies (\$1,600,000)
  9. Osiel Rodriguez, RHP, Cuba -- Yankees
  10. Kevin Alcantara, SS, Dominican Republic -- Yankees
  11. Antonio Gomez, C, Venezuela -- Yankees
  12. Junior Sanquintin, SS, Dominican Republic -- Indians (\$1,250,000)
  13. Francisco Alvarez, C, Venezuela -- Mets (\$2,700,000)
  14. Sandy Gaston, RHP, Cuba
  15. Jose De La Cruz, OF, Dominican Republic -- Tigers (1,800,000)
  16. Alvin Guzman, OF, Dominican Republic -- D-backs (1,850,000)
  17. Jose Lopez, OF, Dominican Republic -- Cubs (\$1,500,000)
  18. Eduarqui Fernandez, OF, Dominican Republic -- Brewers (\$1,100,000)
  19. Adiso Reyes, SS, Dominican Republic -- Tigers (\$1,450,000)
  20. Eduardo Garcia, SS, Venezuela -- Brewers
  21. Jose Rodriguez, C, Venezuela - Rangers (\$2,000,000)
  22. Alejandro Pie, SS, Dominican Republic -- Rays (\$1,400,000)
  23. Eduardo Lopez, OF, Dominican Republic -- Red Sox (\$1,150,000)
  24. Alexander Ramirez, OF, Dominican Republic -- Angels
  25. Freddy Valdez, OF, Dominican Republic -- Mets (\$1,450,000)
  26. Branlyn Jaraba, SS, Colombia -- Brewers (\$1,100,000)
  27. Luis Matos, OF, Venezuela -- Giants (\$725,000)
  28. Joel Machado, LHP, Venezuela -- Cubs (\$850,000)
  29. Denny Larrondo, RHP, Cuba -- Yankees
  30. Jerming Rosario, RHP, Dominican Republic -- Dodgers (\$600,000) More »
- Complete list with scouting reports, grades, video and more »

The rules:

An international player is eligible to sign with a Major League team between July 2 through June 15 of the next year if he is 17 or will turn 17 by the end of the first season of his contract.

Clubs that receive a Competitive Balance Pick in Round B of the MLB Draft receive a pool of \$6,025,400, while clubs that receive a Competitive Balance Pick in Round A of the Draft receive \$5,504,500. All other clubs receive \$4,983,500.

Teams are allowed to trade as much of their international pool money as they would like but can only acquire 75 percent of a team's initial pool amount. Additionally, signing bonuses of \$10,000 or less do not count toward a club's bonus pool, and foreign professional players who are at least 25 years of age and have played in a foreign league for at least six seasons are also exempt.

The pools:

\$6,025,400: Reds, Marlins, Brewers, Twins, Athletics, Rays

\$5,504,500: D-backs, Orioles, Indians, Rockies, Royals, Pirates, Padres

\$5,004,500: Cardinals

\$4,983,500: Braves, Red Sox, Cubs, White Sox, Tigers, Astros, Angels, Dodgers, Yankees, Mets, Mariners, Giants, Rangers, Blue Jays, Nationals

\$3,949,000: Phillies

## The Teams:

The Blue Jays, Brewers, D-backs, Mariners, Phillies, Rangers, Red Sox, Tigers, Twins and Yankees are expected to be busy as the period opens. The Cubs, Dodgers, Giants and Royals -- teams that will no longer be in the penalty for exceeding their past international bonus pool spending -- are also expected to be very active.

The A's, Astros, Braves, Cardinals, Nationals, Padres, Reds and White Sox are in the maximum penalty, and cannot sign an individual player for more than \$300,000 this period.

Here's a look at players outside the Top 30 who have agreed to deals for \$300,000 or more:

### Brewers

Erys Bautista, OF, Dominican Republic -- \$500,000

### Cardinals

Malcolm Nunez, 3B, Cuba -- \$300,000

### Cubs

Rafael Morel, SS, Dominican Republic -- \$850,000

Yohendrick Pinango, OF, Venezuela -- \$400,000

### Dodgers

Alex De Jesus, INF, Dominican Republic -- \$500,000

### Giants

Jairo Pomarez, OF, Cuba -- \$975,000

### Indians

Sterling Romero, OF, Dominican Republic -- \$650,000

Angel Martinez, SS, Dominican Republic - 500,000

### Nationals

Yueri Amparo, OF, Dominican Republic -- \$300,000

Jeremy De La Rosa, OF, Dominican Republic -- \$300,000

### Padres

Axcel Peralta, 1B, Dominican Republic -- \$300,000

Emanuel Rodriguez, SS, Dominican Republic -- \$300,000

### Pirates

Luis Tejada, INF, Dominican Republic -- \$500,000

### Rangers

Luisangel Acuna, INF, Venezuela -- \$425,000

### White Sox

Bryan Ramos, 3B, Cuba -- \$300,000

Harold Diaz, SS, Cuba --\$300,000

Luis Pineda, C, Venezuela -- \$300,000

## **Twins' big rally falls short after 10-run surge**

**Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | July 2, 2018**

CHICAGO -- Despite scoring 25 runs in three games and reaching double figures in runs for the first time all season to nearly make a eight-run comeback on Sunday, the Twins left Wrigley Field empty-handed.

The only thing hotter than the Chicago weather over the weekend was seemingly the Cubs' offense, as the Twins allowed at least 10 runs in each

of the three games, including an 11-10 loss on Sunday for a three-game sweep. Minnesota, which was outscored 35-25 during the series, has lost eight of 10 to drop to a season-high 10 games under .500 (35-45).

#### View Full Game Coverage

"Their offense, we just had trouble with," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "A lot of big innings and big numbers. I think our guys stayed with it. We had some opportunities there and got some big hits to get us back into the game. When you get as close we did there late, it makes you think about some of the runs we gave up along the way. So that's frustrating."

Right-hander Lance Lynn couldn't get through two innings, allowing seven runs on five hits and three walks with all eight runs coming in the second. He gave up a three-run homer to starting pitcher Jon Lester to start the rally, with Lester coming out for a curtain call after his second career homer.

"I wasn't happy," Lynn said bluntly.

Lynn served up run-scoring doubles to Anthony Rizzo, Javier Baez and Kyle Schwarber, before reliever Matt Magill allowed an inherited runner to score on an RBI single from Willson Contreras. It caused Lynn's ERA to rise from 4.81 to 5.49 on the year.

"We didn't want to go out the 'pen in the second inning given the shape of our bullpen," Molitor said. "But we had to do it."

Offensively, the Twins racked up nine hits and four runs (two earned) against Lester through five-plus innings, but it wasn't enough. Jake Cave hit a mammoth solo shot to center in the second and also connected on an RBI double as part of a two-run fifth. Catcher Mitch Garver also provided an RBI single that inning.

Brian Dozier smacked a two-run shot in the sixth off reliever Steve Cishek and the Twins scored five times in the eighth against Dillon Maples with Logan Morrison dropping in an RBI single, Willians Astudillo bringing home two runs with a triple and Garver connecting on a two-run blast. It was again plenty of offense, but not enough pitching.

"That's disappointing," Dozier said. "But at the same time we've had a lot of games where the pitching has been good and we haven't been able to put up runs. Putting both of those two things together seems to be pretty tough to come by right now."

The Cubs continued to tack on runs in the fourth, fifth and sixth innings. Addison Russell had an RBI single in the fourth against Magill, Ian Happ connected on a solo shot off lefty Taylor Rogers in the fifth and David Bote added a sacrifice fly off Rogers in the sixth. Eduardo Escobar had a chance to tie it in the ninth with Eddie Rosario at second with two outs, but Escobar grounded out to first to end it.

"Rosie gave us an opportunity there with good baserunning," Molitor said. "We just couldn't get the last hit. So it's tough. Everyone's a little bit drained from the three days and the weather and getting beat around a little bit."

#### MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Lynn doesn't cover first: After Lester's three-run homer with one out in the second, Lynn was unable to get to first in time on a grounder to first by Happ. It was ruled an infield single and sparked the rally, as Jason Heyward's groundout in the next at-bat would've ended the inning. Instead, the Cubs went on to score five more times.

"We gave them an extra out," Molitor said. "I think that was the biggest thing that stuck out to me. They kept adding on. Magill came in and we couldn't get off the field until they put up an eight. An offense like that, outs when you don't get them, that was problematic to me. The arithmetic says that was an extra five runs because of that particular play."

#### SOUND SMART

Lynn had faced a pitcher 295 times in his career without giving up a homer until Lester's three-run shot. He came into the game holding opposing pitchers to a .133/.169/.145 line with three doubles allowed.

#### HE SAID IT

"I wasn't out there long enough to know, truthfully." -- Lynn, on if the weather was a factor. The game-time temperature was 93 degrees with a heat index of 101

"They never quit. It does not surprise me with Mollie in the dugout. We were very fortunate to come out on top." -- Cubs manager Joe Maddon, on the Twins

#### UP NEXT

The Twins make the short trip to Milwaukee for a three-game series at Miller Park that starts on Monday at 7:10 p.m. CT. Right-hander Kyle Gibson (2-6, 3.48 ERA) will look to bounce back after giving up five runs on 11 hits over seven innings against the White Sox. Shortstop Jorge Polanco will also be reinstated after his 80-game suspension for the use of performance-enhancing drugs. Lefty Brent Suter (8-5, 4.28) starts for the Brewers.

### **Polanco ready to rejoin Twins from suspension** **Rhett Bollinger | MLB.com | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO -- The Twins are preparing for shortstop Jorge Polanco to be reinstated from his 80-game suspension for the use of performance-enhancing drugs on Monday in the series opener against the Brewers. They'll have to make a corresponding roster move prior to the game.

Polanco has been playing well at Triple-A Rochester, going 6-for-13 with a triple and two walks in four games. He also played in two games with Class A Advanced Fort Myers, going 2-for-6 with a homer. Twins manager Paul Molitor said he expects Polanco to get immediate playing time and has been tinkering with potential lineups including Polanco, who hit .256/.313/.410 with 13 homers, 30 doubles and 13 stolen bases in 133 games last year.

#### View Full Game Coverage

"I've thought about that some," Molitor said. "We've got options. We know what he did last year when he had a chance to move up into a pretty important role. I don't know we'll jump him up there that fast. For us to see him is going to be different than hearing about him and reading about him and texting him and all those kinds of things. We'll see how it is. To be honest, coming up here and playing, even though he's doing really well, it's going to be a little different than what he's been doing."

Polanco had a breakout second half in 2017, hitting .293/.359/.511 with 10 homers, 15 doubles and 43 RBIs in 63 games. He moved up to the No. 3 spot in the lineup down the stretch, but as Molitor noted, Polanco is unlikely to be that high in the order early on. Molitor, though, is excited to get Polanco's offense back in the lineup.

"I think we all miss that aspect of his game," Polanco said. "Not to mention the production from that type of approach. He's another one of those guys who helps everyone in the lineup by how he takes good at-bats over the course of a season."

Due to the nature of his suspension before he started his rehab assignment, Polanco spent the first two months working out at the club's Spring Training complex in Fort Myers, Fla. It allowed him to specifically hone in on his defense, working closely with Minor League infield coordinator and former big league manager Sam Perlozzo. Polanco had to take some time off in mid-June after he suffered a cut on his right index finger, but he's healthy and ready to go.

"We all know how he improved last year," Molitor said. "He spent a lot of time on his defense prior to the finger injury. He had day after day after day to do things. People have raved about how he set an example for the other players. First guy out, last guy to leave. A lot of it had to do with him working to shore up any minor shortfalls in his games. I think defensively, he'll be fine."

#### Worth noting

- Right-hander Ervin Santana made his first rehab start with Fort Myers on Saturday, allowing one run on two hits over three innings with two strikeouts. Molitor said the reports were good, although Santana's fastball topped out at 90 mph.

"Velocity, I know everyone is interested in that," Molitor said. "I think 90 was the high mark. But it was somewhat effective. We thought it was a good step. We're going to have to talk today about whether we want him to make his next one in Fort Myers or somewhere else. My gut is it's probably going to be Fort Myers again."

- Molitor said Eddie Rosario, Max Kepler and Bobby Wilson were all doing better Sunday after leaving Saturday's game with heat-related illness. They all received IVs after the game, as did shortstop Ehire Adrianza.

- Left-hander Adalberto Mejia, who made his season debut on Saturday, is on track to remain in the rotation and make his next start against the Orioles on Thursday.

### **Twins Insider: Mistakes, absences pile up in loss to Cubs and disappointing season** **La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 2, 2018**

CHICAGO – Jorge Polanco's suspension has ended and he's returning to the Twins. And news that he could be in the lineup on Monday against the Brewers was met with predictable excitement.

“Everybody loves Polanco,” Eduardo Escobar said. “He’s a good kid. The most important thing is that he’s coming back and he is ready.”

Polanco will debut this week after serving an 80-game suspension for violating the league’s policy on performance-enhancing drugs. He was 6-for-13 with a triple in four games for Class AAA Rochester, convincing a team that’s desperate for offensive punch that he’s ready.

His quality at-bats and production at the plate last season helped the Twins reach the wild-card round of the postseason — and could provide a boost for the sputtering offense.

“He’s another one of those guys who helps everyone in the lineup by how he takes good at-bats over the course of a season,” manager Paul Molitor said.

But it can’t go unrecognized that his suspension was the first sign that this just might not be the Twins’ season.

CHICAGO CUBS 11, TWINS 10

Monday: at Milwaukee, 7:10 p.m. (FSN)

The Twins looked ready to be a threat in the AL Central during spring training, especially when they added righthander Jake Odorizzi, first baseman Logan Morrison and righthander Lance Lynn — all capable veterans — after camp opened to add depth to the roster.

Then, on March 18, it was learned that Polanco would miss nearly half the season following a positive test for stanozolol. Escobar stepped in at short and had responded with an All-Star-worthy first half until a Rick Porcello fastball to his elbow sent him on a 2-for-34 tailspin before going 2-for-6 on Sunday.

The next troubling sign was when Byron Buxton and Miguel Sano landed on the disabled list during a two-week span starting in mid-April. The cornerstones of the Twins’ revival have not been the same since. After Buxton became sidelined by migraines, he broke his left big toe fouling a ball off it during a minor league rehab game. Sano recovered from a left hamstring strain but was so poor at the plate afterward, he currently is having what essentially is a second spring training in Fort Myers, Fla.

Righthander Ervin Santana was expected to return from finger surgery in late April or early May, but he had setbacks, one rehab assignment called off and is just starting to ramp up another one — as the Twins look at his fastballs, now hitting 89-90 miles per hour, and hope the velocity ticks up.

Those four players combined for 14.5 of the Twins’ 36.6 WAR last season.

Good teams overcome injuries — but not these Twins at the moment.

Two more troubling signs popped up early in the season. The most significant was losing 12 one-run games over the first two months of the season. The Twins earned those losses through poor clutch hitting, baserunning mistakes, defensive miscues and basically unclean baseball.

“Things are never perfect,” second baseman Brian Dozier said. “We have had people step up. But we still haven’t tapped into our full potential, but any means, this year.”

Sunday’s 11-10 loss to the Cubs, causing the Twins to fall to an unacceptable 4-14 in one-run games, was the latest example. They battled back from 8-1 to make it interesting by the ninth inning. But when a team falls short, you look at the little things that went wrong.

Lynn, during his 1½-inning cameo appearance, didn’t rush over to cover first base on Ian Happ’s grounder in the second inning, costing the Twins an out in what became an eight-run inning.

“The arithmetic says that was an extra five runs because of that particular play,” Molitor said.

“That was on me right there,” Lynn said.

Molitor also thought the Twins had a chance to throw Willson Contreras out as he legged out a triple but missed a relay.

Enough with the misses. That allows opponents to escape with victories — the Twins’ eight walkoff losses are another signal of deep-rooted issues that are foiling their season.

Instead of taking the next step after losing to the Yankees in the wild-card round last October, they near the halfway point of the season 10 games under .500, nine games behind Cleveland in the AL Central, horrible in one-run games, baffled at times on the basepaths and looking nothing like the team they were a year ago.

By the time they get Polanco, Buxton, Sano and Santana back in the lineup, fans will be focusing on football season.

“I think it’s a combination at times of how we’ve played, how we’ve hit at times, how we’ve played defense at times, how we’ve run the bases and how we’ve pitched,” Molitor said. “All areas at times have been OK and at others they’ve cost us games.”

“Approaching the halfway point. We talked briefly [Saturday] about how much season we’ve got left and you’ve got to create a vision of where you want this thing to go and you can’t let your guard down.”

It’s a good sign that Sano is on board with pausing his season for this holistic approach to his game. After all, the first step toward solving a problem is admitting that there is one.

### **Twins swept by Cubs, lose 11-10 as rally from eight-run hole falls short**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO – Twins righthander Lance Lynn suffered the shortest start of the season and the third shortest of his career Sunday when he was knocked out in the second inning, during which the Chicago Cubs scored eight runs to take an 8-1 lead before holding off a late rally to win 11-10 and complete a sweep of the three-game series.

Lynn (5-7) lit the fuse himself, putting the Twins in a hole they could not fully escape.

He gave up a three-run home run to Cubs pitcher Jon Lester, who feasted on a 3-2 pitch. The next batter, Ian Happ, sent a grounder toward Logan Morrison at first base. Morrison looked to flip the ball to Lynn, but Lynn was late covering the bag. Morrison then tried to beat Happ to the bag but was late.

That would have been the second out. Jason Heyward followed with a groundout. But Ben Zobrist walked, Anthony Rizzo hit an RBI double and Javier Baez added a two-run double as the Cubs took a 6-1 lead. And that was all for Lynn.

Matt Magill entered and gave up run-scoring hits to Kyle Schwarber and Willson Contreras as Chicago took an 8-1 lead.

Lynn was charged with seven runs over 1½ innings and has a 14.84 ERA over his past two starts.

MATT MARTON • Associated Press

Twins righthander Lance Lynn stood in the dugout after being pulled during a disastrous second inning against the Cub

MATT MARTON • Associated Press Twins righthander Lance Lynn stood in the dugout after being pulled during a disastrous second inning against the Cubs on Sunday.

More

“We don’t want to go out to the ‘pen in the second inning, given the shape of our bullpen,” Twins manager Paul Molitor said, “but we had to do it.”

The Twins kept chipping away at the lead, scoring five runs in the eighth — including a two-run triple by Willians Astudillo and a two-run homer by Mitch Garver — to cut the Cubs’ lead to one run.

The Cubs scored a whopping 35 runs in three games, the most the Twins have allowed in a series since May 29-31, 2017, when Houston scored 40 runs at Target Field.

It was the first time the Twins have given up double-digit runs in three consecutive games since Sept. 4-6, 2016.

The Twins did make things interesting with five runs in the eighth inning, including a two-run triple by Willians Astudillo and a two-run homer by Mitch Garver. Eddie Rosario then hit a two-out single off closer Brandon Morrow in the ninth and moved to second on a wild pitch.

But Eduardo Escobar, who hit his 34th double of the season in the eighth inning, grounded out to end the game. Had the Twins rallied to win, the comeback from eight runs down would have been the biggest in team history.

International moves

The international signing period begins Monday, and the Twins are set to land one of the better prospects out of Venezuela.

Misael Urbina is ranked as the 10th-best international prospect by Baseball America. He's a switch-hitting center fielder with some power, and observers believe he will be able to remain in center, where his power would be a plus.

The Twins will not make the signing official until after Urbina passes a physical.

Alexander Pena, another outfielder from Venezuela, is also linked to the Twins.

Twins next for Larnach

With an NCAA championship secured for his Oregon State Beavers, outfielder Trevor Larnach now can sign with the Twins.

Larnach was never expected to be a tough sign, and the sides are putting the finishing touches on a deal that could be announced early this week. Larnach is expected to be in the Twin Cities this week to take a physical and sign the contract.

The Twins selected Larnach with the 20th overall pick of the draft, and the recommended bonus for that slot is \$3.1 million.

Oregon State beat Arkansas on Thursday to win the three-game final series at the College World Series.

"[Scouting director] Sean Johnson obviously will connect and take the next steps around this," Twins Chief Baseball Officer Derek Falvey said. "I'm hopeful that it's soon."

### **Ex-Twin Ron Coomer's love affair with Cubs, Chicago still brightly burns** **Patrick Reusse | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO – The Coomers lived in a house near Midway Airport on the South Side of Chicago. This near:

"When I was kid, I would throw rocks in the air, swing at them with a bat, and try to hit the rock over the Midway fence," Ron Coomer said. "When I did that, it was a home run."

The South Side was primarily White Sox country for baseball fans, although not for young Ronnie Coomer in the 1970s.

"We had one of those old TVs where you twisted the dial and could get the regular channels," Coomer said. "There were also the UHF channels, 26 through 44, and the White Sox games were up there."

"On our TV you couldn't get those channels. You could watch the Cubs on WGN, Channel 9. I would get home from school, and the Cubs were on, and Wrigley Field looked like such a great place for a ballgame."

Coomer's father, also Ron, was a baseball fan, but not pro-Sox and anti-Cub as were a good share of the Coomer relatives and neighbors.

"I was a Cubs fan, so we would go to games at Wrigley Field," Coomer said. "There was a ritual: As soon we got in the ballpark, I would run up the steps and look at the field, take it all in like it was the first time I'd been there, and my dad would get in the concession line."

"He would get a hot dog and a beer, I'd get a hot dog and a Coke, and we'd be ready to watch the Cubs."

Young Ronnie was turning into a good ballplayer, and his parents, Ron and Linda, popped for the hot glove on the market.

"The Wilson A2000 ... every kid wanted one of those," Coomer said. "I would bring the glove with me to Wrigley, for foul balls, and one day we had seats near the Cubs bullpen."

"Bruce Sutter was getting started as the Cubs' closer. He had the same glove. He said, 'Kid, let me see that glove.' He looked at my glove, put his hand in it, pounded the pocket a couple of times and said, 'Let's change gloves.'"

"I grabbed mine back and said, 'No way. You can't have my glove.' My dad told me when he gave me the A2000, 'You do something to ruin this glove or lose it, you're not getting another one,' and I believed him."



This was on Saturday morning, before Game 2 of the Sweat Box Slugfest that the Cubs swept from the Twins over the weekend in Wrigley Field. As the radio analyst, Coomer had been downstairs for the pregame session with Cubs manager Joe Maddon.

Wrigley's massive remodeling has not yet included the press box. The home radio crew has the same ridiculously cramped quarters as the rest of the broadcast locations. And without air conditioning, the oppressive heat had "Coom" looking a bit moist well before the first pitch in his red shirt and shorts.

This is Coomer's fifth season as the analyst for Pat Hughes' play-by-play on Cubs radio broadcasts. He was set to continue broadcast duties in 2014 with the Twins — 30 games as a TV analyst, pregame and postgame shows, and some radio work on the Twins' station — when Hughes called and talked about the opening to replace Keith Moreland.

Dave St. Peter, the Twins president, told Coomer it was OK to seize the opportunity. Coomer was hired after one meeting with Cubs officials.

"Coom played here, he's a Chicago guy; we'd had a lot of conversations in the past, and his knowledge of baseball, his enthusiasm, his constant good humor ... it all added up," Hughes said.

"And in five years in the booth, we haven't had one cross moment — spring training, 162 games, the postseason — and not one bad moment."

Coomer said his one truly nervous moment came when the Cubs and Cleveland were in extra innings of Game 7 of the 2016 World Series.

"I had this thought, 'If we win, Pat's first words will be heard in Chicago for the next 100 years and I can't step on him,'" Coomer said. "I pushed the microphone away from my mouth when it got down to the last out. And Pat made the call, simple and great."

Coomer's acceptance as Hughes' sidekick in Chicago is such that he now is in a partnership with Coom's Corner, a large sports bar in the southwest suburb of Lockport.

And Coomer's presence as a sports figure in Chicago helped cause this historic event to take place earlier this season:

"My Uncle Jim, Jim Eldridge, is one of those hard-core Sox fans that despised the Cubs. He came to his first-ever game at Wrigley Field recently. He said it wasn't bad, considering it was the Cubs."

### **Sunday's Twins-Cubs game recap**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

IMPACT PLAYER: Javier Baez, Chicago

The second baseman went 3-for-5 with two doubles.

#### **BY THE NUMBERS**

2 Times the Twins have given up a home run to an opposing pitcher this season.

4 Consecutive games with at least 10 runs for the Cubs, the longest streak since June 1-6, 1930.

.418 Batting average for the Cubs in the series.

7 Consecutive starts with a win for Cubs lefty Jon Lester.

10 Twins runs Sunday, the most they have scored this season. And it came in a loss.

### **Twins-Milwaukee series preview**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

THREE GAME SERIES AT MILLER PARK

Monday, 7:10 p.m. • FSN, 830 AM: RHP Kyle Gibson (2-6, 3.48) vs. LHP Brent Suter (8-5, 4.28)

Tuesday, 3:10 p.m. • Facebook Live, 830 AM: RHP Jake Odorizzi (3-5, 4.62) vs RHP Junior Guerra (4-5, 3.05)

Wednesday, 3:10 p.m. • FSN, 830 AM: RHP Jose Berrios (8-6, 3.52) vs RHP Chase Anderson (6-6, 4.18)

#### TWINS UPDATE

The Twins finish their nine-game road trip with three games at Miller Park. ... The Twins beat the Brewers in both games in Milwaukee last season, with Bartolo Colon and Alan Busenitz getting the victories. ... The Twins lost two of three to the Brewers in May at Target Field. ... Brian Dozier has reached base in 11 of his past 12 games. ... The Twins are 6-9 against the National League. ... The only way to view Tuesday's game is on Facebook Live.

#### BREWERS UPDATE

Milwaukee will be in first place in the NL Central for the 52nd day, although the Cubs are now only a half-game behind. ... Guerra picked up the win at Cincinnati on Thursday, but it was only the third time in 15 starts he's given up more than three earned runs. ... Outfielder Lorenzo Cain will miss the series after being placed on the 10-day DL because of a left groin muscle strain. ... Jesus Aguilar has more homers than last season (19 to 16) in 61 fewer plate appearances.

#### **Twins struggling 80 games in**

**Staff Writer | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

Monday's game marks the Twins' 81st of the season, meaning they have half a season left to try to salvage what has been a major disappointment.

#### THAT'S OFFENSIVE

The past three games at Wrigley Field aside, the Twins' biggest issue this year has been their lack of offense. They are on pace to score 694 runs this season, a year after scoring 815. (Before Friday, they were on pace to score 660.) The Twins rank in the bottom five in the AL in runs (343), home runs (83) and batting average (.238).

#### ROAD WORRIERS

The Twins are 10 games under .500 on the season, and they are also 10 games under .500 on the road. They went 7-3 on a 10-game road trip vs. the White Sox, Cardinals and Angels in May; since then, they have won only one of their past six road series. That series was at Cleveland, which brings us to one reason for optimism.

#### HOPE? A LITTLE

Another wild-card berth is almost certainly out of reach; the Twins have the 10th-best record in the 15-team AL. They sit in second in the woeful AL Central but are nine games behind the Indians. However, the Twins are 6-3 vs. Cleveland this year, and the teams have 10 games remaining — although seven of those are in Ohio.

#### **Twins pondering roster moves after sweep by Cubs**

**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

The Twins have to make a roster move before Monday's game to make room for Jorge Polanco's return from his PED suspension.

But indications on Saturday were that more moves than that could be made.

"Discussions are not completed," Twins manager Paul Molitor said. "We're looking at options we have in case we need to supplement in some fashion, which I think is possible."

That would suggest that the bullpen could tinkered with a little bit after the Twins gave up 35 runs during the three game series. Ryan Pressly pitched two solid innings late in the game when the Twins really needed them, and the Twins offense made things interesting with five runs in the eighth.

The way some relievers have been used, I expect to see at least one fresh arm (Tyler Duffey) from Class AAA Rochester at Miller Park on Monday to help against the Brewers.

Who goes to make room for Polanco? It's been fun to watch Willians Astudillo the last couple of days. He get his hacks in at the plate, and can play all over the place. Ehire? It's tough for a team to let a glove-first backup go, which Adrianza is. He also is batting .261, which is a heck of a lot better than several players. We'll see....

**Jorge Polanco to join Twins in Milwaukee**  
**La Velle E. Neal III | Star Tribune | July 1, 2018**

Jorge Polanco is on his way.

Polanco is on his way to Milwaukee and could very well be in the lineup on Monday when the Twins open a three game series against the Brewers. It's the first day Polanco will be eligible for the active roster after serving an 80-game suspension for violating the league policy on performance enhancing drugs.

Twins manager Paul Molitor indicated this morning that he's leaning toward getting Polanco in the lineup as soon as possible, and has been figuring out where to bat him in the lineup.

Polanco's arrival could be a boost to a Twins team that is falling farther and farther behind in the AL Central. They began Sunday nine games under .500, and getting above .500 is the first step towards being taken seriously.

On the short term, the Twins have to figure out Cubs lefthander Jon Lester, who is 10-2 with a sparkling 2.18 ERA.

Twins

Robbie Grossman, RF  
Eddie Rosario, LF  
Eduardo Escobar, 3B  
Brian Dozier, 2B  
Logan Morrison, 1B  
Willians Astudillo, 3B  
Mitch Garver, C  
Jake Cave, CF  
Lance Lynn, RHP

Cubs

Ian Happ, 3B  
Jason Heyward, CF  
Ben Zobrist, RF  
Anthony Rizzo, 1B  
Javy Baez, 2B  
Kyle Schwarber, LF  
Wilson Contreras, C  
Addison Russell, SS  
Jon Lester, LHP

**Suspension over, Jorge Polanco set to return to Twins**  
**Mike Berardino | Pioneer Press | July 1, 2018**

His 80-game steroid suspension finally over, shortstop Jorge Polanco is set to rejoin the Twins lineup on Monday in Milwaukee.

The switch-hitting Polanco, who went a combined 8 for 19 with a triple and a home run in six rehab games at Class A and Triple-A, was not in Sunday's Rochester lineup. Why take any chances after all Polanco has been through, including a right index finger that first got caught in a car

door and then became infected.

“His bat-to-ball has been tremendous,” Twins chief baseball officer Derek Falvey said. “He had the cut finger that delayed things. We felt like, ‘Is he going to be a little bit behind?’ But he’s shown no signs of that. He’s in great shape physically. He’s moving well.”

Polanco ended last season in the No. 3 hole for the Twins, hitting .316 and posting a .931 on-base/slugging percentage after Aug. 1. He probably won’t reclaim that lineup spot immediately, Twins manager Paul Molitor said, but his advanced approach at the plate should help an erratic offense.

“I think we all miss that aspect of his game, not to mention the production from that type of approach,” Molitor said. “He’s another one of those guys who helps everyone in the lineup by how he takes good at-bats over the course of a season.”

## SIGNING DATE

Monday is also the opening of the 2018-19 international signing period. The Twins are the favorites to sign Venezuelan center fielder Misael Urbina, who turned 16 in April.

The signing bonus could exceed \$1.5 million for the 5-foot-11, 170-pounder, who is expected to draw the largest bonus out of Venezuela this year. According to Baseball America, Urbina has strong defensive instincts, good closing speed and a below-average arm.

Scouts are reportedly split on his hitting ability, but he does have pull-side power with a compact swing.

Also expected to sign with the Twins this week are Dominican shortstop Felix Rosa and Venezuelan right fielder Alexander Pena. Pending physicals, both are expected to receive bonuses of \$200,000 or more.

The Twins are among six teams with an international bonus pool of \$6,025,400, which is the highest of the five tiers. The Phillies, who share a Dominican Republic complex with the Twins, have the least to spend abroad (\$3.95 million).

Dominican second baseman Yunion Severino, who signed with the Twins for \$2.5 million in December after being declared a free agent by Major League Baseball, will count against the 2018-19 pool. The 18-year-old Severino, who reached the Gulf Coast League with the Atlanta Braves last year, was hitting .417 through six games at rookie-level Elizabethton.

The Twins also reportedly made a strong run at another ex-Braves free agent last winter, but third baseman Kevin Maitan signed with the Los Angeles Angels for \$2.2 million.

## SANTANA PLAN

After Ervin Santana failed to crack 90 mph in his third rehab outing Saturday night for Class A Fort Myers, is it possible the veteran right-hander will simply have to learn how to survive with diminished velocity?

“I’m not sure,” Molitor said. “I’d be speculating a little bit, but I do know I’ve seen games along the way the last three years where he has pitched pretty steadily at 89-91 (mph), just relying on movement and location.”

Santana, who had been shut down since May 29, worked three innings on 36 pitches for the Miracle. Santana, 35, gave up a run on two hits and two strikeouts.

“It was somewhat effective,” Molitor said. “We thought it was a good step.”

Twins officials planned to discuss the next step for Santana, but it will probably be a four-inning stint for Fort Myers.

Molitor has remained in contact with Santana, who has managed to keep his spirits up despite a lengthy recovery from Feb. 6 finger surgery.

“Always positive responses,” Molitor said. “Everybody that’s been working with hi — weight room, coaches — all just say he’s been a high standard for what else to follow and how he’s handled it.”

## BRIEFLY

Despite lasting just four innings in his 2018 big-league debut on Saturday, left-hander Adalberto Mejia is expected to take his next turn in the rotation at home against Baltimore on July 5. That could change depending on bullpen needs for the Milwaukee series.

Sitting out Sunday's game were catcher Bobby Wilson and outfielder Max Kepler, both of whom left Saturday's game as well and received IVs, but left fielder Eddie Rosario was able to recover well enough to start against Cubs ace left-hander Jon Lester.

Returning Polanco from the restricted list will require the Twins to open a spot on their 40-man roster. They already designated right-hander Felix Jorge for assignment on Friday, with a minor trade the most likely outcome.

## **Lance Lynn chased as Twins fall 10 games under .500 for first time since 2016** **Mike Berardino | Pioneer Press | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO — Through his first 176 starts in the major leagues, there was one thing Lance Lynn had never done: Give up a home run to the opposing pitcher.

That changed Sunday afternoon with one swing of Jon Lester's bat, his three-run homer igniting an eight-run second inning that wiped out an early Twins lead and sent the Chicago Cubs to an 11-10 win and a three-game sweep of this interleague series at sweltering Wrigley Field.

Maddeningly, the Twins rallied from a 9-1 hole to pull within a single run on Mitch Garver's two-run homer in the eighth, but closer Brandon Morrow came on to record the final four outs for his 18th save in 19 chances.

"I love the fight with the guys in the dugout," Twins second baseman Brian Dozier said. "I kind of had glimpses of last year's team with our fight early in the (2017) season. That was good to see, but you've got to look at the big picture as far as some mistakes we made early on that cost us one or two runs."

Game-time temperature was 93 degrees, and the heat index was 101 degrees. It was still sticky and miserable, but not enough to send any players off for intravenous treatment, as happened to three Twins a day earlier.

How did the heat affect Lynn as he dropped to 0-4 with a 6.92 earned-run average in his past nine starts against the Cubs?

"I wasn't out there long enough to know, truthfully," he said after recording just five outs.

Wrapping up their trying week in the Windy City with a fifth loss in six tries, the Twins (35-45) boarded their luxury buses for Milwaukee at a season-worst 10 games under .500. They haven't sagged to such depths since completing a franchise-worst 103-loss season in 2016.

Now a season-high nine games out of first place in the American League Central, the Twins fell to 4-14 in one-run games despite reaching double-digit runs for the first time all season. They gave up 35 runs to the Cubs in the series to offset 25 runs from their previously punchless offense.

"I think there's a lot of disappointment because everyone's expectations were rightfully lifted," Twins manager Paul Molitor said, "and we haven't played well enough to make many arguments about why we are where we are. All areas at times have been OK and at others they've cost us games."

It was just the second career homer for Lester in 245 career at-bats, but that didn't stop him from turning around a 95.5 mph fastball and blasting it 406 feet into the center-field bleachers. Not since Milwaukee's Scott Karl connected off Dan Perkins in June 1999 had the Twins given up a homer to an opposing pitcher.

Lynn arched his back and stared skyward in obvious exasperation as Lester rounded the bases, but it was what happened next that proved even harder to accept. Lynn failed to cover first on Ian Happ's routine grounder to Logan Morrison, turning the presumed second out into an infield single.

That looked even worse when Jason Heyward followed with a tapper to shortstop. Instead of escaping with a 3-1 deficit, Lynn stuck around to walk Ben Zobrist before giving up consecutive doubles to Anthony Rizzo and Javier Baez.

The latter came on a 1-2 curveball after Baez was late on two straight high fastballs. The 12 extra pitches that followed his defensive lapse pushed Lynn's pitch count to 62 for the game, including a whopping 45 in the second.

"We gave them an extra out," Molitor said. "I think that was the biggest thing that stuck out to me. An offense like that, outs when you don't get them, that was problematic to me. The arithmetic says that was an extra five runs because of that particular play."

Lynn, whose postgame answers totaled 44 words, agreed.

“That was on me right there,” he said.

Reliever Matt Magill came on to give up two more run-scoring hits as the Cubs batted around for the third time in a span of six innings, including a pair of five-run frames on Saturday. After sending 10 and 11 men to the plate in those innings, the Cubs sent up 12 batters in the second.

The seven earned runs against Lynn were a season high and matched his total during a six-start stretch (36 1/3 innings) from May 22 through June 20. They also pushed his season earned run average from 4.81 to 5.49, the highest it’s been since the end of May.

On the plus side, rookies Jake Cave and Garver went a combined 6 for 10 with two homers and five RBIs. Cave’s third home in 13 games traveled 429 feet to center in the second.

Dozier added a two-run homer for his 12th on the year, and Eduardo Escobar pushed his majors-leading doubles total to 34.

### **Preview: Twins at Brewers**

**Associated Press | Fox Sports North | July 1, 2018**

MILWAUKEE — Jorge Polanco is expected to make his season debut Monday night when the Minnesota Twins open a two-game interleague series against the Milwaukee Brewers at Miller Park.

Polanco will be reinstated Monday from his 80-game suspension for use of performance-enhancing drugs after going 6-for-13 in four games with Triple-A Rochester.

He batted .256 with 13 home runs, 30 doubles in 133 games last year and was especially strong in the second half, slashing .293/.359/.511 with 10 homers and 43 RBIs.

That performance moved him into the No. 3 spot in the Twins’ lineup, but manager Paul Molitor said he probably won’t bat that high right away upon his return.

“We know what he did last year when he had a chance to move up into a pretty important role,” Molitor told reporters Sunday in Chicago. “I don’t know we’ll jump him up there that fast. For us to see him is going to be different than hearing about him and reading about him and texting him and all those kinds of things.

“We’ll see how it is. To be honest, coming up here and playing, even though he’s doing really well, it’s going to be a little different than what he’s been doing.”

Right-hander Kyle Gibson (2-6) starts for Minnesota. He posted a 2.45 ERA through his first four June starts but saw that number grow to 3.35 after allowing five runs in seven innings to the Chicago White Sox his last time out.

Gibson struck out seven in the game and walked just one but gave up a season-high 11 hits.

“I went back and looked at some of the hits I gave up,” Gibson said. “I don’t know if I just picked the wrong pitch at the wrong time or what. I executed quite a few pitches there, and they found holes.”

The Twins dropped a three-game weekend series to the Chicago Cubs at Wrigley Field and have lost eight of their last 10 overall.

Milwaukee struggled during the weekend, too, dropping the last two of a four-game series at Cincinnati. The Brewers managed just five total runs in those losses while allowing 20, including a grand slam in each one.

“Two runs, three runs ... You’re going to need more to win most games,” Brewers manager Craig Counsell said.

Despite that showing, the Brewers will return home still leading the National League Central by a half-game over the Cubs, who will be idle Monday.

Brent Suter (8-5) gets the nod in the series opener. He’ll be looking to get back on track after his three-game winning streak was snapped last week by the Kansas City Royals.

Suter overcame a somewhat slow start to the season and has turned into a solid starter in the last two months. He's 6-2 with a 3.50 ERA in his last eight starts. Before his outing against Kansas City, he hadn't allowed more than three runs in his previous seven games.

Part of Suter's success can be attributed to his pace, which is among the game's fastest. That makes it difficult for hitters to settle in between pitches and, Suter admits, there can be a slight advantage to working quickly.

"I don't want to quick-pitch people; I don't do that," he said. "But I want to keep the tempo up and let my fielders get back in and hit as quickly as possible. That's how I operate. If that gets them uncomfortable, that's fine, but I'm just in attack mode and up-tempo."

Suter is 1-0 with a 3.72 ERA in two career starts against the Twins, both of which came at Target Field. He held them to a run and five hits while striking out six in 5 2/3 innings on May 18.

### **Late Twins rally falls short in 11-10 loss to Cubs** **Associated Press | Fox Sports North | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO — With a career batting average under .100, Jon Lester might seem to be a pitcher who doesn't care what he does at the plate.

Not true.

"It's important to have good at-bats. I feel like I have done that regardless of the outcome," he said.

Lester hit a three-run homer that highlighted an eight-run burst in the second inning and wound up with his NL-leading 11th win as the Chicago Cubs held off the Minnesota Twins 11-10 on Sunday.

"I've had good at-bats and I haven't been just a one-pitch out guy. So I have worked some counts and I've been able to at least make the pitcher work," he said. "That's all I'm trying to do."

"If I get hits, I get hits," he said. "The home run is awesome, it's cool, especially at home. It's always fun to play here with the crowd and to be able to hit the ball into the bleachers. But at the end of the day I know I'm a pitcher and I'm not a hitter."

Ian Happ also homered for the Cubs, who have scored at least 10 runs in four straight games for the first time since 1930. Chicago swept the three-game series and has won four in a row overall.

Brian Dozier hit a two-run homer and Jake Cave also homered for the Twins.

Minnesota concluded a 1-5 Chicago road trip that began with two losses in three tries to the White Sox, and fell 10 games below .500 for the first time this season.

Lester hit his second career home run, prompting a curtain call from the cheering fans.

Lester went 10 seasons, mostly in Boston with sporadic at-bats, before getting his first major league hit. Now, in his fourth season with the Cubs, Lester has put more of an emphasis into hitting.

"I really didn't care about hitting there" in Boston, he said. "I'm worried about David (Ortiz) and (Dustin) Pedroia and all of the other guys driving in runs as opposed to me."

"Coming over here, it can change the outcome of a game, so it becomes a little more important and you work on it all year. In spring training you're doing it from part of the second week on," he said.

Lester (11-2) allowed four runs, two of them earned, and nine hits in five-plus innings.

Mitch Garver hit a two-run homer off Dillon Maples as the Twins scored five times in the eighth. Maples, called up from Triple-A before the game when pitcher Brian Duensing went on the disabled list with a sore left shoulder, also allowed an RBI single to Logan Morrison and a two-run triple to Willians Astudillo.

"Their offense, we just had trouble with it. Lot of big innings, lot of crooked numbers. I think our guys stayed with it. We got some opportunities there and got some big hits to get back in the game. When you get as close as we did late, it makes you think about some of the runs we gave up

along the way, so that's frustrating," Twins manager Paul Molitor said.

Javier Baez, who doubled twice, Happ and Willson Contreras each had three hits for the Cubs.

Cubs closer Brandon Morrow got one out in the eighth and pitched a scoreless ninth for his 18th save in 19 chances.

"They got out on us pretty early, but I love the fight of the guys in the dugout. I kind of had glimpses of last year's team and our fight," Dozier said.

In the third consecutive sweltering day at Wrigley Field with a gametime temperature at 93 degrees and a heat index at 101, the Cubs jumped all over Lance Lynn (5-7) in the second inning.

Baez doubled home two runs and Anthony Rizzo had an RBI double. Kyle Schwarber met reliever Matt Magill with the Cubs' third straight double.

Cubs shortstop Addison Russell added an RBI single in the fourth inning and made a highlight grab in the sixth inning before leaving the game with an apparent injury resulting in the catch.

Russell bumped into Baez while making the running catch on Eduardo Escobar's ball down the left-field line in foul territory. He walked off the field and into the dugout after talking to a team trainer and manager Joe Maddon. Maddon said Russell injured his left middle finger and he doesn't believe it to be serious.

#### TRAINER'S ROOM

Twins: LF Eddie Rosario, one of three Twins to leave Saturday's game due to heat was in the lineup on Sunday. Teammates Bobby Wilson and Max Kepler were available, as was infielder Ehire Adrianza, who received intravenous fluids after finishing the game.

"We just encouraged everyone last night to rest and hydrate the best they could again this morning to get themselves in positions to get through the game," Molitor said. "You just try to be aware of it. There's not much you can do: You've got to play people and you've got to get through the game." ... SS Jorge Polanco's 80-game performance-enhancing drug suspension ends Monday and Molitor said he expects him to rejoin the club in Milwaukee after a stint with Triple-A Rochester.

Cubs: OF Albert Almora didn't start, but he came in the game in the eighth as a defensive replacement after leaving Saturday's game due to dehydration. Almora suffered cramps in his legs and was removed in the fifth inning. Almora had a nice sliding catch in center to rob Kepler in the ninth.

#### UP NEXT

Twins: Visit Milwaukee on Monday as they continue their interleague schedule. Kyle Gibson (2-6) is the scheduled starter. He had another rough outing against the White Sox in his last start on June 27. He allowed five runs on a season-high 11 hits.

Cubs: RHP Kyle Hendricks (5-8) will try to bounce back from his shortest outing of season on Tuesday against the Tigers. Hendricks allowed six runs on eight hits in 2 2-3 innings as his ERA moved up to 4.21 in a loss to the Dodgers on June 27. He finished the 2017 season with a 3.03 ERA.

#### **Jon Lester homers, gets NL-high 11th win as Cubs edge Twins** **Associated Press | ESPN | July 1, 2018**

CHICAGO -- Jon Lester hit a three-run homer that highlighted an eight-run burst in the second inning and wound up with his NL-leading 11th win as the Chicago Cubs held off the Minnesota Twins 11-10 on Sunday.

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#### **Wetmore's 5 thoughts: After wacky Cubs series, how many more games will Lance Lynn start for the Twins?**

**Derek Wetmore | ESPN 1500 | July 1, 2018**

The Twins to their credit didn't give up Sunday when they fell behind 9-1. But after making things compelling down to the final out, all the team had to show for it was a 3-game sweep and a ticket out of the Friendly Confines of Wrigley Field. The Cubs overmatched Minnesota this weekend and as the month of the trade deadline began Sunday, the Twins are buried in the standings in a season that is almost half complete.

This column presents 5 thoughts from Sunday's 11-10 loss the Cubs.

1. The Twins surrendered at least 10 runs in all three games on Chicago's North side.

That's the first time this season that Minnesota has permitted double-digit runs in 3 consecutive games. They allowed 10 or more runs 18 different times last year; they also scored 10+ in 18 ballgames. The last time the Twins gave up 10 or more runs in 3 games in a row was during September of a dreadful 2016 season (Sept. 4-6 with a 13-11 loss to the White Sox, and 11-5 and 10-3 losses to the Royals).

It's an arbitrary cutoff point because we like round numbers. Still, it's fair to say that it's very hard to win a game when giving up 10 runs to a team with Jon Lester starting the game for the other side. Including Sunday's loss to Chicago, the Twins are 1-59 under Paul Molitor when

they've surrendered double-digit run totals.

2. Improbably, the Twins came back and made it a game Sunday.

Minnesota had trailed 9-1 but they finished the game with 16 hits and made things interesting late in Sunday's game. The Cubs used their closer Brandon Morrow for a 4-out save. This in a game that they'd started Lester and at one point led by 8 runs. That's a remarkable turn of events. But in a wacky series like this one, maybe we shouldn't be surprised.

The Twins had the go-ahead run at the plate with Eduardo Escobar facing the closer Morrow, and Escobar had two cuts to try to take the lead before he grounded out to end the game. A 5-run 8th inning had the Twins within striking distance. That they even got to that point was unthinkable for most of the afternoon Sunday, following a weekend scorched by Chicago's mid-summer heat.

That 8th inning for the Twins included:

- Another double for Eduardo Escobar.
- Brian Dozier walk (he homered earlier Sunday).
- Logan Morrison single.
- Willians Astudillo's first MLB triple.
- Mitch Garver 2-run home run.
- All the damage came with 2 outs off struggling reliever Dillon Maples.

3. Lance Lynn didn't escape the 2nd inning in his 16th start in a Twins uniform. How many more will he have?

Lynn got off to a bad start in April with the Twins, then he really bounced back to become a valuable pitcher over his past 10 starts. Now, with the team floundering in the standings and Lynn on a 1-year contract, you have to wonder how many more starts he'll make for Minnesota.

Maybe the Twins will stand pat or decide to "buy" this month in hopes of cashing in on their already long odds of making the postseason. In that case, Lynn's 16th start puts him at roughly the halfway mark for a starter. But if the Twins are sellers, Lynn fits the profile of the kind of player that teams look to trade away ahead of the non-waiver trade deadline.

The way the schedule lines up right now, Lynn could be on track to make 3 more starts before the all-star break in mid-July. Then depending on how Minnesota aligns its rotation after those 4 days off – will J.O. Berrios pitch in the all-star game? – Lynn could get 2 or 3 more starts ahead of the trade deadline.

I believe that despite Lynn's short start on Sunday in Chicago, he'd have value for a contender. His combination of career-long consistency and postseason experience make him an October rotation candidate for some good clubs with legitimate postseason aspirations, National League and American.

4. Willians Astudillo started the game at third base for the Twins.

I feel the need to commit words to commending Astudillo for his willingness to play so many positions. He's getting thrown into unfavorable circumstances and he caught my attention this weekend. In a crazy game like Sunday's – or Saturday's – these things tend to get lost in the shuffle.

For one thing, he's a catcher. He played catcher mostly in the minor leagues. Yes, he's moved around a bit to work on positional flexibility, but I think he's a catcher first, utility guy by necessity. He's a 26-year-old who made his MLB debut Saturday, and his minor league stats profile suggests he's not a fan of walks or strikeouts. His minor league walk rate and strikeout rate both would be lowest among Twins hitters this season.

Saturday he took over for a heat-sick Eddie Rosario in left field, and after a weird series of events he slid over and stood in center field. How many catchers have done that, I wonder? On Sunday he started at third base, made a fine barehanded charge play for a force out at first base, and generally held his own, from what I could tell.

He also hit a 3-run triple Sunday and picked up his first Major League RBI in Saturday's loss. He's an interesting player with a strange minor league stat line. I'm curious to see if he can catch at all, because the Twins could use more of that. Sure, a lot of career minor leaguers would be happy to buy — or borrow — a new glove to play wherever the big league club asked them if it meant finally surfacing in the Majors. But not everybody in the big leagues would be thrilled with that kind of assignment. My point is that on a team that's so desperate for bodies to fill jobs, Astudillo's willingness to answer the bell all over the place is commendable.

5. The Cubs jumped out in front with an 8-run 2nd inning that included Jon Lester's 3-run blast.

It was just the second home run of Lester's career. It's the 100th home run that Lance Lynn has allowed in his career, including the postseason, and it's the first time he's ever served one up to a pitcher.

I think Lynn could have a legitimate gripe that the 2-2 fastball at the top of the strike zone was called a ball and not the third strike, but that's how it goes sometimes. If the Lester home run was the last drop of blood drawn that inning, the Twins might have been fine. They trailed 3-1 at the time Lester's ball left the yard, and they later showed that their bats still had life left.

The next hitter, Ian Happ, grounded to first baseman Logan Morrison, and Lynn was a beat late covering the first base bag. The same thing happened to Adalberto Mejia on Saturday, and that's got to be grating on a Twins' team that needs to scratch and claw for every inch the rest of the way. Happ reached when Morrison and Lynn couldn't convert the ground ball to an out, and the rest of the Cubs' inning went like this:

Groundout for second out that would have ended the inning ... walk, double, double, pitching change, double, single and finally a groundout. Five more runs scored that didn't need to, and as a result Chicago took control of the game, 8-1.

### **The Twins' season in miniature: simple mistakes and a growing pile of losses**

**Dan Hayes | The Athletic | July 2, 2018**

CHICAGO — The Twins have dealt with a number of things out of their control going wrong this season, and it unquestionably has played a part in their 35-45 record. But when problems arise with the aspects the Twins can handle, and they've repeatedly played a role, that's a different story.

While the Twins battled to the end Sunday afternoon, rallying from an eight-run deficit before falling 11-10 to the Cubs at Wrigley Field, the team's valiant effort wasn't what manager Paul Molitor wanted to discuss afterward.

Instead, Molitor was focused on a critical second-inning misplay by Lance Lynn that added up to big outburst and resulted in the starting pitcher's early exit. Lynn didn't cover first base on Ian Happ's infield single, and it led to an extended inning, a quick hook and a long day for a bullpen already low on gas. The misplay is yet another example of a missed execution damaging the Twins' chances this season.

"When you get as close we did there late it makes you think about some of the runs we gave up along the way," Molitor said. "We gave them an extra out. I think that was the biggest thing that stuck out to me. ... we couldn't get off the field until they put up an eight. An offense like that, outs when you don't get them, that was problematic to me. "The arithmetic says that was an extra five runs because of that particular play."

Following an eight-start rough patch to begin his Twins career, Lynn had seemingly settled in and turned around his season. But Lynn lost for the second time this week in Chicago after he previously surrendered a pair of leads against the White Sox on Tuesday.

The Twins also spotted Lynn an early lead Sunday when Jake Cave put them ahead 1-0 with a second-inning solo homer. The advantage didn't last long.

Lynn put two on before Jon Lester got hold of a 3-2 pitch from Lynn and blasted a three-run homer with one out in the second inning. Happ followed with a grounder to first base that Logan Morrison cleanly fielded. But Morrison lost a footrace to the bag with Happ, and Lynn was late getting over.

"That was on me right there," Lynn said.

Lynn retired Jason Heyward on a grounder for what should have been the final out of the inning. The Cubs didn't waste the opportunity Lynn gave them as Ben Zobrist walked and Anthony Rizzo and Javy Báez each doubled to make it a 6-1 contest. Reliever Matt Magill took over and yielded two more run-scoring hits for the Cubs to take a seven-run lead.

Lynn exited after the Báez double and handed the ball to a bullpen that had seen heavy usage between a 13-inning affair on Thursday and after short starts by José Berríos and Adalberto Mejía.

"I was too busy kicking myself in the butt for a bad outing," Lynn said when asked what Molitor said to him before he exited.

Molitor was clearly upset about his team's latest miscue after three long days at Wrigley Field. The Twins made another mistake when Eddie Rosario's throw to third wasn't cut off in the sixth inning, allowing Willson Contreras to slide in with a triple. Contreras scored on David Bote's sac fly to extend Chicago's lead to 11-5.

The Twins got within a run courtesy of late home runs by Brian Dozier and Mitch Garver, who went 3-for-5 with three RBIs. They even managed to get the tying run onboard in the ninth but came up short as Brandon Morrow struck out Eduardo Escobar with a runner on second.

"You've got to look at the big picture as far as some mistakes we made early on that cost us one or two runs," Dozier said. "That kind of gets

overshadowed and gets magnified at the very end with what happens. When you make mistakes against good teams like them that can put up a lot of runs — you can't do that.”

The Twins have made far too many mistakes in their first 80 games for Molitor's liking.

The team is already facing an uphill battle as it has spent significant chunks of the season without Miguel Sanó, Byron Buxton, Joe Mauer, Jason Castro, Jorge Polanco and Ervin Santana, among others. Throw in a lot of the team's early underperformance and the Twins have little margin for error.

Yet they've repeatedly cost themselves on the field and the bases. Lynn's previous start unraveled when he knocked down a potential double-play ball. Zach Duke missed the bag in Tampa in April and allowed the winning run to score.

The Twins have run into a plethora of outs on the bases, damaging an already-short-handed offense that ranks 21st among major-league teams with a .311 on-base percentage. Molitor certainly isn't surprised to find his team sitting 10 games under .500 with the second half about to begin.

“We haven't played well enough to make many arguments about why we are where we are,” Molitor said. “I think it's a combination at times of how we've played, how we've hit at times, how we've played defense at times, how we've run the bases and how we've pitched. All areas at times have been OK at times and at others they've cost us games. ... We talked briefly (Saturday) about how much season we've got left and you've gotta create a vision of where you want this thing to go and you can't let your guard down.”

Polanco on the way

It's unlikely he'd be the only addition the Twins make on Monday, but shortstop Jorge Polanco is the only one they were certain about after Sunday's loss. With his 80-game suspension ending on Monday, Polanco must be added to the 40-man roster and added to the active roster. Molitor is glad to add a player to the lineup who produced an .870 OPS in the second half of the 2017 season and batted third more than 30 times down the stretch. Polanco was 8-for-19 in six rehab games this week at various stops throughout the minor-league system.

“We know what he did last year when he had a chance to move up into a pretty important role,” Molitor said. “I don't know we'll jump him up there that fast. For us to see him is going to be different than hearing about him and reading about him and texting him and all those kinds of things. We'll see how it is. To be honest, coming up here and playing, even though he's doing really well, it's going to be a little different than what he's been doing.”

“We all miss (his good approach). Not to mention the production from that type of approach. He's another one of those guys who helps everyone in the lineup by how he takes good at-bats over the course of a season.”

The Twins currently have a full 40-man roster, which means another move is coming to make space for Polanco. Molitor said after Sunday's game that the club hadn't finalized the Polanco move, nor had they figured out if they'd bring up another reliever to help out the bullpen. Matt Magill, Taylor Rogers and Ryan Pressly each pitched two or more innings on Sunday. The bullpen pitched four innings on Saturday after recording 11 outs in Friday's loss. Those efforts all followed seven frames of work by the relief corps in Thursday's 13-inning win over the White Sox.

“We're looking at options we have in case we need to supplement in some fashion, which I think is possible,” Molitor said.

### **Target Field Reminds A Young Fan The Eagles Are Legends**

**Andrew Dobin | Twin Cities Media | July 1, 2018**

When I saw the news The Eagles were coming to town I am going to be completely honest that the first thing I thought of was The Dude from Big Lebowski saying “I hate the friggen Eagles man!” before being promptly tossed from a cab in the classic film Big Lebowski. My immediate next thought was damn that would be a fun night of music with Jimmy Buffet and The Eagles at an outdoor concert. In that time of thinking I was too slow and didn't get the show. Flash forward a few months and I got the word I was going to cover the show after all as another of our writers was unable to make it. My mind was blown, and would be many more times through this journey. So on a week where the Twin Cities scorched at 100+ degrees and I was working multiple weddings on photo duty I ran from a wedding reception, literally through downtown Minneapolis, got my ticket then sprinted to the stadium to take my seat. Sweat, heat exhaustion, and a chaotic commute later I will say this show was worth it and then some.

Opener Caroline Jones was the mystery of the night I was most curious about. A new name to music and known rising artist I wanted to hear what the buzz was about. Sadly the set was short but I am positive that will change as her name becomes popular. Between her playfully fun personality and her musical talent I think it's just a matter of time. I could be going WAY out on a limb in some folk's minds but she sounded to me very much like a female Vince Gill. Clean guitar picking play with smooth vocals and relateable lyrics the biggest difference between the two would

be she's a little more pop and the song topics more of the millennial generation. But she was a great warmup for the crowd. Barefeet and Tough Guys are the obvious crowd favorites. While Barefeet is a catchy pop sound Tough Guys got some deserved attention. With a sort of Carrie Underwood sound and sass, or maybe Miranda Lambert I can't pick, I will enjoy seeing where she pops up next and when she'll be back to Minneapolis next.

Sadly on this night of amazing music our photographer was not approved to cover Jimmy Buffett's set. But for those wondering. Yes, yes he does sound and look almost the same as ever. You could close your eyes and it would be Cheeseburger in Paradise circa 1980s all over again with Florida beaches and fruity drinks. Though and opener I enjoyed the entire set from Buffett. I've never been a die hard fan, it wasn't my generation sorry folks. But, he's got a song lineup you cannot deny is fun and memorable. Which his set did a great job honoring with all the classics and a few crowd sing alongs. What stood out to me was the casual air of his set. Not casual as in low effort, but it made Target Field feel like someone's sizable backyard where friends had set up a stage to play some music.

The tropical get up of the Parrotheads (as Buffett's fans call themselves) that made downtown Minneapolis look like Honolulu for an afternoon. It certainly felt appropriate for the weather, and their sunny attitudes convinced the predicted rain to hold off until the next morning. But the visual aid in identifying his fans made one thing perfectly clear – Target Field concerts have an economic impact that goes well beyond the stadium's walls. Music lovers had traveled from all over Minnesota and other states, they stayed in hotels, ate in restaurants and turned what would be a quiet Saturday downtown into a busy one.

However, what I was there to see and what we are here to discuss is the one and only, or 5, Eagles. With a few additions to their band lineup they brought the energy, noise, and memories to Target Field. Songs which I acknowledge I hadn't heard or remembered being Eagle's originals all came rushing back to me from song one. Now, when you do something often enough it tends to lose it's magic at times. In my case concerts have their ups and down so there's shows where I leave feeling less thrilled than a trip to the grocery store. But from the moment I entered the stadium this was different. You truly can feel the energy of fans at some shows and it is infectious. So the moment I was in my seat and the stadium went dark to announce The Eagles were beginning things shifted up a gear.

The lights went dim, the announcer asked for phones to be shut off, and then we waited. Suddenly 5 lights fired up and lit the band's front men and they started an acapella intro to Seven Bridges Road. Now that may sound like oh hum, but when you have an iconic sound like the voice of this band you are setting the mood for the night by doing a harmonizing start to the show. And the message was immediately received by all 41,182 fans in attendance as the band got rolling.

The band rocked through the start of their show as they warmed of the crowd with some tunes such as Take it Easy and Take it to the Limit A couple of songs I never fawned over but found more intrigue with after hearing them live. During the first run of songs is when I had my mind blown for the second and third time. A question mark on my mind was, who the hell is this guy in the band wearing a Twins jersey? Does he think he's local and cool now with that? And then I was put in my place, hard. It was none other than Deacon Frey, son of the late Glenn Frey. Deacon knows Minnesota well and immediately spoke of his memories fishing on Lake Mille Lacs. Ok Deacon, I apologize and bend the knee.

After my ego and cynical self was taught a lesson I got the third mind blower. They introduced the rest of the band and casually, har har, introduced none other than Vince Gill. A legend of his own, just playing along with one of the biggest rock bands ever. My family was in the crowd and knows Vince's music well and loves him so I immediately texted them saying . OH.MY. GOD!. And they responded in kind saying YESSSS!!!. Vince wouldn't ever be my pinch hitter for The Eagles if I was given that task for who knows what reason. But my god was he the right pick. The man has the voice to hit all the songs the band has and fits right in with the guys personality. Truly a gift ontop of an already great show.

Frankly I could go on for another 1000 words about this show, probably because they played for an estimated 2 hours and 22 minutes. But I'll keep the song picks brief. All your favorites? They played them. And they were amazing. Including when the band said "you kids, this next one your parents LOVED back in the day" and they went right into Life's Been Good. My god they rocked that song, the opening riff as amazing as the first I had heard it on cassette. Of their entire show I gotta my favorites still stand out as Life's Been Good, Already Gone, Take it Easy, and Funk 42. The brass section on Funk 42 was down right nasty and I did not expect that when I got to this show.

Final thoughts. I am sorry Lebowski aka The Dude aka Jeff Jeff Bridges, you're wrong to hate the Eagles. 41,000 fans and myself agreed on one thing last night: The Eagles still have IT and rocked the whole show at Target Field. I wish they'd live another 70 years for me to see them with my own family and friends for nostalgia. But I will take the memories and experience from this show with me always. Mind forever blown.