



Press Clips

(June 11, 2018)

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FROM THE OC REGISTER**Albert Pujols passes Stan Musial on career RBI list with perfect timing**

By J.P. Hoornstra

MINNEAPOLIS – A little rain couldn't spoil the weekend for Albert Pujols, or the bus full of fans that journeyed more than 500 miles to see him make history.

On Saturday, Pujols hit the 623rd home run of his career. The solo homer allowed him to tie another former St. Louis Cardinals great, Stan Musial, with 1,951 career runs batted in.

Sunday, Pujols drove in three more runs. The 1,952nd RBI – a single off the end of his bat in the first inning – landed in center field, so Pujols was able to keep the historic baseball. In the ninth inning, he singled again to drive in the final two runs of the Angels' 7-5 loss.

Pujols said he kept that ball too, but he didn't plan to hold onto either one for long.

"Both of the baseballs are going to go to (Musial's) family, because I believe they deserve that," Pujols said.

The first 1,329 RBIs of Pujols' career came as a Cardinal. The last 625 have come as an Angel.

"Getting to St. Louis and getting drafted by the organization, I grew up and pretty much learned about the history and what kind of man (Musial) was," he said. "It's pretty special that the Lord allowed me the opportunity to spend some time with him before he left this Earth. He made a big impact on my life."

Jody Boen, along with her children, befriended Pujols in St. Louis years ago. She helped organize a cheering section for Pujols, called Christian Family Day, that has traveled to see him play on the road once a year in six of Pujols' seven seasons with the Angels.

In 2012, the maiden bus journeyed to Chicago to watch the Angels play the White Sox, Boen said. Trips to Kansas City, Atlanta, Denver and Cleveland followed. This year, about 45 fans were on the bus to Minneapolis.

"Last year, they contacted the Down Syndrome Association, so they were able to bring kids with Down Syndrome to the game," Pujols said. "The Boen Family, they were the first family when we got to St. Louis in 2001 to really open the doors to us and make us feel like (we were) home. It's a relationship that we have since Day 1 when I stepped foot in the big leagues."

Boen said that Pujols volunteered to pay for the bus fare and a group dinner each time.

"We didn't ask for anything," Boen said. "He's giving it all to us."

Rain postponed the first pitch of Saturday's game by four hours, so the annual group dinner took place a bit later than planned.

With Pujols passing Musial, the timing of this year's trip could not have been better for a group of Cardinals fans.

"In St. Louis, Stan was the hero for everybody," Pujols said.

NATIONAL CONTROVERSY

Pujols is alternately listed as possessing either sixth place or seventh place on the all-time RBI list. Why?

Hall of Famer Cap Anson began his playing career in the National Association in 1871. MLB does not officially recognize the National Association as a major league. Therefore, the 195 RBIs Anson collected before jumping to the National League in 1876 are not counted on MLB's website.

Other websites count all of Anson's 2,075 RBIs toward his official total, which would rank fourth all-time and push Pujols down to seventh.

ROTATION SET

Andrew Heaney, "TBA" and Garrett Richards are listed as the Angels' starting pitchers each of the next three days in Seattle. TBA ostensibly refers to "Time for Barría Again," since right-hander Jaime Barría is the only healthy member of the Angels' regular rotation who can start Tuesday on normal rest.

It's the Angels' first time through the rotation since losing Shohei Ohtani to a sprained right elbow ligament. Heaney will have an extra day's rest since his last outing, a complete-game shutout against the Kansas City Royals last Tuesday.

Richards and Barría will both start on four days' rest. Richards tossed 5-1/3 innings against the Minnesota Twins on Friday. Barría would need to be recalled from Triple-A Salt Lake, where he threw 41 pitches over three innings Thursday in his most recent start against the Round Rock Express.

ALSO

Andrelton Simmons continues to make progress in his recovery from a sprained ankle, Manager Mike Scioscia said, but there is no timetable for his return. ... Catcher Rene Rivera has resumed baseball activities, including throwing and hitting off a tee. Rivera has missed 21 games since undergoing surgery on the meniscus in his right knee.

UP NEXT

Angels (LHP Andrew Heaney, 3-4, 3.12 ERA) at Seattle (LHP Wade LeBlanc, 1-0 2.94), 7 p.m., Fox Sports West

Angels lost to Minnesota Twins in series finale, ending six-game winning streak

By J.P. Hoornstra

MINNEAPOLIS – Manager Mike Scioscia needed one word Saturday to identify which aspect of the Angels' six-game winning streak made him the proudest: Pitching.

On Sunday, pitching made all the difference.

Angels starter Nick Tropeano did not make it out of the fifth inning against the Minnesota Twins, and Jake Cave's two-run home run against reliever Jim Johnson provided the winning margin in the Angels' 7-5 loss.

"It's a big job for me to provide shutdown innings," Tropeano said. "The offense puts up runs. It's my job to go out there and throw up zeroes. I just didn't do that today."

Tropeano's first 10 starts of 2018 have been an enigma. He's taken shutouts into the sixth inning three times. He's also failed to complete five innings on another three occasions, including each of his last two starts.

Sunday, Tropeano (3-4) was charged with five runs in 4-1/3 innings in front of an announced crowd of 28,656 at Target Field. He handed reliever Cam Bedrosian an unenviable first-and-third, one-out boondoggle with a 4-3 deficit in the fifth inning. Another run was charged to Tropeano's ledger when Eduardo Escobar drilled a two-out RBI double off Bedrosian.

Though his final line didn't reflect it, Tropeano appeared to be in control after some early trouble.

In the first inning, the right-hander issued a one-out walk, then threw a first-pitch fastball over the middle of the plate to Logan Morrison. The slugging first baseman parked a fly ball in the bleachers overhanging right field. Morrison's seventh home run of the season gave the Twins a 2-1 lead.

Then, Tropeano retired 10 batters in a row. What changed?

"Just getting the first-pitch strike, getting ahead of hitters, putting them away when I needed to and just executing the pitch," he said.

Six of the 10 batters actually saw a first-pitch strike, though Miguel Sano helped by swinging at a 3-and-0 fastball and popping out into foul territory to end the turbulent first inning.

Meanwhile, the Angels took the lead.

Ian Kinsler led off the game with a walk, went to second on a wild pitch by Twins starter Fernando Romero (3-2), took third base on a passed ball, and scored on a two-out single by Albert Pujols.

In the second inning, the Angels stranded runners on second and third base. Mike Trout hit a line drive between first and second base, but Morrison was stationed a good 40 feet off the line and barely moved to make the catch. Trout finished 0 for 5 with two strikeouts.

In the fourth inning, the Angels retook the lead.

Zack Cozart was drilled in the back by a Romero slider, then scored on a double by Jose Fernandez to tie the game at 2. Fernandez, the 30-year-old rookie from Cuba, has hit safely in each of his first three major league games. He hit line-drive doubles, down the right- and left-field lines, in his first two at-bats Sunday.

Fernandez was on third base when Chris Young smoked a line drive into center field. The ball hung up long enough for Cave, the Twins' center fielder, to make the catch. It was deep enough for Fernandez to tag up and score. The Angels led 3-2.

Minnesota rallied against Tropeano in the fifth. Mitch Garver doubled and scored on a single by Cave. Tied 3-3, Ehire Adrianza tripled and Cave scored the go-ahead run. Tropeano walked Robbie Grossman on his 66th and final pitch of the game, and was relieved by Bedrosian.

"With runners in scoring position, it's kind of nut-up time," Tropeano said, "and you have to make your pitches."

The Angels do not have the luxury of knowing in advance whether they will get Good Tropeano or Bad Tropeano every fifth day. They won't have regular opportunities to skip his starts, either. Now that Shohei Ohtani has been lost for an extended period with a sprained elbow ligament, Tropeano comprises one-fifth of a five-man rotation.

The Angels have seen enough of Bad Tropeano in June. In two starts this month, the right-hander has allowed 10 runs in only nine innings. His ERA has risen from 3.80 to 4.83.

Johnson, by contrast, began the month of June with three straight scoreless outings. Yet only one of his last 12 appearances has come in a game the Angels were leading, and one mistake Sunday did little to inspire more confidence.

Johnson, a right-hander, walked Max Kepler, a left-handed hitter, with one out. With two outs, he threw Cave a 3-2 fastball down the middle of the plate. Cave's two-run homer to center field extended the Twins' lead to 7-3.

Minnesota still led by four in the ninth inning when former Angels pitcher Fernando Rodney made it interesting. After walking Chris Young and allowing a single to Ian Kinsler, Rodney allowed a two-run single by Albert Pujols. The Angels trailed 7-5.

Pujols' three RBIs allowed him to pass Stan Musial for sole possession of sixth place in the all-time record book.

Rodney then walked Luis Valbuena, bringing Cozart to the plate as the potential game-winning run. But when Cozart's flare into shallow center field landed in the glove of second baseman Eduardo Escobar, the game was over. A possible series sweep on the road was thwarted.

The Angels (37-28) won't be able to claim a share of first place when they travel to Seattle for a three-game series beginning Monday. The first-place Mariners (41-24) now lead the Angels by 4 1/2 games.

FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES**Angels fall to Twins 7-5 on a zero of a day for Mike Trout**

By Jeff Miller

Mike Trout on Sunday had a batting average of .000, “Trout” and a string of zeroes rarely appearing in the same sentence.

Of course, that was over only a single game, a sample size comically small but also fully representative on a day of lost chances and a lost game, the Angels falling to Minnesota 7-5.

“Mike’s never that far off,” manager Mike Scioscia said. “Occasionally, you’re going to have some stretches where hits aren’t falling in.”

This stretch included all nine innings against the Twins, Trout going hitless in five at-bats, each of which came with runners on base.

Before Sunday, he was batting .317 this season under such circumstances, with a 1.037 on-base-plus-slugging percentage.

So Trout stranding eight runners as the team was three for 15 with men in scoring position was the sort of development the Angels aren’t used to seeing.

This is especially true during a season in which he’s threatening to break Babe Ruth’s all-time record for WAR, a rough but revered measure of a player’s overall value.

“His approach is good,” Scioscia said of Trout, who has two hits in his last 19 at-bats. “His process is good. He’ll be fine.”

The Angels won two of three games against Minnesota but scored only 10 runs and batted .212 (21 for 99, 23 strikeouts).

Of particular note other than Trout, Luis Valbuena was hitless in 11 at-bats with six strikeouts and Justin Upton was one for nine.

Still, the Angels had an opportunity in the ninth inning against closer Fernando Rodney after Albert Pujols’ two-out, two-run single. With the tying run on first base, Zack Cozart popped out.

“There’s no doubt we had chances,” Scioscia said. “We kept pressuring them early in the game. We just couldn’t keep building on that.”

Before Pujols’ ninth-inning hit, the Angels scattered a trail of empty moments. Here, presented in chronological order, are the results of their other at-bats with two runners on base:

Single, strike out, fly out, pop out, pop out, line out, single, sacrifice fly, strike out, ground out, strike out, ground out, pop out, pop out.

Lost, too, was the chance given Nick Tropeano, the Angels starter who surrendered two early runs but then watched his teammates come back to take a 3-2 lead after four innings.

“When the offense puts up runs, it’s my job to go out there and throw up zeroes,” Tropeano said. “I just didn’t do that today.”

Things went to pieces for him when the first five Twins to bat in the fifth inning reached base, three of them eventually scoring.

Tropeano (3-4) gave up two walks, a single, a double and a triple before being relieved by Cam Bedrosian, who gave up a run-scoring double.

The inning was a stark turn for Tropeano, who began the fifth having retired 10 batters in a row.

“I just got to do a better job of executing pitches with runners in scoring position,” he said. “That’s on me. Overall, not a good day.”

The Angels head to Seattle for three games against one of baseball’s most surprising stories. The Mariners not only sit atop the American League West but have risen to that perch without Robinson Cano.

In fact, Seattle greatly improved in mid-May after Cano was suspended for 80 games because of a failed drug test.

The Angels and Mariners last met May 6, a day that ended with the Angels leading the division and 1½ games ahead of third-place Seattle. Since then, the Mariners are 22-10 and the Angels 16-16.

But that's baseball, where fortunes can change quickly, even for someone like Mike Trout.

Albert Pujols passes Stan Musial on RBI list

By Jeff Miller

It was an early June home run, just one of 623 in the career of Albert Pujols.

But the solo drive at Target Field on Saturday had significant meaning: Pujols pulled even with Stan Musial in career RBIs with 1,951.

“It was pretty emotional,” Pujols said Sunday after driving in three more runs to pass his former St. Louis Cardinals teammate, who died in 2013. “I tried not to show it too much because we still had to play a baseball game.”

Pujols remains in contact with Musial’s family and plans to give them his uniform and bat from this weekend.

"I believe they deserve that," he said, adding that Musial's family donated items for his charity foundation.

Pujols passed Musial for sixth all-time with a first-inning single Sunday. In the ninth, he drove in two more runs to push his career total to 1,954. Next on the list is Lou Gehrig with 1,995.

"I don't have any words right now to describe it," Pujols said. Speaking of Musial's place in St. Louis lore, he added, "He was a hero for everybody."

Since joining the Angels as a free agent in the winter of 2011, Pujols has frequently been visited by a large group of St. Louis fans during road games.

Pujols hosted dinner for them Saturday night.

"I can close my eyes and just think about it," he said, recalling his time with Musial. "The smile and just the kind words he said to me. Those mean a lot. Those are the things you can take with you no matter how long you play."

Scioscia moving up

Mike Scioscia, who passed Tommy Lasorda in career managerial victories in May, eclipsed Fred Clark last week to move into 19th place all-time.

"Having the opportunity to be here as long as I have is something I do not take for granted," he said of his 19 seasons in Anaheim. "I know it's been an incredible opportunity."

Scioscia now has 1,607 wins and needs 13 more to pass Ralph Houk.

He likely would have to manage a 20th full season and part of a 21st to catch Jim Leyland, who's at No. 17 with 1,769 wins.

Scioscia, 59, is in the final season of a 10-year contract. He and the Angels aren't expected to make any official decisions about 2019 and beyond until after this season.

FROM ANGELS.COM

Pujols passes Musial for 6th on all-time RBI list

By Maria Guardado

MINNEAPOLIS -- The novelty of milestones has likely worn off for **Albert Pujols** by now, but the one he reached on Sunday afternoon was different.

Pujols collected his 1,952nd career RBI in the first inning of the Angels' **7-5 loss** to the Twins at Target Field, passing fellow Cardinals great Stan Musial for sole possession of sixth place on the all-time list.

The top 5 is as follows: Hank Aaron (2,297 RBIs), Babe Ruth (2,213), Alex Rodriguez (2,086), Barry Bonds (1,996) and Lou Gehrig (1,995).

Pujols opened the scoring by driving in **Ian Kinsler** from third with a single to shallow center field. Pujols immediately motioned for the ball, which he plans to give to the Musial family. It was a meaningful moment for Pujols, who forged a special bond with Musial during his 11 seasons in St. Louis and grew to revere the Hall of Famer.

"In St. Louis, Stan was a hero for everybody," Pujols said. "Getting to St. Louis and getting drafted by the organization, I grew up and learned about the history and what kind of man he was. It was pretty special that the Lord allowed me to spend some time with him before he left this earth. He made a big impact in my life."

Pujols, 38, tied Musial with a solo home run off Twins right-hander **Kyle Gibson** on Saturday.

"Yesterday, when I tied him, I was pretty emotional," Pujols said. "I tried not to show it too much because we still had to play a baseball game. And then today to be able to pass him, I don't have any words to describe it. Everything that I wore pretty much and both of the baseballs are going to go to his family, because I believe that they deserve that."

Pujols added two more RBIs with a two-out single in the ninth to bring his career total to 1,954. He is one shy of tying Gehrig (1,995).

"Albert has the utmost respect for what Stan Musial was about," manager Mike Scioscia said Saturday. "Not only on the field, but he was a man of great character off the field. I know those two had a chance to spend a lot of time together when he was in St. Louis. He respects his legacy tremendously, so for him to be in the same sentence as Stan Musial, I know it's a nice feeling for Albert."

Halos' streak snapped despite Pujols' big day

By Maria Guardado

MINNEAPOLIS -- **Albert Pujols** and **Jose Miguel Fernandez** each collected milestone RBIs, but it wasn't enough to overcome a rocky start from right-hander **Nick Tropeano** as the Angels saw their six-game winning streak come to an end with a 7-5 loss to the Twins in Sunday afternoon's series finale at Target Field.

The Angels entered Sunday with a 1.85 team ERA in June, but Tropeano couldn't continue that stretch of strong pitching, allowing five runs over 4 1/3 innings. He has surrendered 10 runs over nine innings in his last two outings for the Angels.

"In the last start, I was falling a little behind a lot of hitters," Tropeano said. "I think this time they kind of just found some holes, man. It's my job to provide shutdown innings. I didn't do that, so that's on me."

Pujols opened the scoring with an RBI single off Twins right-hander **Fernando Romero** in the first inning, recording his **1,952nd career RBI** and passing Stan Musial for sole possession of sixth place on the all-time list. Pujols added a two-out, two-run single in the ninth that cut the Twins' lead to 7-5, but Twins closer **Fernando Rodney** coaxed a popout from **Zack Cozart** to end the game.

"It's pretty special," Pujols said. "In St. Louis, Stan was a hero for everybody. Getting to St. Louis and getting drafted by the organization, I grew up and learned about the history and what kind of man he was. It was pretty special that the Lord allowed me to spend some time with him before he left this earth. He made a big impact in my life."

Fernandez finished 2-for-3 with two doubles and an RBI, the first of his MLB career. Fernandez, who was called up from Triple-A Salt Lake on Friday, has hit safely in his first three games with the Angels.

The rest of the Angels' offense wasn't as productive, going 3-for-15 with runners in scoring position and leaving 10 men on base. The Angels (37-29) head to Seattle 4 1/2 games behind the first-place Mariners, who they'll face in a three-game series that begins Monday night.

"There's no doubt we had chances," manager Mike Scioscia said. "We kept pressuring them early in the game, and we couldn't just keep building on that."

Tropeano retired 10 in a row after yielding a two-run home run to **Logan Morrison** in the first inning, but he unraveled in the fifth and couldn't protect the Angels' 3-2 lead. **Max Kepler** led off the inning with a walk, though he was wiped off the basepaths after **Martin Maldonado** caught him stealing at second. After **Mitch Garver** doubled, **Jake Cave** delivered an RBI single to right field to tie the game.

Ehire Adrianza followed with an RBI triple to put the Twins ahead, 4-3. Adrianza pulled a down-and-away changeup down the right-field line, and **Chris Young** had some trouble corralling the ball in the corner, allowing Cave to score from first and Adrianza to cruise into third base. Tropeano issued another walk to **Robbie Grossman** before Scioscia decided to pull him in favor of **Cam Bedrosian**.

Tropeano didn't retire any of the five batters he faced in that inning. He departed after allowing four hits, walking three, striking out two and throwing 66 pitches.

"I think I've just got to do a better job of executing pitches with runners in scoring position," Tropeano said. "The offense puts up runs, it's my job to go out there and throw up zeros, and I just didn't do it today. Overall, not a good day."

Bedrosian struck out **Eddie Rosario** for the second out before yielding an RBI double to **Eduardo Escobar** that made it 5-3. Morrison then grounded out to end the inning.

The Twins added a pair of insurance runs in the sixth on Cave's two-run home run off **Jim Johnson**.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

The Angels briefly turned a 2-1 deficit into a 3-2 lead by scoring two runs off Romero in the fourth. Cozart began the inning by reaching on a hit-by-pitch and scored from first on Fernandez's double to

right field to tie the game. Maldonado then singled to put runners on the corners for Young, who knocked in Fernandez with a sacrifice fly to center field. The Angels had a chance to add more, as **Ian Kinsler** subsequently singled to put a pair of runners on with one out, but Romero struck out **Mike Trout** and coaxed a groundout from **Justin Upton** to end the inning. Trout, who went 0-for-5 on Sunday, is now 2-for-19 with no extra-base hits and no RBIs over his last five games.

"[Trout is] never that far off," Scioscia said. "Occasionally you're just going to get into some stretches where hits aren't falling in, but his approach is good, his process is good. He'll be fine."

UP NEXT

The Angels will fly to Seattle to kick off a three-game series against the first-place Mariners on Monday at 7:10 p.m. PT at Safeco Field. Left-handers **Andrew Heaney** (3-4, 3.12 ERA) and **Wade LeBlanc** (1-0, 2.94 ERA) will match up in the series opener. Heaney is coming off the best start of his career, a one-hit shutout against the Royals on his 27th birthday. He has posted a 1.93 ERA over his last eight outings and is 1-1 with a 2.35 ERA in three career starts against Seattle.

FROM MLB.COM

Injury updates: Ohtani, Darvish, Betts

Here's a roundup of the latest injury news across the Majors.

Shohei Ohtani, Angels

The right-hander was placed on the disabled list Friday with a Grade 2 sprain of the ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow, and he received both platelet-rich plasma and stem-cell injections. When addressing reporters following the announcement of the injury, Angels general manager Billy Eppler said the club remained optimistic that Ohtani can avoid Tommy John surgery. "This is completely treatable with the biologic prescription that the doctors recommended," Eppler said.

The Angels also tweeted that Ohtani would be re-evaluated in three weeks and an update on his treatment would be provided at the time. On Sunday night, ESPN's Pedro Gomez said on SportsCenter said that the 23-year-old two-way phenom will "probably" need elbow surgery after all, which would force Ohtani to miss the rest of the season and likely keep him off the mound for all of 2019, though it's possible he could return to serve as a designated hitter sooner than that, as the timetable for hitters returning from TJ is shorter than it is for pitchers. The club has not commented on Gomez's report, and it appears the long-term treatment plan for Ohtani's elbow has still not been finalized.

Yu Darvish, Cubs

Cubs manager Joe Maddon said Sunday the club is not certain Darvish will return to action prior to the All-Star break. The 31-year-old right-hander was placed on the 10-day disabled list on May 26, retroactive to May 23, with right triceps inflammation. It was his second trip to the DL this season, his first with Chicago -- he was sidelined with flu-like symptoms earlier in May.

Darvish has played catch four of the past five days and will do so again Monday in Chicago, Maddon said.

"I think we'll know more by the end of this coming week exactly what we think about hopefully being able to lay out a plan about getting him back," Maddon said before Sunday's series finale vs. the Pirates. "But we're not at that point yet."

Darvish has posted a 4.95 ERA with a rate of 4.7 walks per nine innings (it was 2.8 last season) over eight starts this season.

Mookie Betts and Dustin Pedroia, Red Sox

Betts continues to take batting practice and is progressing well in his recovery from a left abdominal strain.

"He's actually probably gonna hit up the machine during the game, and let's see how he reacts to it," manager Alex Cora said Sunday. "But it seems like, if everything goes well, the way he swung today, he's moving well. There were some pitches that he got to that probably a week ago, no way he gets to it."

Cora said he doesn't have a day in mind for Betts' return and will wait to see how he reacts to more hitting work. Boston's star right fielder opened the season on a tear, slashing .359/.437/.750 with 17 home runs and 13 steals in 48 games.

Pedroia continues to deal with left knee inflammation, which has kept him sidelined since May 30 after he returned from the disabled list (left knee surgery) and played three games. Despite taking swings, taking ground balls and playing catch this week, the veteran second baseman's rehab will progress slowly for now.

Roberto Perez, Indians

Perez left the Tribe's game against the Tigers in Detroit on Sunday after he was hit on the right hand by a **Drew VerHagen** fastball in the sixth inning. Perez initially remained in the game and scored on an **Erik Gonzalez** double, but he did not return behind the plate in the bottom half of the frame.

Perez is hitting .130 with a double, triple and a home run in 88 plate appearances this season, catching on Sunday after primary backstop **Yan Gomes** caught a marathon 12-inning loss to Detroit on Saturday.

Perez underwent X-rays on his hand and the catcher indicated that "everything looks fine," but manager Terry Francona described the results as ambiguous. The Indians are in the process of sending the images to Dr. Thomas Graham -- a hand specialist based out of the Cleveland Clinic -- in order to get a second opinion ahead of the Indians' upcoming four-game series with the White Sox in Chicago.

Byron Buxton and Joe Mauer, Twins

Buxton (broken right big toe) and Mauer (cervical neck strain) participated in pregame workouts prior to Minnesota's contest against the Angels at Target Field on Sunday.

Buxton ran the bases, and Mauer took batting practice, fielded ground balls and ran the bases.

"[Buxton] did some tee and some flip drills yesterday," manager Paul Molitor said. "I think he was excited to do that. I think he was pleased with how it went. Not a great gauge for us, as far as where we are at. We will probably do a little bit more of the same. Obviously, we have got Joe out there today doing a little more work. We will probably have another discussion with him today on what the next step should be."

In 28 games this season, Buxton -- who was previously on the DL due to migraines -- is hitting .156/.183/.200 with five steals. Mauer, who collected his 2,000th career hit this season, is hitting .283/.404/.355 in 38 games.

Justin Turner, Dodgers

Turner was out of the starting lineup for a fourth consecutive game Sunday with soreness in his left wrist, which was surgically repaired after it was fractured by a pitch during Spring Training. Manager Dave Roberts, who this week said he hoped Turner might be back in action this weekend, said Sunday that Turner will likely be back Tuesday.

"Could he play today? Yes. Is his wrist getting better? Absolutely," Roberts said. "But I think for us, having an off-day [Monday], having him available to hit today, not push it to gain that equity we've built in the last couple days -- right now, where we're at, it just doesn't make sense."

Turner has been among the Dodgers' most productive hitters since joining the club in 2014. In 80 plate appearances this season, he's hitting .243/.325/.343 with four doubles and a home run.

FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Twins hold off Angels for 7-5 win

MINNEAPOLIS -- Minnesota's Jake Cave hit a ball deep into left-center in the eighth inning Sunday.

But one of baseball's best players was closing fast.

Fortunately for the Twins, the ball fell behind Mike Trout and Cave ended up with a double.

Cave had a career-high three hits, including a home run, and the Twins held on to beat the Los Angeles Angels 7-5.

"I saw him kind of jump and I didn't see the ball, but I heard the crowd start cheering, so I was like, 'Oh, I think that ball got by him.' So that was cool," Cave said.

"I know I'm probably not allowed to say this, but he's probably my favorite player. So to be able to hit some balls out there to him today and to be on the same field as him, it was an honor, really."

Cave, who made his major league debut May 19 and was 1-for-10 at the plate entering Sunday -- the lone hit cleared the fence -- also singled and homered.

Minnesota traded for Cave in March after he was designated for assignment by the Yankees.

"To be able to come up and show that I deserve to be here, it does feel really good," said Cave, who hit 20 home runs between Double-A and Triple-A last year.

Eduardo Escobar doubled twice to take over the major league lead with 26 and the Minnesota bullpen threw 3 2/3 shutout innings before a two-run single by Albert Pujols in the ninth.

Los Angeles had the go-ahead run at the plate against closer Fernando Rodney in a non-save situation, but Zack Cozart popped out.

"He's been pretty clean, but that one kind of had us a little anxious," Twins manager Paul Molitor said.

Pujols had three RBI to pass Stan Musial for sixth-most in baseball history with 1,954. Ian Kinsler had three hits for Los Angeles, which lost for the first time in seven games.

Minnesota's Fernando Romero (3-2) had control issues from the outset, but managed to complete five innings to win for the first time in six starts. He allowed five hits and struck out five while throwing 94 pitches. Romero also hit two batters and threw two wild pitches.

Los Angeles starter Nick Tropeano (3-4) struggled for the second consecutive outing, allowing five earned runs in 4 1/3 innings. Tropeano allowed five earned runs in 4 2/3 innings last Monday against Kansas City.

Trailing 3-2 in the fifth, Mitch Garver doubled, Cave had an RBI single and Ehire Adrianza an RBI triple off Tropeano for a 4-3 Twins lead. Escobar had an RBI double two batters later against Cam Bedrosian.

After giving up a two-run home run to Logan Morrison in the first, Tropeano retired 10 straight Twins before the fifth.

"I just didn't execute pitches when I needed to," Tropeano said. "With runners in scoring position you got to make your pitches."

Los Angeles was 3-for-15 with runners in scoring position and left 10 men on base.

BOTTOM THREE COME THROUGH

Garver, Cave and Adrianza were the bottom three hitters in the Twins lineup.

They combined for six of Minnesota's 10 hits.

FIRST FOR FERNANDEZ

Los Angeles' Jose Miguel Fernandez got his first career RBI with a fourth-inning double. Called up from Triple-A Salt Lake before Friday's game, the 30-year-old first-baseman was 4-for-10 in the series.

TRAINERS ROOM

Angels: C Martin Maldonado, who fouled a ball off his foot Friday, was back behind the plate. He was hit by a pitch in the second inning.

Twins: Brian Dozier got a day off with Escobar starting at 2B. ... CF Byron Buxton (broken left big toe) and 1B Joe Mauer(neck/concussion) did some pregame base-running Sunday. Mauer also took batting practice and did some fielding. After the game, the team announced Mauer will begin a rehab assignment Tuesday at Triple-A Rochester.

UP NEXT

Angels: Open a three-game series Monday in Seattle with LHP Andrew Heaney(3-4, 3.12) scheduled to start against Mariners LHP Wade LeBlanc (1-0, 2.94).

Twins: RHP Jake Odorizzi (3-3, 4.24) is scheduled to get the ball Tuesday in Detroit to begin a six-game road trip. LHP Blaine Hardy (2-1, 3.66) is the scheduled Tigers starter.

FROM ESPN.COM

Power Rankings: Rivals stake their claims for Astros' throne*

The voting is in, and what figures to be a season-long three-way wrestling match for top honors in our Power Rankings has a new champ. After reclaiming the highest perch for just two weeks, the Astros, defending world champs, have again been pushed down to No. 3 as the Yankees kept mashing and cinched their best record through 60 games (42-18) since 1998, when they won their first of three consecutive World Series titles. The Red Sox held steady in the No. 2 slot, ready to take their shot at reclaiming the lead in the American League East -- and the rankings.

But just as the Astros might have lost a few strides on the rest of the AL's top tier, they're threatened by the Mariners for dominance in their own division. Seattle made the biggest move within this week's top 10, moving up three rungs to No. 6 while also displacing the Astros by percentage points in the AL West. That wasn't the only significant change in the top 10, as the Angels made their return, while the Cardinals slipped out of MLB's top third with a two-slot decline.

The biggest gain of the week, however, was made by the Giants. Call it the MadBum effect, but now that the Giants have one more good starting pitcher than they had before while bouncing around .500, their six-rung improvement could be a sign of things to come. They weren't the only National League West team to advance, as the Dodgers and D-backs both made gains as well. The biggest declines were from the reliably inconsistent Rays and Mets, who dropped five and four slots, respectively.

This week, our panel of voters is composed of David Schoenfield, Eric Karabell, Tim Kurkjian, Bradford Doolittle and Sarah Langs.

Los Angeles Angels

Record: 37-29

Week 9 ranking: 12

The Angels had the rare misfortune of simultaneously placing one of their best pitchers and one of their best hitters on the disabled list Friday when Shohei Ohtani was put on the DL with a sprained ulnar collateral ligament; he will be re-evaluated in three weeks. But there is some good news -- the Angels rattled off six straight wins last week and still have the best player on the planet in Mike Trout. -- *Casella*

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

FROM NBC SPORTS

Report: Shohei Ohtani likely to have Tommy John surgery, will be out until 2020

By Craig Calcaterra

Pedro Gomez of ESPN reported overnight that the Los Angeles Angels expect Ohtani to undergo Tommy John surgery and miss the remainder of the 2018 season and the entire 2019 season. Here was Gomez's comment on SportsCenter:

"Everything I'm hearing is that the reality is, he probably will need Tommy John surgery . . . The earliest we might see him, should he have TJ surgery, would be the 2020 season."

There has been no confirmation by the Angels or anyone close to Ohtani, but nor has there been contradiction. We'll obviously hear more on this today.

Ohtani was diagnosed with a Grade 2 UCL strain late last week. He underwent a platelet-rich plasma and stem cell injections, with the idea being that he could avoid surgery by doing so. Such a path has worked for **Masahiro Tanaka** and some other pitchers, but it's by no means foolproof. The Angels were going to reevaluate him in three weeks. At this point, waiting the three weeks before surgery would likely not harm his timetable should surgery then be decided, so it's possible that the Angels will still wait and see.

If Ohtani does go under the knife, however, it would be sad, sad ending to his breakout rookie season. Ohtani has wowed baseball by being its first effective two-way player in nearly a century, going 4-1 with a 3.10 ERA and a K/BB ratio of 61/20 in 49.1 innings as a starter and hitting .289/.372/.535 with six homers and 20 RBI in 129 plate appearance as a part-time designated hitter.

Ohtani turns 24 early next month. He signed with the Angels this past offseason as a free agent, but is subject to a full six years of team control per MLB's Collective Bargaining Agreement. For that reason this setback will not substantially impact the Angels financially nor impact Ohtani's near or mid-range

future in Major League Baseball from a financial perspective, but it's obviously a big blow to him, the Angels and fans who have come to enjoy him in his brief time in the States.

Here's hoping he can avoid surgery and get back to his old self via rehab. Given the Angels' and Ohtani's long-term interests, however, and given this report, that's not seeming particularly likely.

The Angels won last night but starter **Shohei Ohtani** couldn't qualify for the W. He left after four innings due to a blister on his finger.

Ohtani was warming up to start the fifth, actually, but his catcher, **Martin Maldonado**, called for a trainer when he didn't look right with his warmup pitches. Later Mike Scioscia said that noticed that Ohtani's slider and splitter were becoming less effective as the game went. His night ended having given up one run on four hits and three walks.

This is the second time this season that Ohtani has dealt with blisters.

Ohtani left a game early with a blister on April 17, but made his next stat (he's on a once-a-week schedule, so it was seven days later). Scioscia said after the game that this blister "didn't look as bad" as the first one but only time will tell.

Albert Pujols passes Stan Musial for seventh on all-time RBI leaderboard

By Bill Baer

Angels DH **Albert Pujols** knocked in a run with a single in the first inning of Sunday afternoon's 7-5 loss to the Twins. The RBI marked the 1,952nd of his career, passing Hall of Famer Stan Musial for sole possession of seventh place on baseball's all-time RBI leaderboard. Pujols added a two-run single in the ninth inning, finishing 2-for-4 with three RBI on the day.

Pujols' next target is Lou Gehrig at 1,995 and Barry Bonds at 1,996. If he is able to stay healthy, he should be able to get there by the end of the season. On the season to date, Pujols is hitting .256/.294/.412 with nine home runs, 36 RBI, and 23 runs scored in 252 plate appearances.

Pujols, who will likely be a first-ballot Hall of Famer after he retires, is also seventh on baseball's all-time home run leaderboard with 623. His next target there is Ken Griffey, Jr. at 630.

FROM CBS SPORTS**Will Mike Trout sign an extension if Angels keep missing the postseason? 'I don't know the answer' to that**

The Halos have played three postseason games in the Trout era

By Mike Axisa

At 37-29, the Los Angeles Angels sit in third place in the AL West. They're 4 1/2 games back of both the division lead and the second wild-card spot, and SportsLine puts their postseason odds at 19.2 percent. Those odds are sixth best among the 15 AL teams.

The Angels have made the postseason just once since 2009, and that was a wholly unsatisfying three-game sweep at the hands of the Kansas City Royals in the 2014 ALDS. Those are the team's only three postseason games in the Mike Trout era. The Angels have rarely been terrible since 2009, but they haven't been good enough to truly contend either.

Trout, who would've been a free agent this past offseason had he not signed a long-term extension in 2014, is signed through the 2020 season and it stands to reason the Angels will try to sign him to a contract extension -- a record contract extension, no doubt -- at some point before free agency. Would Trout consider re-signing with the Angels if they continue missing the postseason? Bill Shaikin of the *Los Angeles Times* recently asked Trout and GM Billy Eppler that question:

"He has never said that (he won't re-sign if we don't make the postseason)," Eppler said.

Trout can be a free agent after the 2020 season. Would he consider signing before then if the Angels do not make the playoffs, this year or next?

"I don't know the answer," Trout said. "I want to get to the playoffs. That's my mindset. I can't predict the future. So I just take it one game at a time now and see what happens."

A diplomatic answer, that is. Trout is two-and-a-half seasons away from free agency and that is an eternity in baseball years. There's no need for him to lock himself into anything at this point. It does him no good and it does the team no good either. Trout (and his agent) is smart. When the time comes, he'll consider all his options, including staying with the Angels.

Trout, who turns 27 in August and might just now be reaching the prime of his career, is hitting .299/.431/.632 (192 OPS+) with 19 home runs and 39 RBI in 66 games. He's also 13 for 13 in stolen base attempts. At +5.4 WAR, Trout leads baseball in wins above replacement and by a considerable margin too. Cleveland Indians third baseman Jose Ramirez is second at +4.4 WAR.

The Angels recently lost both Shohei Ohtani (elbow) and Andrelton Simmons (ankle) to the disabled list - Ohtani is reportedly facing probable Tommy John surgery -- and those two are the team's two best non-Trout players. Getting to the postseason will be tough even with Trout having a potentially historic season. Doing it without Ohtani and Simmons for some length of time will be that much more difficult.

Report: Shohei Ohtani will 'probably need Tommy John surgery' after elbow injury

Ohtani was placed on the disabled list last week

By Mike Axisa

Baseball fans may have to start bracing for the worst with Los Angeles Angels two-way star Shohei Ohtani.

According to a report from ESPN's Pedro Gomez, Ohtani will "probably need Tommy John surgery" in the wake of his recent elbow injury. Ohtani was placed on the disabled list with a Grade 2 ulnar collateral ligament sprain last week. Here is a transcript of Gomez's video report:

"The Angels are holding out hope that (Ohtani won't need surgery), but everything I'm hearing is that the reality is he probably will need Tommy John surgery. They're trying to hold out because they're in the middle of a season, they're kind of competitive right now, he is their best pitcher. But, it doesn't look good at this point."

Before the season it was revealed Ohtani had a Grade 1 UCL sprain. Now he has a Grade 2 sprain, which is more severe, and that is not good progression. The tear -- a sprain is by definition a tear -- is getting worse, and there's nowhere else to go after this. A Grade 3 sprain is a complete ligament tear that requires Tommy John surgery.

When Ohtani was placed on the disabled list, the Angels said he received a platelet-rich plasma and stem cell injection in his elbow, so they are attempting to rehab the injury. He will be reevaluated after three weeks. Here's what GM Billy Eppler told reporters, including the Associated Press, about Ohtani's injury when he was placed on the disabled list:

"We're hopeful that he can (avoid surgery)," general manager Billy Eppler said, "that this is completely treatable with the biologic prescription that the doctors recommend."

It is worth noting the Angels have had some success rehabbing UCL tears and avoiding Tommy John surgery. Garrett Richards rehabbed a partially torn UCL two years ago with a PRP and stem cell treatment similar to Ohtani's. Also, New York Yankees righty Masahiro Tanaka was able to rehab a partial UCL tear back in 2014. Rehabbing a ligament tear is uncommon, but not unprecedented.

Tommy John surgery has a very high success rate but it is not 100 percent, and any time there's a chance a star pitcher won't need his elbow cut open, they'll attempt rehab. These days Tommy John surgery rehab takes 12-14 months, sometimes longer. And Ohtani is especially unique because he is a two-way player. Tommy John surgery rehab for position players is typically 6-8 months. Would he be able to hit before being able to pitch?

The soon-to-be 24-year-old Ohtani owns a 3.10 ERA (131 ERA+) with 61 strikeouts in nine starts and 49 1/3 innings so far this season. At the plate, he's hitting .282/.372/.535 (150 OPS+) with six home runs in 129 plate appearances. Ohtani is no worse than the team's third best player behind Mike

Trout and Andrelton Simmons. Losing him for any stretch of time is a big blow. Tommy John surgery could mean losing him until 2020.

The Angels had their six-game winning streak snapped Sunday afternoon (MIN 7, LAA 5), and they are currently in third place in the AL West at 37-29. They're 4 1/2 games back in both the division race and the second Wild Card spot race.

Kinsler, Angels visit Mariners

Maybe it was the goose that took the field during a rain delay at Comerica Park or maybe it was just a return trip to Detroit.

By STATS

Maybe it was the goose that took the field during a rain delay at Comerica Park or maybe it was just a return trip to Detroit.

But after a frigid start, Ian Kinsler is showing why the Los Angeles Angels acquired him in an offseason trade with the Tigers.

Since returning to the leadoff spot in the lineup 12 games ago, Kinsler is batting .388 (19-for-49) with six home runs, raising his season average to .229. His streak of consecutive games with a home run ended at three Sunday in Minnesota, although he went 3-for-4 and scored twice in a 7-5 loss to the Twins.

The Angels open a three-game series on Monday in Seattle against the Mariners.

"Sometimes something clicks and you're able to find something that you can work on every day and work off of," Kinsler told MLB.com.

The second baseman was batting .179 and in a 0-for-13 slump when the Angels arrived in the Motor City in late May. Kinsler, who will turn 36 later this month and is in his 13th season, spent four years with the Tigers after starting his career with the Texas Rangers.

He broke out of the slump with a single in the series opener against the Tigers and went 3-for-3 the next night with a three-run homer in a 9-2 victory.

"It's a comfortable place for me," Kinsler said of Comerica Park after that game. "The box is comfortable. A lot of good memories in that batter's box. It's comfortable, it's familiar. Probably a little bit of a coincidence, but it's nice to (break out of the slump) here. ..."

"A long time coming. Any time you can help the team win, you feel a lot better taking your uniform off after a game."

Kinsler worked diligently with hitting coaches Eric Hinske and Paul Sorrento to find his stroke.

"The process only keeps you going for a while," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "You have to start to see some results. Although his process has been very, very good, you want to get some hits and help your team."

Kinsler's contributions have been all the more important after the Angels have placed shortstop Andrelton Simmons (sprained right ankle) and right-hander/designated hitter Shohei Ohtani (UCL sprain in right elbow) on the 10-day disabled list in the past week.

"You can't replace those guys, but at the same time, the games don't stop," Kinsler said. "We've got to play the games. We've got to pitch well, we've got to continue to swing the bats."

On Monday, the Angels are scheduled to face Mariners left-hander Wade LeBlanc (1-0, 2.95 ERA), who will take on Los Angeles for the first time in his career. Despite LeBlanc being involved in only one decision this season, Seattle is 5-2 in his starts.

The surprising Mariners (41-24) have won 17 of their past 22 games to pull into a tie with the defending World Series champion Houston Astros atop the American League West. The Angels (37-29) are 4 1/2 games back.

Seattle has done it by going 21-9 in one-run games, the most victories in the majors in that circumstance.

"We're winning, so that's all right," said Mariners third baseman Kyle Seager, whose two-run homer Sunday broke a tie in a 5-4 victory at the Tampa Bay Rays. "Whether we're winning by 10 (runs) or one, as long as we're winning, that's what we're worried about."

Andrew Heaney (3-4, 3.12) is set to start the series opener for the Angels. The left-hander is 1-1 with a 2.35 ERA in three career starts against the Mariners.

Heaney is coming off his first career complete game and shutout after pitching a one-hitter Tuesday in a 1-0 victory over the Kansas City Royals on his 27th birthday.

FROM YAHOO! SPORTS

Will Shohei Ohtani need Tommy John surgery?

By Liz Roscher

It only took two days for Shohei Ohtani's elbow injury to go from bad to potentially worse. After the Los Angeles Angels announced on Friday that Ohtani was going on the disabled list with a grade 2 strain of the ulnar collateral ligament in his pitching elbow, ESPN's Pedro Gomez dropped a Tommy John bombshell on Ohtani fans everywhere on Sunday.

"The Angels are holding out hope that (Ohtani won't need surgery), but everything I'm hearing is that the reality is he probably will need Tommy John surgery. They're trying to hold out because they're in the

middle of a season, they're kind of competitive right now, he is their best pitcher. But, it doesn't look good at this point."

Gomez said that he's reporting what he's heard from his sources, so it's just an unconfirmed report at this point. But considering that Ohtani's UCL strain has gotten worse over time, it's not hard to believe that Tommy John surgery could be in his future.

On Monday, Angels GM Billy Eppler responded to Gomez's report by saying that nothing had changed since Friday.

#Angels GM Billy Eppler: "There have been no changes in Ohtani's diagnosis and neither our physicians nor medical staff have recommended (Tommy John surgery) or said it's likely."

The Angels announced Friday that Ohtani has a grade 2 sprain of the UCL in his right elbow.

Despite the Angels' comment, the real gut-punch of the report, besides that he "probably" needs Tommy John surgery, is the time frame. If Ohtani has Tommy John now, he would most likely miss the rest of the 2018 season AND the entirety of 2019 season. The earliest he'd be back would be spring training 2020. That's 20 long, Ohtani-free months.

Ohtani was diagnosed with a grade 1 UCL strain back in November, before he signed with the Angels. The Angels knew about it, and presumably signed off on his recommended treatment: a platelet-rich plasma injection and rest. Ohtani was able to start the season on time, and he performed brilliantly. However, his UCL was continuing to get worse. ESPN Stats and Info tweeted an interesting statistic

Shohei Ohtani will be placed on the DL with a grade 2 sprain of the UCL after receiving a PRP and Stem Cell injection. Of the 33 instances of PRP injections for UCL injuries that Jon Roegele has confirmed (since 2008), 16 (48.5%) have ultimately led to Tommy John Surgery.

That stat provides a little hope, but it's important to remember that Ohtani got a PRP injection in November after his grade 1 strain *and* in June after his grade 2 strain. After two injections for progressively worse UCL strains, his chances of getting Tommy John might be higher.

The Angels have a little history with UCL strains, though. In May 2016, Garrett Richards had a significant tear of his UCL, but opted for stem cell therapy and rest instead of surgery. He missed the rest of the 2016 season, but was able to start the 2017 season. Masahiro Tanaka of the New York Yankees was also able to avoid surgery to repair his partially torn UCL in 2014, similarly getting a stem cell injection and resting for several months. These two cases are far from the norm, but it shows that it's possible to avoid Tommy John if the situation is right.

Though Ohtani "probably" needs Tommy John surgery, there's no harm in waiting to see how things look in a few weeks. When the Angels announced Ohtani was going on the DL, they also said he received a platelet-rich plasma injection and would be evaluated again in three weeks. If he's going to miss all of the 2019 season no matter what, waiting a few more weeks isn't going to hurt anything — even if it feels like it's just prolonging the inevitable.

FROM BLEACHER REPORT**Report: Shohei Ohtani likely to have Tommy John surgery to repair elbow injury**

By Tyler Conway

Shohei Ohtani's rookie season is likely over.

ESPN's Pedro Gomez reported early Monday morning the Los Angeles Angels expect Ohtani to undergo Tommy John surgery and miss the remainder of the 2018 season and the entire 2019 season.

"Everything I'm hearing is that the reality is, he probably will need Tommy John surgery. ... The earliest we might see him, should he have TJ surgery, would be the 2020 season."

Ohtani, 23, was diagnosed with a Grade 2 sprain of his UCL last week. He underwent platelet-rich plasma and stem cell injections to hopefully repair the damage, with the plan of reevaluating his status in three weeks.

"We're hopeful that he can, that it is completely treatable with the biologic prescription the doctors recommended," Angels general manager Billy Eppler told reporters.

"I'm just going to take every day as it comes and put him on this course of recovery and strengthening for the next three weeks and then deal with what we've got to deal with in three weeks' time."

As one of the most touted Japanese players in history, Ohtani has fit the bill during his rookie season. He is 4-1 with a 3.10 ERA and 1.14 WHIP, striking out 61 batters in 49.1 innings. Also serving as a designated hitter on some off days, Ohtani has slashed .289/.372/.535 with six home runs and 20 RBI.

The Angels will hope to follow Garrett Richards' blueprint, as he avoided Tommy John in 2016 by receiving stem cell treatment.

Ohtani also had a platelet-rich plasma injection on his right pitching elbow in October.

FROM AL.COM**St. Luke's star, L.A. Angels draft pick Jeremiah Jackson named Alabama's 2018 Mr. Baseball**

By Ben Thomas

Jeremiah Jackson had one more award to pick up before starting his professional baseball career on Tuesday.

The former St. Luke's star from Mobile was crowned Alabama's 2018 Mr. Baseball on Sunday night at the annual Alabama Sports Writers Association convention in Montgomery.

He is the 20th winner of the award overall and the first winner from Coastal Alabama since Fairhope's Daryl Norris in 2010. He is the first winner from Mobile since Baker's Joe Doan in 2003.

"I am honored to receive this award and recognition," he said. "This award has been in my sights for a couple years. I want to thank all the people that have helped me get to this point. This is very rewarding given the level of baseball ability of all the finalists. I believe this is a fitting way to start the next chapter of my baseball career."

The 6-foot, 170-pound shortstop was drafted No. 57 overall by the Los Angeles Angels in last week's MLB First-Year Player Draft. He will fly to Arizona on Tuesday morning and start the next phase of his career, opting to forego a scholarship at Mississippi State.

In leading the Wildcats to the Class 2A semifinals this season, Jackson hit .637 with 15 home runs and 49 RBIs. He also was named the Class 2A Hitter and Overall Player of the Year by the ASWA.

"This year was awesome," he said. "Going into the year, we were kind of the underdogs. No one really believed in us, and we grinded. It kind of took us a while to find the rhythm, but once we did it took off from there. We had a lot of younger guys come out and show out. A bunch of older guys did the same thing. We made it to the fourth round. The season got cut a little short. We wanted the blue map, but we played our butts off."

For his six-year career, Jackson hit .439 with 34 homers and 199 RBIs. He also helped St. Luke's to a pair of state championships.

"He has tremendous bat speed and tremendous power to all fields," St. Luke's coach Mike Szymanski said. "He is one of those guys that just has baseball instincts. He knows without hesitation when to take an extra base. Then, in the field, he is so smooth that he makes unbelievable plays look routine."

In a best-of-three semifinal loss to eventual state champ G.W. Long last month, opposing coach Drew Miller showed Jackson the ultimate sign of respect. He walked him intentionally 11 times in 13 at-bats. Jackson was St. Luke's leadoff batter.

"We had to do what we had to do to give our team the best chance to win," Miller said of his gameplan. "His (Jackson's) reputation spoke for itself. Every coach I talked to told me not to throw him a meaningful pitch so we didn't."

Jackson edged Homewood's record-setting base stealer Josh Hall in the race for Mr. Baseball. He finished with 89 votes to Hall's 75. The other members of the Super 10 were Auburn's Brooks Fuller, Andalusia's Ethan Wilson, Sweet Water's Jonah Smith, Hoover's Sonny DiChiara, Cullman's Will Morrison, Headland's Chase Wilkerson, Mobile Christian's Ethan Hearn and G.W. Long's Dylan Register.

Jackson received the most first-placed votes with four. Hall followed with two. Fuller, Wilson and Smith had one each.

FROM HOMETOWN LIFE**Hard-throwing Lee drafted by Angels and expects bullpen action**

By Marty Budner

Jake Lee had a few anxious moments June 5.

The 22-year-old Milford resident was considered a top 10-round pitching prospect in the 2018 Major League Baseball draft held June 4-6 in Secaucus, N.J. The draft's second day had been rolling along and Lee's name was still on the board.

"I was just sitting there waiting for the phone call and they had the stream pulled up on the TV," said Lee, who was waiting at home with his family and close friends. "I couldn't watch that. I was just pacing back and forth, going around the house just trying to do random stuff so I wouldn't think about it."

Finally, around 5:30 p.m., the Los Angeles Angels called his name. The 271st overall pick and ninth-round draftee who most recently played at Oakland University couldn't have been happier.

"I was just happy to hear my name called. It was definitely nerve-racking," Lee said. "That day two of the draft, especially, once they got to the eight- and ninth-round area and knowing that there are just a couple rounds left (that day), I was really nervous."

"But talking with some of the scouts and my coaches and my adviser, it was that six to 10-round range where I was predicted to go in," he added. "I ended up going in the ninth, so they were all accurate with what they told me."

Assigned to the Owlz

Lee knew he'd be selected in the draft, but was somewhat surprised it was the Angels. He had preliminary conversations with many other teams — the New York Yankees, Cleveland Indians, Pittsburgh Pirates and the hometown Tigers, for example. But he had not heard from the Angels until the week prior to the draft.

Lee was immediately assigned to the Angels' advanced rookie short-season league affiliate Orem Owlz, who play in the South Division of the Pioneer League. The Utah-based franchise's season begins June 15 at Grand Junction. The team's first home game is June 21 against the Ogden Raptors.

Lee can't wait to get his professional career started.

"First, I'm just excited to be given this opportunity. I mean, it's always been a dream of mine," Lee said. "And coming from a small school and being overlooked, I guess I just kind of always had a chip on my shoulder. And being a senior-sign guy they didn't put a lot of money into me and I guess that's how it works."

"Now I just have to make the most of my opportunity and go out there and work hard," he added. "I just have to keep on doing what I'm doing and see what happens."