



WHITE SOX HEADLINES OF AUGUST 1, 2018

"Sox unable to overcome Shields' 2 mistakes"... Max Gelman, MLB.com

"Anderson pulled after not running out line drive" ... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"Sox quiet on Deadline, focused on development"... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

"Tuesday's top prospect performers"... Daniel Kramer and Casey Harrison, MLB.com

"White Sox stay quiet as trade deadline comes and goes without (another) move" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"Paul Konerko is getting ready for his broadcast with Hawk Harrelson: 'It might be the only game ever that I hope goes to extra innings'" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"An animated Rick Renteria sends another message with Tim Anderson benching: 'We don't give in'" ... Vinnie Duber, NBC Sports Chicago

"White Sox prospect Zack Collins aims to match Frank Thomas' feat" ... Russell Dorsey, Chicago Tribune

"Lesson learned? White Sox's Tim Anderson pulled from loss after failing to run out play"... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune

"White Sox get pitching prospect Hunter Schryver from Rays"... Phil Rogers, Chicago Tribune

"Tim Anderson pulled from White Sox' loss to Royals" ... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun Times

"White Sox great Paul Konerko psyched for booth pairing with Harrelson"... Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun Times

"White Sox don't grab headlines on deadline day, but they might not be done, either" ... James Fegan, The Athletic

Sox unable to overcome Shields' 2 mistakes

By Max Gelman / MLB.com / July 31, 2018

CHICAGO -- James Shields had been the subject of trade speculation heading into Tuesday's non-waiver Trade Deadline, but 3 p.m. CT came and went, and Shields was still in Chicago. So he started against the Royals, illustrating what he could provide to an interested team during the August waiver trading period.

Shields worked efficiently through seven innings and 104 pitches, with his only mistakes coming on two two-run homers that ultimately sunk the White Sox in a 4-2 loss at Guaranteed Rate Field. Shields has now thrown at least six innings in 17 of his last 19 starts, and has completed seven frames in eight outings.

"I've said it before, I only can control what I can control," Shields said when asked about the deadline. "But at the end of the day, I'm always focused. I thought my mechanics were really good. I had a few walks that cost me there today. But I'm just focused on pitching for this squad right now and doing my part."

Early on, Shields looked to be on his best game, retiring the first 10 Royals he faced. Even the first hit he allowed -- an Alex Gordon fourth-inning single -- was a soft grounder poked away from the over-shifted infield.

That dominance was matched by Royals starter Danny Duffy, however, who held the White Sox scoreless through 5 2/3 innings. The White Sox had multiple opportunities to cash in early, but left two men on in the second and stranded the bases loaded in the fourth.

"I hung two pitches tonight and it cost me four runs," Shields said. "You can't really let up that many runs and expect to win ballgames. I gotta do a better job of bearing down right there.

"I don't like losing," Shields added. "I'm out there trying to win every ballgame I can so unfortunately I have to pitch better. That's the bottom line. I've got 13 losses on the year. I'm not too happy about it. I just have to pitch better."

Shields was not the only White Sox frustrated during Tuesday's game. In the sixth inning with a potential rally brewing, Tim Anderson did not run out a live ball, thinking he'd lined out to the third baseman. Anderson ended up being the third out of the inning and manager Rick Renteria pulled him to start the seventh.

"He had a lapse in that particular instance because he recognized something that he thought was clearly an out," Renteria said. "But we know how we're supposed to go about it and we're going to continue to do it and it's not going to change."

Matt Davidson, the Royals' tormentor all season, homered for the eighth time against Kansas City this season in the seventh inning. The two-run blast tied the franchise mark for most homers in one season against the Royals, joining Albert Belle in 1998 and Jose Valentin in 2003.

Overall, the White Sox had 10 hits Tuesday night but left 13 men on base.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Close but no cigar: The White Sox again had a solid opportunity to cash in on early-inning hits in the eighth, when Adam Engel and Yolmer Sanchez led off with consecutive singles. Engel ended up on third after stealing second with Sanchez up, but Omar Narvaez, Nicky Delmonico and Leury Garcia could not drive in a run. Narvaez struck out swinging, Delmonico fouled out, and Garcia struck out on a foul tip.

SOUND SMART

In addition to his eight home runs against the Royals this season, Davidson is batting .432 (16-for-37) with two doubles and 14 RBIs when playing Kansas City.

HE SAID IT

"I feel good right now. My delivery is about as good as it has been all year over the last few weeks here. I had a little hiccup in Anaheim. Overall, it has been pretty good and my body feels really good. I'm hoping to finish strong here," --Shields, on getting stronger as the season has progressed

UP NEXT

The White Sox continue their three-game series with the Royals on Wednesday at 7:10 p.m. CT. Dylan Covey (4-6, 5.40 ERA) takes the mound for Chicago looking to rebound from a tough start. Covey allowed six runs in 4 2/3 innings last time out against the Angels. Jakob Junis (5-11, 5.06) goes for Kansas City.

Anderson pulled after not running out line drive

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / July 31, 2018

CHICAGO -- Rick Renteria admitted after Tuesday's 4-2 loss to the Royals at Guaranteed Rate Field he's often viewed as an even-keel sort of personality as the White Sox manager.

But that upbeat demeanor disappeared in the sixth inning when Tim Anderson did not move out of the batter's box on a line drive to third baseman Rosell Herrera ruled a no-catch with runners on first and second and two outs, resulting in Anderson being thrown out. Renteria pounded his fists twice on a dugout bench, walked from one end to the other in irate fashion and eventually made his way into the clubhouse.

Renteria pulled Anderson from the game in the top of the seventh, moving Leury Garcia to shortstop and Nicky Delmonico to left field. He then explained his decision and reaction after the team dropped to a season-low 32 games under .500.

"He didn't try to do it that way. He hit what he thought was a line drive at the defender. He thought he genuinely saw the defender catch the ball," Renteria said. "As much as we all want to take it all into account, you never assume the out.

"I've been talking about it since I got here. So like we tell these guys, don't assume anything. Just go until they ultimately make the call.

"We'll let the opposing team make the review call," Renteria said. "It didn't look very good to have him standing at the plate and having the ball going around the diamond. It's as simple as that and he understands it. He knows it. We've talked about it."

In fairness to Anderson, who has always been a hard-nosed, all-hustle player, the ball clearly looked to be caught by Herrera but third-base umpire Lance Barksdale ruled the other way. Herrera threw to Whit Merrifield covering second, but Omar Narvaez beat the throw and the attempted force. The White Sox would have had the bases loaded and two outs for Garcia.

Anderson saw the ball caught from his vantage point, but admitted it was a weird play. When asked if he was surprised Renteria removed him, Anderson said, "Yeah, I was surprised." He then shared what Renteria shared with him.

"It can't happen. It doesn't look good," Anderson said. "He's the manager. It's his call on the players. I have to respect his decision. Come tomorrow and be ready to play.

"I never thought I should have [run] because if I did I would have run. Yeah, I saw him throw to second and I saw it go to first. I thought he caught it. I didn't see the umpire signal safe but I'll learn from it, keep on going."

Veteran players such as Welington Castillo and Avisail Garcia have been pulled by Renteria for not hustling, and he's made the move in Spring Training and during the regular season. Renteria also indicated the situation was over and done, with Anderson returning to the lineup Wednesday.

"That's not indicative of Timmy. It isn't," Renteria said. "But there are moments when the manager has to take control of a particular situation. That was mine. And so when you see me get upset like that it's because it's something that we preach and talk about all the time.

"If we're going to win and move forward as a championship organization, we need fighters. And Timmy's a fighter. He had a lapse in that particular instance because he recognized something that he thought was clearly an out. But we know how we're supposed to go about it and we're going to continue to do it ,and it's not going to change."

Sox quiet on Deadline, focused on development

By Scott Merkin / MLB.com / July 31, 2018

CHICAGO -- The White Sox made a move prior to Tuesday's 3 p.m. CT non-waiver Trade Deadline, acquiring left-handed pitcher Hunter Schryver from the Tampa Bay Rays in exchange for international signing bonus pool money.

That deal followed Sunday's acquisition of fellow southpaw Caleb Frare from the Yankees for another \$1.5 million in international signing bonus pool money. But as far as the active roster or the 40-man, no other trade went down after closer Joakim Soria was sent to the Brewers for left-hander Kodi Medeiros and right-hander Wilber Perez last Thursday.

It's a much different landscape for the rebuilding White Sox compared to the period from July 13 to July 30 of last season, when general manager Rick Hahn traded seven players off the big league roster for a return of 12 players, including outfielders Eloy Jimenez and Blake Rutherford and right-handed pitcher Dylan Cease.

Then again, the White Sox have moved on to more of a developmental phase as opposed to talent acquisition within the rebuild.

"I didn't anticipate, to be honest, anything else was gonna be occurring at this particular time," White Sox manager Rick Renteria said. "But there's always surprises and you deal with them when you reach that point. For us, today was nothing new so we just keep moving forward."

Trades for the White Sox certainly could happen in August with a number of players possible candidates during the waiver period. That list includes right-handed pitcher James Shields, who started Tuesday for the White Sox, left-handed relievers Luis Avilan and Xavier Cedenro, utility player Leury Garcia and possibly first baseman Jose Abreu and right fielder Avisail Garcia.

Abreu and Garcia could end up being candidates for an extension, but even if they aren't part of the long-term rebuild, the team holds control over them through 2019. The White Sox also have another year of control over Avilan and Cedenro and another two over Leury Garcia.

As Hahn mentioned Friday, there's no urgency to trade any of those players.

Schryver, 23, will be assigned to Class A Winston-Salem after going a combined 1-3 with a 2.40 ERA, nine saves, 59 strikeouts over 48 2/3 innings, a 1.07 WHIP and .212 opponents average in 31 appearances (one start) this season between Class A Bowling Green and Class A Advanced Charlotte. He originally was selected by Tampa Bay in the seventh round of the 2017 MLB Draft out of Villanova University and is 5-3 with a 2.70 ERA and 15 saves and 97 strikeouts in 51 career games (one start) in the Rays organization.

These three moves improved the White Sox left-handed pitching depth as they continue assembling their critical mass of talent. But minus the loss of Soria, their Major League roster hasn't changed.

"Most guys and most instances you hope are going to go into a winning situation, but you have guys that have been in the organization probably for a while and they like where they're at," Renteria said. "There's a sense of comfort whenever that case might be."

"At the end of the day, they all know that things happen. Things could change. It's a business, and you have to deal with those moments when they occur and do the best that you possibly can."

Tuesday's top prospect performers

By Daniel Kramer and Casey Harrison / MLB.com / August 1, 2018

In his final start before being promoted to Triple-A Nashville, No. 12 overall prospect Jesus Luzardo (A's No. 1) tossed five innings of one-run ball for Double-A Midland, lowering his RockHounds ERA to 2.29. It will be the second promotion of the season for the left-handed prospect, who is ranked as the second-best among southpaws, and that it comes in his first full season since undergoing Tommy John surgery in 2016 should give A's fans plenty to be excited about.

Luzardo began the year making three starts with Class A Advanced Stockton, tallying 25 strikeouts over 14 2/3 innings. He was promoted to Midland in late April and has been on a tear since, most notably with just three earned runs over his last nine starts.

- No. 13 overall prospect Michael Kopech (White Sox No. 2) tied a season high with seven innings pitched for Triple-A Charlotte, giving up two earned runs on four hits and two walks with eight strikeouts. Among MLB Pipeline's Top 100, Kopech ranks second with 143 punchouts on the season.

Kopech's nifty play

- Making his debut for Double-A Mobile, No. 16 overall prospect Jo Adell (Angels No. 1) went 2-for-4 with a two-run homer to help the BayBears to a 9-6 win. Adell, who the Halos took with the 10th overall pick last June, has already climbed from Class A Advanced Inland Empire and Class A Burlington. It's been a busy month for the 19-year-old, who also played in the SiriusXM All-Star Futures Game a little more than two weeks ago at Nationals Park.
- No. 20 overall prospect Casey Mize (Tigers No. 1) tossed three scoreless innings with four strikeouts in his debut for Class A Advanced Lakeland, throwing 44 pitches, 28 for strikes, with just one hit allowed. Mize made just one start for the Tigers' Gulf Coast League affiliate last week, tossing two hitless innings. At Auburn this season, the 21-year-old compiled a 3.30 ERA in 17 starts, striking out 156 and walking just 16 in 114 2/3 frames before the Tigers took him first overall in the Draft.
- No. 37 overall prospect Triston McKenzie (Indians No. 1) tossed seven innings of one-run ball, lowering his ERA with Double-A Akron to 2.77. As he's continued his climb through Cleveland's farm system, McKenzie -- a first-round pick in 2015 -- has continued to prove that he has wipeout secondary pitches to go with an impressive fastball that scouting reports say has picked up velocity. McKenzie is in his fourth season as a pro, yet he's just 20 years old.
- Blue Jays No. 8 prospect Jordan Groshans went 3-for-4 with six RBIs, including a three-run homer, to elevate his season slash line with the Blue Jays' GCL affiliate to a gaudy .380/.439/.593. The 12th overall pick in this year's Draft, Groshans finished a triple shy of the cycle. Scouting reports touted Groshans, one of the top prep hitters in this year's class, for his quick right-handed swing, and it's showing -- the 18-year-old already has four homers in 108 at-bats this season.
- Twins No. 6 prospect Trevor Larnach, who the club took in the first round in June, hit his first two professional home runs as part of a 2-for-4 day in the Rookie-level Elizabethton Twins win over Johnson City. It's a limited sample size for the 21-year-old outfield product of Oregon State, but Larnach is slashing .300/.412/.500 in 11 games with Minnesota's rookie level affiliate.
- Orioles No. 3 prospect DL Hall continued to impress by striking out five and surrendering only three hits across four shutout innings for Class A Delmarva. The left-hander threw 76 pitches, 46 for strikes, but didn't pick up a decision. Hall, 19, however posted his best month yet, going 2-1 with a 0.67 ERA across five starts spanning 26 2/3 innings with an impressive 39:10 strikeout-to-walk ratio. The good month could be a sign of things to come for the southpaw, who's 2-6 with a 2.27 ERA in 75 1/3 innings in his first full season in the Minors.
- Nationals No. 11 prospect Jefry Rodriguez picked up his first win since getting promoted to Triple-A Syracuse after tossing six shutout innings against Pawtucket, improving to 1-2 with the Chiefs. Despite walking three, the 25-year-old righty threw a career-high 107 pitches, 72 for strikes, and also struck out three while giving up only five hits. Since the promotion on June 29, Rodriguez is posting a 4.39 ERA through five starts, and has yet to allow a home run.

Rodriguez's third whiff

- Rangers No. 22 prospect Sam Huff topped off a 2-for-4 showing with two homers, a pair of runs scored and five RBIs for Class A Hickory. The 6-foot-4 prospect is now slashing .248/.306/.460 through 88 games this season. Five of Huff's 15 homers and 10 of his 48 RBIs have come since July 25. During that span, he's also hitting .333 (8-for-24) with six extra-base hits.
- Reds No. 28 prospect Jose Lopez surrendered just three hits across seven shutout innings, striking out five without allowing a walk while improving to 5-9 for Triple-A Louisville. He threw 92 pitches, 72 for strikes, and the win marks the fourth time this season the 24-year-old right-hander has pitched through

the seventh. Lopez has gone seven innings three times against the Mudhens, also doing so June 15 and July 7.

White Sox stay quiet as trade deadline comes and goes without (another) move

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 31, 2018

The White Sox made the anticipated trade-deadline move last week, when they traded closer Joakim Soria to the Milwaukee Brewers.

It turned out to be their lone major league move of this much-discussed time of the season, with the deadline coming and going Tuesday afternoon and the South Siders remaining quiet.

That's not to say that there weren't candidates to be on the move, with plenty of folks preparing for the possibility that veteran starting pitcher James Shields could find a new team, one intrigued by his best season out of three in a White Sox uniform and his experience of pitching in a pair of World Series. And bullpen arms Xavier Cedeno and Luis Avilan also looked like potential options for contending squads looking to add to their relief corps.

But in the end, Rick Hahn's forecast that it would be a much quieter deadline this year after last summer's sell-off proved to be the case.

The general manager has talked for a while now about the franchise's advanced position in its rebuilding process. Last season, the White Sox had a bevy of veteran pieces it used to acquire minor league talent, adding to the wealth of prospects in their loaded farm system. This time around, the White Sox are in the middle of a waiting game, waiting for young players to develop at multiple levels of the organization. And so there was no repeat of last season, when Hahn traded David Robertson, Tommy Kahnle, Anthony Swarzak, Todd Frazier, Melky Cabrera, Dan Jennings, Tyler Clippard and Miguel Gonzalez.

Hahn admitted he expected as much this past Friday, when talking about the Soria trade.

"I don't think it took anyone by a great surprise that we moved a guy who was in the final year of his contract. We're still engaged on a few different fronts," he said. "But being that we don't have any others who are similarly situated, there's really no urgency to consummate anything else over the next few days. If the right opportunity arises, we'll react. But there's really no urgency."

The White Sox, with an eye on the long-term future, did make a couple minor league moves in recent days, adding Triple-A pitcher Caleb Frare in a deal with the New York Yankees and Class A pitcher Hunter Schryver in a trade with the Tampa Bay Rays.

Again, a quiet Tuesday doesn't preclude the White Sox from making any waiver trades. Last August's trade of Gonzalez to the Texas Rangers yielded infield prospect Ti'Quan Forbes, who's had a nice season in the minor leagues.

But the focus now — as it has been all season — will be squarely on the continued development of some of the organization's highest-rated prospects. And that means more speculation about when Eloy Jimenez and Michael Kopech, two of the top 15 prospects in baseball both currently playing at Triple-A Charlotte, will arrive on the South Side.

Paul Konerko is getting ready for his broadcast with Hawk Harrelson: 'It might be the only game ever that I hope goes to extra innings'

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / July 31, 2018

It might veer off course more than a few times, but Paul Konerko is hoping his broadcast with Hawk Harrelson lasts forever.

OK, maybe not forever. But if anyone was ever rooting for free baseball, it's the legendary White Sox first baseman, who is one of the many guests who will join the retiring Harrelson in the booth during this sendoff season. His day with Hawk comes Aug. 19.

"It might be the only game ever that I hope goes to extra innings," Konerko said Tuesday on the South Side. "It'll be awesome. I haven't seen Hawk in a while. All the games I've caught this year have been not his games, they've been other games where he hasn't been doing it, but I'm going to try and cram as much as I can in.

"I'm going to try and obviously announce the game a little bit, but I'll say it now, forgive me if I just go off on some tangents that have nothing to do with what's going on on the field because there's a chance I'm going to want to ask him a lot of questions and I've got a lot of stuff teed up."

Konerko is just one of the famed White Sox and Chicago sports figures who will be teaming with Harrelson in the booth this season. A.J. Pierzynski will make a much-anticipated appearance. Frank Thomas has already called a game with Harrelson.

As all of these former White Sox greats have said, Harrelson has meant a lot more than just a voice to narrate what the team does on the field. He's been an important part of the organization, a face of it at times, and an important figure in these players' careers and lives.

It's no wonder they are so excited to spend a day in the booth with him.

They're also promising an entertaining afternoon of White Sox baseball, and Konerko was no exception.

"I want as much time as I can up there with him," Konerko said. "I'm specifically flying back here to do it — although flying back and catching Pearl Jam the night before isn't a bad thing. It worked out well.

"I don't want to make a train wreck out of calling the game. But if I do — I've never done anything like that — this might be a first and last right here. It probably will be. I don't know what to expect, but I want to have my thoughts so I know where to go. I don't want to waste any opportunity to talk about some stuff with him up there because I think he's great. There's a lot of stories. My whole career with the White Sox, he was there all the time. Buses, planes and all that. I couldn't imagine my career here without him.

"I'm not vying for a job, this is not an audition, so as long as I don't say anything that gets me fined by the FCC, anything short of that's fine. Who knows, we'll see how it goes. But I'll be taking no orders on what to talk about, I promise you that much."

An animated Rick Renteria sends another message with Tim Anderson benching: 'We don't give in'

By Vinnie Duber/ NBC Sports Chicago / July 31, 2018

It's happened before this season. And it happened again Tuesday night. Rick Renteria is not going to stand one of his players not running to first base.

As much as the developmental stages of this rebuilding effort on the South Side are about moving players through the minor league system and transforming them into the types of talent that will fuel the next contending White Sox team, they are also about establishing a culture, a way of doing things. That's where Renteria comes in, and the "Ricky's boys don't quit" mantra is a distillation of how he wants his players to compete.

More than one time this season, he's made a very public display of enforcing that ethos, sitting a player down for not running to first base. Tim Anderson was the latest to be on the receiving end of a mid-game benching, pulled following the sixth inning of Tuesday's 4-2 loss to the visiting Kansas City Royals.

Anderson's miscue was not a good look, as Renteria hammered home during his animated postgame press conference. The shortstop lined a ball right at the third baseman, who he believed caught the ball on the fly for an inning-ending out, but the call on the field was that it was a ground ball. Confusion reigned for the Royals, too, as the third baseman whipped the ball to second base to try and cut down Omar Narvaez, but Narvaez was safe there. The second baseman then walked the ball over to first for the force out on Anderson, who remained at home plate the whole time.

"We tell these guys, don't assume anything. Just go until they ultimately make the call. We'll let the opposing team make the review call. It didn't look very good to have him standing at the plate and having the ball going around the diamond," Renteria said. "It's as simple as that, and he understands it. He knows it. We've talked about it. He comes out of the box, he doesn't stand there. But we just reiterated to make sure that you allow the umpires to make the calls and you allow the other clubs to go ahead and ask for reviews.

"We run."

As animated as Renteria was after the game, he was even more animated after the play, slamming his hand down in the dugout before walking toward the clubhouse. Anderson was out of the game when the White Sox took the field in the top of the seventh.

"These kids are growing up and the reality is, we want our veteran players, and they do, talk to the players. But there are moments when the manager has to take control of a particular situation," Renteria said. "That was mine. And so when you see me get upset like that it's because it's something that we preach and talk about all the time. We don't give in."

This is at least the fourth time Renteria has employed this strategy this season, and while it's a strategy that most definitely counts as a teaching tool, age and experience have not been factors in his decision-making in these situations. He benched Avisail Garcia during a spring training game. Leury Garcia and Welington Castillo were benched during regular-season games.

Avisail Garcia was an All-Star last season and Castillo was a veteran free-agent signing, but Anderson is probably the highest-profile member of that quartet when it comes to the team's long-term future and his place in this rebuilding effort. In that sense, this kind of learning experience could be a valuable one.

Anderson, as he said after the game, believed the ball to be caught on the fly. And despite the ruling on the field in that moment, replay showed that the ball was indeed caught on the fly.

"It can't happen. It don't look good," Anderson said when asked what Renteria told him. "He's the manager. It's his call on the players. I have to respect his decision. Come tomorrow and be ready to play. ... It's the way he teaches us to play hard, to keep playing. I'll be ready to play tomorrow."

"He didn't try to do it that way. He hit what he thought was a line drive at the defender. He thought he genuinely saw the defender catch the ball," Renteria said. "As much as we all want to take it all into account, you never assume the out. That's what we talk about all the time. I've been talking about it since I got here."

Onlookers might question why this type of penalty needs to be handed down as the White Sox turn the calendar to the final two months of a season that currently sees the team sitting 32 games below .500. But Renteria has this job for a reason in the middle of this rebuilding process. And benching Anderson in July 2018 could have a positive impact in September 2020 or October 2021. It's an organization-wide culture that's being established alongside the hoped-for perennial contender, and Renteria's a big part of that process.

"If we're going to win and move forward as a championship organization, we need fighters. And Timmy's a fighter," Renteria said. "He had a lapse in that particular instance because he recognized something

that he thought was clearly an out. But we know how we're supposed to go about it, and we're going to continue to do it and it's not going to change. As long as I'm here it's not going to change.

"Sometimes you have to react a certain way. With all due respect to Timmy and all my guys — I love all of my guys. Don't get me wrong, I love every single one of those guys in there, but we're going to continue to do it because it's important for us to do it here all the way through the system because anybody that comes to play for us, that's the way we're going to play."

White Sox prospect Zack Collins aims to match Frank Thomas' feat

By Russell Dorsey / Chicago Tribune / July 31, 2018

Since the White Sox drafted Zack Collins in the first round of the 2016 draft, his knack for getting on base has been his signature, and his patient approach has been a refreshing sight for an organization with its share of free swingers.

As Collins has begun to figure out the Double A level this season, he has his eyes set on accomplishing a feat no White Sox player has in 20 years.

"I'd love to lead the big leagues in walks and on-base (percentage)," Collins said.

The Sox's top catching prospect is leading the minor leagues in walks (87), on-base percentage (.408), and walk rate (21 percent) and sported a career-high .833 OPS in his first 96 games for Double-A Birmingham this season.

"Zack is one of those hitters that when you challenge him to do something, he has it set in his mind that he's going to do it," said Birmingham Barons manager Ryan Newman. "I absolutely think that is a goal that he can reach with his ability."

The last White Sox player to lead the majors in on-base percentage was Frank Thomas in 1997 (.456), the Hall of Famer's third and last time doing it during his 16-year career with the White Sox. Thomas also led the league in walks four times.

"People always ask me about my approach. In my opinion, your eyes aren't perfect enough to (only) look for the outside pitch or the inside pitch," Collins said. "So I look for something I can drive and if it's not there, I don't swing."

"Sometimes I let pitches go that look drivable because they aren't perfect and that's just part of it. It happens. Guys are throwing nasty pitches. Guys are throwing hard. When you're looking for the perfect pitch, sometimes it doesn't work out."

As a hitting instructor himself before joining the White Sox organization, Newman would see young hitters struggle to toe the line of patience and aggressiveness. Watching his catcher's ability to do that in just his third professional season has impressed him.

"It's an exceptional eye in such a young hitter," Newman said. "Zack has a well-above-average knowledge of the strike zone. When he was struggling earlier in the season, he was actually too selective. When he expanded, not the strike zone, but what he wanted to hit, that's when he really took off. He looks comfortable."

The University of Miami product went back to his old stance because of a lack of comfort. Despite his .248 batting average, combining his patient approach with his old stance, the numbers have proven the change to be effective. He has doubled his line drive percentage to 26 percent, which has translated to consistent success at the plate.

Collins offensive prowess may get him to the big leagues, but the progress he makes on the defensive side may determine how soon that promotion comes. White Sox catchers have ranked 29th or worse in

defensive runs saved the last three seasons and they have been one of baseball's worst pitch framing teams in 2018.

"I've seen some comments made about (my defense) that I took to heart. I'm looking to get better at every aspect of my game," he said. "Hopefully I can help the big league team in Chicago soon."

Lesson learned? White Sox's Tim Anderson pulled from loss after failing to run out play

By Phil Rogers / Chicago Tribune / July 31, 2018

While the excitement of the trade deadline bypassed the White Sox, they created a little of their own on the field, unfortunately the wrong kind.

Tim Anderson, the shortstop of the present and the future, was pulled from a 4-2 loss to the Royals in the sixth inning Tuesday night after prompting a visible display of anger from manager Rick Renteria. He failed to run out of the batter's box on a low liner to third baseman Rosell Herrera and made an inning-ending out at first when umpire Lance Barksdale ruled Herrera trapped the ball rather than caught it.

Renteria called it an atypical "lapse" from Anderson. But he thought he had to react when Anderson turned into a spectator at home plate.

"He got stuck at the plate," Renteria said. "He hit the line drive (and) the call was not made as a catch. It was still alive. ... We tell these guys, don't assume anything. Just go until they ultimately make the call. We'll let the opposing team make the review call. It didn't look very good to have him standing at the plate and having the ball going around the diamond."

This play was the most memorable moment on a night when James Shields' effort was spoiled by two-run home runs from the Royals' Ryan O'Hearn, who was making his big-league debut, and Brett Phillips, recently acquired from the Brewers in the Mike Moustakas trade.

Trailing 2-0, the White Sox had runners on first and second with two outs in the sixth inning. They already had left eight runners on base when Anderson came up to face Danny Duffy.

He drilled a shoetop-high liner at Herrera, who reacted slowly to Barksdale's safe call. Herrera threw to second base too late to force Omar Narvaez, who busted it to the bag, but Anderson never even started down the line. Second baseman Whit Merrifield took a few steps toward first and lobbed the ball there for the final out.

"I never thought I should have (run) because if I did I would have run," Anderson said. "I saw him throw to second and I saw it go to first. I thought (Herrera) caught it. I didn't see the umpire signal safe but I learn from it, keep on going."

Renteria couldn't believe his eyes. He waved his arms, then slammed his hand down on a railing before heading up the dugout tunnel. Anderson was lifted from the game.

Replays clearly showed Herrera had caught the ball, so the Royals could have appealed if Anderson had been safe at first. But it was a moot point because Anderson posed like a statue throughout the entire sequence.

Anderson said he was surprised Renteria pulled him from the game. But Renteria insisted it is the kind of play that a manager must police.

"I pulled Wellington Castillo, I pulled Avisail Garcia, I pulled everybody from spring training through the regular season," Renteria said. "There are certain plays in which you can talk to the guys and keep them

in the game and go over it. Certainly this wasn't done to embarrass Timmy but we do expect we're going to give it an effort on every play to the best of our ability."

James Shields (4-13) pitched well but lost to Duffy (7-9) because he gave up a pair of two-run home runs. Those accounted for the only runs off him over seven innings. Matt Davidson hit a two-run homer in the seventh but the Sox couldn't overcome leaving 13 runners on base.

While Shields wasn't traded before Tuesday's deadline for non-waiver trades, he's a candidate to clear waivers and become trade eligible once again.

"I only can control what I can control," Shields said. "But I'm always focused. I thought my mechanics were really good. I had a few walks that cost me there today. But I'm just focused on pitching for this squad right now and doing my part."

White Sox get pitching prospect Hunter Schryver from Rays

By Phil Rogers / Chicago Tribune / July 31, 2018

In a deal similar to one they made with the Yankees on Saturday, the White Sox acquired left-handed pitching prospect Hunter Schryver from the Rays for international signing bonus pool money.

Schryver, 23, is working effectively as a reliever in high-A after being a seventh-round pick in the 2017 draft from Villanova University. He is 1-3 with a 2.40 ERA, nine saves and 59 strikeouts in 48 2/3 innings between low-A Bowling Green and high-A Charlotte.

The Sox acquired 25-year-old lefty Caleb Frare from the Yankees for \$1.5 million in bonus slot money. The dollars included in the Schryver deal are not yet known.

Tim Anderson pulled from White Sox' loss to Royals

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun Times / July 31, 2018

Add shortstop Tim Anderson to the list of White Sox pulled by manager Rick Renteria for not running hard, or in Anderson's case Tuesday, not running at all, on a low line drive that was ruled a catch in the White Sox'4-2 loss to the Royals.

Anderson assumed third baseman Rosell Herrera had made an inning-ending catch in the sixth, but umpire Lance Barksdale ruled it a no catch, and Anderson, who hadn't moved from the batter's box, was out at first.

Renteria, who insists that all balls be run out, slammed his hand on the bench before ducking into the dugout tunnel, an unusual display of anger.

"I pulled Welington Castillo, I pulled Avisail Garcia, I pulled everybody from spring training through the regular season," Renteria said. "There are certain plays in which you can talk to the guys and keep them in the game and we go over it. Certainly that wasn't done to embarrass Timmy but we expect we're going to give it an effort on every play to the best of our ability.

"At the end of the day that just didn't look good."

Anderson was sure the ball was caught and said he was "surprised" Renteria pulled him.

"He's the manager. It's his call on the players," Anderson said. "I have to respect his decision. Come tomorrow and be ready to play."

“There are moments when the manager has to take control of a particular situation,” he said. “That was mine. And so when you see me get upset like that it’s because it’s something that we preach and talk about all the time. We don’t give in. If we’re going to win and move forward as a championship organization, we need fighters. And Timmy’s a fighter.

“But we know how we’re supposed to go about it and we’re going to continue to do it and it’s not going to change. As long as I’m here it’s not going to change.”

Sox quiet at deadline

The only Sox trade before the deadline was the acquisition of Class A left-hander Hunter Schryver from the Rays for international-signing-bonus pool money. Schryver, 23, was 1-3 with a 2.40 ERA in two levels of Class A for the Rays. The Sox will assign him to Class A Winston-Salem.

One trade candidate, veteran right-hander James Shields, allowed four runs in seven innings Tuesday. Shields gave up two-run home runs to Ryan O’Hearn (the first of his career) and Brett Phillips.

Shields retired the first 10 batters and struck out eight.

“I’ve got 13 losses on the year. I’m not too happy about it,” Shields said. “I just have to pitch better.”

Royals killer Matt Davidson

Matt Davidson’s two-run homer in the seventh against Kevin McCarthy was his 16th of the season and eighth against the Royals. That tied Albert Belle (1998) and Jose Valentin (2003) for the most by a Sox player against the Royals.

This and that

The Sox released right-hander Chris Volstad, who was designated for assignment Friday.

† Top pitching prospect Michael Kopech allowed two runs and four hits, struck out eight and walked two in seven innings for Class AAA Charlotte. Kopech (4.15 ERA) has a 2.25 ERA, 32 strikeouts and four walks in his last four starts.

† Outfield prospect Luis Robert returned to action with the Arizona Summer League Sox after missing four weeks with a thumb injury.

White Sox great Paul Konerko psyched for booth pairing with Harrelson

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Chicago Sun Times / July 31, 2018

Ken Harrelson’s fan club has no greater booster than White Sox great Paul Konerko, who is already dealing with a mild case of the butterflies as he looks forward to being paired with the iconic broadcaster when the Sox host the Royals on Aug. 19.

Harrelson has seven games remaining in his 33rd and final season as a Sox broadcaster, including one with A.J. Pierzynski on Hawk Day on Sept. 2 and another with Konerko.

“It might be the only game I ever hoped would go extra innings,” Konerko said.

Konerko, who considers the Lee Elia rant one of the great moments in baseball history, always embraced the colorful characters in the clubhouse, dugouts and press boxes who made the game fun, amusing and entertaining, and Harrelson was at the top of his list.

Paul Konerko was a visitor at Guaranteed Rate Field Tuesday.

"I couldn't imagine playing here without everything he's got," Konerko said.

"Almost on a daily basis there was conversation about Hawk. On that left-field line, stretching, or sitting in the dugout during a game. 'I wonder what Hawk said about that one?' So yeah, it's kind of an end of an era, a big long era. I don't think guys are going to get to do it as long as he's done it, and I don't think guys will be allowed to be like he is anymore, right? So definitely special.

"To anybody who has done something that long, I don't care if it's a writer, coach, whatever, you start talking 40, 50, 60 years of doing a thing, being in the game, that could almost trump anything when you've got that type of longevity."

Konerko made it clear he wants to work all nine innings because he wants as much time as he can get with Harrelson. It worked out great because he has tickets for a Pearl Jam concert the day before. When he heads back home to Arizona in a few days, he'll start doing some preparation.

"I'm a little nervous about keeping up — I don't want to make a train wreck out of calling the game," he said.

But don't expect him to play safe as an analyst.

"I'm not vying for a job, this is not an audition, so as long as I don't say anything that gets me fined by the FCC, anything short of that is fine," he said. "I'll be taking no orders on what to talk about, I promise you that much."

Between Harrelson and Konerko, there will be no shortage of stories to tell.

"My whole career with the White Sox, he was there all the time," Konerko said. "Buses, planes and all that. I couldn't imagine my career here without him."

Konerko, who spent a good portion of his year coaching his son's travel baseball team along with former teammate J.J. Putz, stopped in Chicago on his way home after taking his son Owen to Cooperstown, New York, over the weekend to take in the Hall of Fame induction of former teammate Jim Thome. The experience exceeded his own expectations and those of his son, who wants to go back next year.

Thome's "genuineness" is what always will stand out for Konerko, along with Thome's lengthy at-bats that allowed Konerko ample time to get loose in the on-deck circle in those seasons he batted behind him.

"You hear it all the time, kind of cliché, but a down-to-earth, real normal guy," Konerko said. "That's who he was. He brought everybody in all the time, wherever he went. He made everybody feel like they were part of the ride."

White Sox don't grab headlines on deadline day, but they might not be done, either

By James Fegan / The Athletic / August 1, 2018

If there's one thing I don't do enough in White Sox coverage (there's more than one thing) it's talk about Leury García. Over the past two years, provided the steadiest major-league work of his career, García has hit .274/.314/.416 — essentially league average — in 154 games while manning every defensive position save for first base and catcher.

The 27-year-old has been the prototypical do-everything switch-hitting utility man who would fit in on any team, including the White Sox, whose outfield production has mostly struggled to keep fans from glancing at Charlotte Knights box scores, and García's recent hot streak has seen him glide toward the top of the batting order. García was also part of a waiver trade with the Texas Rangers, made in exchange for Alex Rios, that was announced Aug. 9, 2013.

Since then, general manager Rick Hahn's tenure has also seen the Sox deal Adam Dunn, Alejandro De Aza, Gordon Beckham, Dioner Navarro, Tyler Clippard and most recently Miguel González in August, after the non-waiver deadline. In other words, they have pulled off a deal during this period in every year of Hahn's tenure but one. And while having to pass players through waivers isn't the ideal way to big-name, division-race-shifting talent, those really aren't the caliber of pieces the White Sox have to offer at this juncture.

Starting pitchers that are having worse 2018 campaigns than James Shields have been moved during this past month, and plenty of relievers less effective than Luis Avilán and Xavier Cedeño have already been traded, but they're on the level of players who could be moved in an August deal. This might complicate dealing someone with a ton of team control left and thus broad appeal for multiple teams, but the White Sox have foreshadowed that this deadline would be quieter because there are fewer pieces they have acted decisively with in response to demand.

"On certain players who are entering their walk year here, you probably are a little more flexible on their values since the chance to move them is limited," Hahn said last week. "Whereas longer-term pieces we are pretty consistent about how we value guys who have control beyond just the end of this season."

Which is all to say, a relatively quiet July 31 does not mean the talent-acquisition phase of the rebuild is halted for the time being. Of course the White Sox would point out that they did not stand pat at the deadline, adding a pair of minor-league left-handed relievers in Caleb Frare from New York on Sunday, and Hunter Schryver from Tampa Bay on Tuesday, both for international signing bonus pool space that they are restricted from using in increments larger than \$300,000. The deals continued a trend of them using their IFA room to grab middle-tier prospects that started with Yeyson Yrizarri last July, brought them their most intriguing prospect in Ryan Burr last August, and has continued to include Thyago Vieira, Ricardo Pinto, and now Frare and Schryver.

Caleb Frare, a 2018 Eastern League All-Star, was an 11th-round pick by the Yankees in 2012. (Mark Brown/Getty Images)

Frare has already reported to Triple-A Charlotte and struck out three batters in two scoreless innings in his White Sox organizational debut. Scouts see him as primarily a fastball-slider left-handed reliever who works from 91-93 mph, and say he has enough natural deception in his short arm action to make his average stuff play up and be effective out of the 'pen. There's not believed to be too much upside beyond that role, but given he's got a 0.77 ERA with 61 strikeouts and 16 walks across 46 2/3 innings mostly spent in Double-A Trenton, the 25-year-old has been making significant progress toward reaching that projection this year. Jack Curry of YES reported the Sox gave up \$1.5 million in bonus space, which dwarfs the \$250,000 the Braves gave up to get major-league reliever Brad Brach, or the same amount the White Sox traded to get Pinto in March.

Schryver is an interesting case, although he's earlier in his development than Frare, as the 23-year-old former seventh-round pick will report to High-A Winston-Salem after being promoted out of the Midwest League in the middle of the season. His strikeout rate has taken a significant dip since getting promoted, but in all he's whiffed 59 in 48 2/3 innings while allowing 14 walks and recording a 2.40 ERA. His fastball velocity has ticked up to 91-92 mph this season, but the notable thing is he throws a knuckleball as his primary off-speed pitch. It gets classified as a knuckle curve a lot, and he throws it at a low-80s curveball velocity, but scouts say it knuckles, with the crazy low spin rate, float and drop associated with it.

Does this make him good? Unknown. He's a lefty reliever in Single-A and I've never seen him pitch, but it was the most exciting White Sox revelation of deadline day. Thankfully the excitement doesn't necessarily end here: there may even be the next Leury García coming over by the end of the month.