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"Moncada may rest after left hamstring tightens"... Scott Merkin, MLB.com

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### **Abreu HRs, but Sox can't come back vs. Twins**

By Max Gelman / MLB.com/ May 4, 2018

CHICAGO -- One night after erasing a four-run deficit to walk off against the Twins, the White Sox seemed determined to recapture that series-opening magic. But on Friday at Guaranteed Rate Field, they came up just short.

Carson Fulmer got rocked by Minnesota's offense, giving up four home runs in 3 2/3 innings, and the White Sox couldn't complete the comeback in a 6-4 loss. The five runs (four earned) and seven hits allowed by Fulmer set a new season high for the young right-hander.

"I didn't make the pitches I wanted to," Fulmer said. "I had better feel later on in the game, just missed some spots, and when you miss some spots to a lineup like that you're gonna definitely pay for it."

The chances were there for the White Sox, much like Thursday night. Matt Davidson came to the plate with the bases loaded in the fifth and seventh innings with Chicago trailing 6-4, but he grounded out and struck out to end the threats.

"[Davidson] tried to put together as good an at-bat as possible," manager Rick Renteria said. "He took good swings, he took good passes. Wasn't able to generate what we needed in terms of producing runs, but that's just baseball."

Unlike Thursday, the White Sox got off to a good start. They jumped in front with a two-run homer from Jose Abreu in the first inning, his seventh of the season.

But Fulmer's struggles arose in the third inning when he allowed three solo home runs, including back-to-back blasts from Eduardo Escobar and Logan Morrison. Escobar had also taken Fulmer deep in the second, giving him his third career multi-homer game.

"[Fulmer] worked, he tried to work and manage what he had today," Renteria said. "I think it's one of those things where he's going to have to continue to slow it down a little bit, try to find a way to direct and be able to manage locating and commanding the zone as best he can."

After falling behind 5-2 in that third inning, the White Sox never regained the lead. Yolmer Sanchez scored on a groundout after hustling out a triple in the third, and Leury Garcia cranked a solo homer in the fourth, his first of the season, but that's as close as Chicago would get against the Twins' bullpen.

Yoan Moncada, back in the lineup Friday after fouling a ball off his foot Wednesday, left the game in the fifth with left hamstring tightness and was replaced by pinch-runner Adam Engel. Moncada has dealt with hamstring issues a couple times already this season, but it hasn't been serious enough to warrant a DL stint.

#### YOU GOTTA SEE THIS

Nicky Delmonico recorded his third four-star catch of the season with an impressive sliding grab in the eighth. Ehire Adrianza looped a foul ball past the tarp in left field, and Delmonico covered 94 feet in five seconds to get there, per Statcast™. The left fielder had a 43 percent catch probability.

#### HE SAID IT

"I know we're a young staff. We're close, we learn a lot from each other and with the veteran guys, they're always on us about trying to take the positives out of every outing, but for me personally it's really disappointing any time you go out there and get taken out of the game early." -- Fulmer, on gaining learning experiences during rough outings

#### MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

Fulmer's struggles led to an early hook in the fourth, and Aaron Bummer's first batter, Max Kepler, singled up the middle. Jason Castro tried to score from second on the hit, but Garcia unleashed a perfect throw to nail Castro at the plate by a few steps. The Twins challenged the call on the field, and perhaps that Omar Narvaez had blocked the plate. But the out call was confirmed and the score remained 5-3. Garcia's throw turned out to be pivotal, as he homered in the bottom of the fourth to pull the White Sox within a run.

#### UP NEXT

Hector Santiago starts Saturday for the White Sox at 6:10 p.m. CT at Guaranteed Rate Field. The lefty will be making his second start of the season in place of the injured Miguel Gonzalez. He and Chris Volstad have split the spot-starting duties with Gonzalez sidelined, and Volstad will likely see a significant chunk of innings in relief. Lance Lynn gets the start for the Twins.

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#### **Moncada may rest after left hamstring tightens**

By Scott Merkin /MLB.com / May 4, 2018

CHICAGO -- Yoan Moncada departed in the bottom of the fifth inning of Friday night's 6-4 loss against the Twins at Guaranteed Rate Field with a recurrence of left hamstring tightness.

The White Sox second baseman left in the eighth inning of Wednesday's loss at St. Louis and sat out Thursday's series opener against the Twins. Despite feeling good enough to return Friday, Moncada admitted postgame that rest might now be the best solution.

"Yes, I think with two, three, four days off, I will be able to get a rest and recuperate that area and then maybe I can come back 100 percent healthy," said Moncada through interpreter Billy Russo. "Right now, it's tough for me to make any assumptions, but with a few days off, I think I will be able to play pain-free."

"It is frustrating, because I want to play. I'm here to play and I'm here to help this team. I'm here to help these guys to win games. When you're not able to do that, then you don't feel good."

Moncada drew a one-out walk from Jose Berrios in the fifth, but then jogged somewhat gingerly toward second on Yolmer Sanchez's long fly to center. During Jose Abreu's ensuing at-bat, manager Rick Renteria and head athletic trainer Herm Schneider came out to check on Moncada at first and he was replaced by pinch-runner Adam Engel.

"I felt the tightness when I was running," Moncada said. "I don't think it's anything serious, but it's something that is there. I can't play my game, I can't play free because I feel it when I'm running every day. I felt it and then I let them know and Ricky made the decision."

A sore right foot, caused by a foul ball he hit Wednesday, and a sore left thumb also have hampered Moncada. But it's the left hamstring that may lead him to sit him down for a bit, or even send him to the disabled list.

"He felt really good today. So I have to wait until he gets reevaluated to see what's happening," Renteria said. "When I went to talk to him, he just said he was cramping up again. So they'll check it, and we'll know more in the morning."

"Even after the game, when we took him out, he said he felt good. They checked him, they did the strength test, the whole thing. He said he felt fine. So giving him the day, he did all the work, was fine. Again, it's premature for me to respond to the possibility he might have. We've got to check him out first, and then we'll see where we're at."

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### **This is why one tough start doesn't bug Kopech**

By Scott Merkin /MLB.com/ May 4, 2018

CHICAGO -- Michael Kopech isn't trying to paint a picture of himself as a pitcher who is "beyond ready" for the Major Leagues, knowing there are more things for him to polish after making eight starts for Triple-A Charlotte in the past two seasons.

"But I do feel like I've done a good job of that," said the hard-throwing right-hander during a Friday conference call honoring him as the White Sox Minor League Pitcher of the Month for April and honoring outfielder Luis Alexander Basabe and catcher Seby Zavala as the co-White Sox Minor League Players of the Month.

"Honestly, I feel like my changeup is here," Kopech said. "I've thrown it more and more. I'm comfortable with it. I had more swings and misses on it last start than I probably have in my entire career combined. So I'm comfortable with my secondary stuff right now. The main thing is just getting ahead of guys and staying ahead of them and limiting damage when runners do get on."

Kopech, ranked as the White Sox No. 2 prospect and No. 10 overall in baseball by MLB Pipeline, has a 0-1 record with a 2.67 ERA in five starts this season. He has fanned 35 and walked nine over 27 innings; he is coming off of a start against Gwinnett on Tuesday when he set a season high by allowing four runs (three earned) in six innings.

To show the high level of excellence the 22-year-old has achieved, this particular start with seven hits allowed, six strikeouts and two walks over 100 pitches wasn't deemed a good one by Kopech. But it served as an important part of his growth, as he explained to his dad after that effort and again on Friday.

"I told him I thought I needed it, because I was getting too comfortable and too relaxed," Kopech said. "I needed an outing that was kind of a grind outing and to take what I could away from it."

Kopech knows that a rough start is just part of the process.

"Nobody wants to have a bad outing," Kopech said. "Learning from those situations and taking them into the next start is really all you can do. I've been comfortable with the amount of focus I've put into my sideline work. I'm really excited to keep doing so."

During this rebuild, the White Sox have done a great job of not rushing top prospects even when a need at the big league level might exist. General manager Rick Hahn mentioned Tuesday in St. Louis there's still development for Kopech, and how he's embracing the changes and suggestions.

Those changes and suggestions, being worked on with pitching coach Steve McCatty, are taking place with Charlotte. Ultimately they are geared toward sustained big league success.

"For the most part, everything he tells me is for the next level," said Kopech of work with McCatty. "That's both of our end goals."

"We've done a really good job of making the progress we have in the past month. I think we are both excited about what's coming up this month."

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### **Farquhar seen by ex-teammates LoMo, Odorizzi**

By Scott Merkin/MLB.com/ May 4, 2018

CHICAGO -- Minnesota designated hitter Logan Morrison and starting pitcher Jake Odorizzi visited Danny Farquhar at RUSH University Medical Center on Friday morning, where the White Sox reliever has been recovering from surgery for a brain hemorrhage caused by a ruptured aneurysm.

According to Morrison, the visit lasted about two hours. Farquhar joked to his former Rays teammates about not believing the White Sox put him on the 60-day disabled list, demonstrating a desire to pitch as part of his recovery.

"I told him to take the summer and relax and have a good time in Chicago, but that ain't him," Morrison said. "He wants to get out there."

"We're just like, 'Just enjoy your family, enjoy your kids. Don't worry about June, whatever the day it is that you can't pitch before,'" Odorizzi said. "I don't want to speak for him, but he seemed pretty optimistic that he was going to be able to pitch again. The doctors kind of said the same thing, but at the same time, he's had to take it day by day."

Farquhar, 31, suffered the aneurysm after pitching against Houston on April 20 and then collapsing in the White Sox dugout at Guaranteed Rate Field. The White Sox have provided periodic updates on Farquhar from his family, and they have paid tribute to Farquhar with his name and number written on their hats, his jersey hanging in the bullpen and wearing 'Pray for 43' T-shirts.

"He's moving along well," White Sox manager Rick Renteria said. "I have not visited him, but we just know that things are moving along in a positive manner."

Morrison and Odorizzi didn't know they would be able to visit Farquhar until Friday morning. Farquhar was excited to see them, said Morrison, and they spent a few hours putting life in perspective, as well as baseball and friendship.

"Everything out of that situation couldn't have unfolded better from what we saw today," Odorizzi said. "It was the normal Farquhar with just a scar on his head. You take the scar away, he's the same guy he's always been, so a pretty miraculous turnaround, considering it's been two weeks."

"He loves to play the game. He loves to pitch," Morrison said. "If he's able to, he'll be the guy who does it, for sure. Nothing's going to stop him from doing that, so I think if he's able to get off the mound and throw again it would be awesome for him to break my bat, for sure, and get me out."

Santiago to start

Hector Santiago knows he's starting Saturday against the Twins, but doesn't know anything about his role beyond. With left-hander Jace Fry coming up from Triple-A Charlotte on Friday and joining fellow southpaws Luis Avilan and Aaron Bummer in the bullpen, Santiago would seem to have the starting spot until Miguel Gonzalez returns healthy or Michael Kopech gets called up.

But the White Sox also could go by matchups with the fifth starter's spot. Santiago is ready to go 100 pitches against the Twins, after throwing 86 against the Royals in a start last Sunday.

He said it

"I've been able to stay healthy. Last year, I wasn't completely healthy and this year I'm in better shape, and thank God I'm healthy." -- Outfielder Luis Alexander Basabe, the White Sox co-Minor League Player of the Month for April with catcher Seby Zavala, on his great start to the 2018 season through interpreter Billy Russo

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### Friday's top prospect performers

By Oliver Macklin /MLB.com/ May 4, 2018

It was a night to remember for Major League Baseball's elite prospects.

The evening began with six teams' No. 1 prospects -- including four of the top 11 players on the Top 100 Prospects list -- crushing home runs, highlighted by the Yankees' Gleyber Torres hitting his first big league long ball. Francisco Mejia (Indians), Eloy Jimenez (White Sox), Keston Hiura (Brewers), Fernando Tatis Jr. (Padres) and Austin Hays (Orioles) all went deep for their respective Minor League clubs as well.

Dodgers' top prospect (No. 12 overall) Walker Buehler capped off the day by cementing his name in the history books. The right-hander became just the third Major League pitcher in the past 110 years with at least six innings pitched while allowing no hits and no runs with eight or more strikeouts within his first three big league starts. Buehler's dominant outing was finished off by the Dodgers' bullpen to complete the combined no-no, a 4-0 victory over the Padres in Monterrey, Mexico.

Here are the top prospect performances from Friday's Minor League action:

- Mejia (Indians' No. 1 prospect, No. 11 overall) went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate with a double and a home run while driving in four. The young backstop's four RBIs and seven total bases were both season highs. It's been a slow start to the season for Cleveland's top prospect, but he raised his slash line from .175/.213/.262 to .198/.241/.321 with the stellar performance.

Mejia clubs two-run shot

- Rays' No. 1 prospect Brendan McKay was nearly part of a combined no-hitter himself until the Class A Bowling Green bullpen allowed the pitching staff's first hit in the ninth inning of the HotRods' extra-inning victory over Lake County. MLB's No. 25 overall prospect tied a career high with nine strikeouts without allowing a hit through 4 2/4 innings. He walked just one, as he lowered his season ERA to 1.45.

- Jimenez (White Sox No. 1 prospect, No. 4 overall) extended his hitting streak to eight games when he clubbed a two-run bomb in the first inning of Double-A Birmingham's 5-4 win over Tennessee. Jimenez

now has 14 base hits during the streak and has raised his slash line all the way from .167/.241/.417 to .290/.313/.597 over that span.

Jimenez homers to right-center

- The Brewers' No. 1 prospect, Hiura crushed his third homer of the year for Class A Advanced Carolina en route to a 4-for-5 day at the dish. The No. 54 overall prospect in baseball singled three times, drove in two and scored three runs as Carolina defeated Down East, 9-6. Hiura now has six hits over his past two contests.

Hiura collects his fourth hit

- Tatis, Padres' top prospect, crushed his sixth home run of the year -- and third in his past four games -- for Double-A San Antonio. MLB's No. 8 overall prospect has racked up nine hits in his past four games and has 24 total bases over that span following a slow start to the year.

Tatis Jr. hammers a moonshot

- Sandy Alcantara (Marlins' No. 2 prospect) earned his first victory of the year for Triple-A New Orleans, allowing just one run over seven solid innings to lower his season ERA to 3.27. The right-hander gave up four hits and walked one while striking out five to beat Omaha.

- Nick Pratto, the Royals' No. 2 prospect, has already matched his home run total from last season after crushing his fourth long ball of 2018 for Class A Lexington. The 19-year-old first baseman added a double to finish the game 3-for-5 with two RBIs and three runs scored.

Pratto blasts a two-run shot

- Brandon Lowe (Rays' No. 10 prospect) tallied seven total bases for Double-A Montgomery as he homered and tripled while driving in three and scoring a run. Lowe, a 23-year-old second baseman from the University of Maryland, is now batting .263/.330/.526 on the year.

Lowe's RBI double

- Touki Toussaint, the Braves' No. 11 prospect, fired six scoreless innings for Double-A Mississippi while striking out a season-high 10 batters. The right-hander allowed just two hits and two walks and has now compiled 17 K's and allowed just one run over his past 13 innings (two starts).

Toussaint strikes out 10th

- A.J. Alexy (Rangers' No. 17 prospect) had struggled to being the season for Class A Hickory prior to turning in a career-best performance. The 20-year-old righty struck out a career-high 12 batters in six innings. He gave up just one hit and three walks in the scoreless outing, his first victory of 2018

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### **Latest Michael Kopech comp: 'He reminds me a little bit of Josh Beckett'**

By Vinnie Duber/ NBC Sports Chicago / May 4, 2018

Michael Kopech has been called a future ace, a future star, a future Cy Young winner.

The latest comp for the White Sox top-ranked pitching prospect? A two-time World Series champ.

"I've never seen him when he's not confident," White Sox manager Rick Renteria said Friday. "He's got a tremendous mental makeup. Emotionally, I think he's as driven as anyone I've seen. He's wanting to go out there and perform and do extremely well."

“He reminds me a little bit of Josh Beckett. I had Josh Beckett back in Double-A quite a few years back. Same mentality. Has the ability to turn it up a notch when he thinks things are getting out of hand and continues to improve.”

Comparing Kopech to Beckett makes a good deal of sense. Beckett was a hard-throwing Texan just like the White Sox prized prospect, a guy who fans can't wait to see firing fastballs past hitters on the South Side. Beckett was able to turn that Texas heat into a remarkable career, one that featured two World Series rings and three All-Star appearances, not to mention a World Series MVP trophy and a no-hitter.

Beckett was a dominant force as a 23-year-old while leading the Florida Marlins to their 2003 championship. He turned in a 2.11 ERA in his six appearances that fall, five of which were starts and two of which were complete-game shutouts, including one in the NLCS against the Cubs. He followed that up four years later with a 1.20 ERA in four playoff starts for the Boston Red Sox in winning the 2007 World Series. There was a complete-game shutout in there, too, quite a rare thing in these days of postseason pitching.

Will Kopech be that kind of a pitcher?

The White Sox and their fans certainly hope so. While plenty of other young arms are doing dazzling things in the minor leagues — Alec Hansen, Dane Dunning, Dylan Cease, to name a few — Kopech is the pitching prospect envisioned at the front of the rotation. In fact, that list of hoped-to-be homegrown pitching stars brings to mind those Marlins rotations of yesteryear, ones featuring Beckett, A.J. Burnett, Brad Penny and Dontrelle Willis.

Kopech's numbers so far this season at Triple-A Charlotte have been as expected. Through his first five starts, he's got a 2.67 ERA with 35 strikeouts in 27 innings.

All this is great, you must be thinking. But you really want to know when he'll hit the big leagues, right?

Well, as he's been saying for some time now, Kopech believes he's ready. And it wouldn't be much of a hot take to suggest that at the start of this season he could have already been the best pitcher the White Sox had at any level of their organization, including the major leagues.

But there's no rush to get Kopech to the bigs. With the rebuilding White Sox not expected to be in contention for any sort of postseason spot, Kopech's readiness for the majors and the team's place in the standings have nothing to do with each other. And while he might seem to be dominating every lineup he's facing at Triple-A, there are still things the White Sox want him to work on before his development continues on to the big league level. Most notably, his changeup, which gets discussed regularly by White Sox brass.

“Obviously, he's working on his changeup. It's shown a lot better,” Renteria said. “Fastball command, again. Obviously, he has his breaking ball. But he's starting to improve on his changeup usage, and it's going to be something that he's going to need to get people out with the fastball, a multi-dimensional pitch and his breaking ball to get balls in different levels of the zone.”

Kopech figures to be up sometime this summer. Until then, White Sox fans will have to settle for Triple-A highlights every fifth day and the continued comparisons to major league greats.

While South Side baseball fans would probably like to have another Beckett pitching at Guaranteed Rate Field, they'd love for Kopech to attain just one of Beckett's achievements more than the others: those rings.

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**After leaving his second straight game, Yoan Moncada might need a few days to rest ailing hamstring**

By Vinnie Duber/ NBC Sports Chicago / May 4, 2018

For the third time in this young season, Yoan Moncada was lifted from a game with hamstring tightness.

After walking in the fifth inning of Friday's 6-4 loss to the visiting Minnesota Twins, Moncada departed the game after a visit from the trainer and manager Rick Renteria. Moncada got an off day Thursday after making a similar departure from Wednesday's game against the St. Louis Cardinals.

So what's the deal? Will the White Sox prized young player hit the disabled list? It's too early to tell, Renteria said after Friday's game, but the second baseman said he might need a short string of games off in order to get back to 100 percent.

"I think with two, three, four days off I will be able to get a rest and recuperate that area and then maybe I can come back 100-percent healthy," Moncada said through a translator. "Right now, it's tough for me to make any assumptions, but that's what I think, with a few days off I will be able to play pain-free."

Leaving a game with hamstring tightness wouldn't by itself be that big a deal, and it's very possible that this bout isn't anything to worry about, either. But the continued flare-ups when Moncada is on the base paths makes one pay closer attention. Friday he left after reaching first base. Wednesday he left after sliding into third base. And last month he left a home game against the Houston Astros after running to first on a ground ball.

"I felt the tightness when I was running," he said. "I don't think it's anything serious, but it's something that is there. I can't play my game, I can't play free because I feel it when I'm running every day. I felt it and then I let them know and Ricky made the decision."

"It is frustrating because I want to play. ... The last couple days, I've been on the field, I start the game, but then I have to get out of the game because of that recurring tightness. It's frustrating because I want to play. I'm here to play and I'm here to help this team. I'm here to help these guys to win games. When you're not able to do that, then you don't feel good."

Moncada will be reevaluated before Saturday's game, Renteria said.

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### **Carson Fulmer allowed four homers on a rough night, but his opportunity to star in White Sox rebuild remains**

By Vinnie Duber/ NBC Sports Chicago / May 5, 2018

Carson Fulmer was quite good in his previous two outings. He was not good Friday night.

With the visiting Minnesota Twins in town, Fulmer didn't make it out of the fourth inning after he surrendered four homers in the game's first three innings, really all that needed to happen to determine the 6-4 final.

So was it two steps forward, one step back for the developing Fulmer? That's a harsh and not really fair declaration to make, considering these kind of nights can happen to any big league pitcher.

But undoubtedly Fulmer is under a microscope for the rebuilding White Sox, who are using the 2018 season to find out what they have in a host of players and if those players are a part of the organization's bright future. Fulmer — a first-round draft pick with plenty of potential — is a part of that group, which means that every start he makes will be looked at in a specific way.

Manager Rick Renteria has a habit of calling all these games for that group of young players "learning experiences." It's not difficult to see how Fulmer could have built on a pair of strong starts, allowing just two runs in 13 innings in his last two outings. But figuring out how a player builds on a string of up-and-down performances, inconsistent performances is a bit more challenging.

It seems like it just comes down to picking out the positives.



“Every time you go on the mound, regardless if it’s good or bad, you’re still learning,” Fulmer said. “Still get an opportunity to go out there and have another start, have another opportunity to learn and throw some positives under your belt.

“The veteran guys, they’re always on us about trying to take the positives out of every outing, but for me personally it’s really disappointing any time you go out there and get taken out of the game early.”

Fulmer’s positives were hard to come by in a game in which he watched four of his pitches leave the yard, including three in one inning. But Renteria pointed to the end of Fulmer’s outing, when after walking the first two hitters in the fourth, he got the next two out.

You might think that’s grasping at straws. Or maybe it is a valuable learning experience that could benefit Fulmer down the line in his career.

“He ended up working, even when I left him out there to work in the fourth. He got through (Joe) Mauer and (Brian) Dozier, and I was expecting he’d be able to get through that,” Renteria said. “He worked very, very hard to manage that situation.

“I thought he worked, he tried to work and manage what he had today. He didn’t have his best command, but he had good stuff. I think it’s one of those things where he’s going to have to continue to slow it down a little bit, try to find a way to direct and be able to manage locating and commanding the zone as best he can.”

Regardless of how much was actually gleaned from this particular outing, the overarching themes stay the same when it comes to Fulmer’s opportunity this season. With the White Sox not expected to contend for any kind of championships, Fulmer and many of the team’s other young players will get plenty of playing time to show what they can do and whether or not they belong in the organization’s long-term plans.

With an ERA north of 5.00, Fulmer still has plenty to show. But he also has plenty of time to show it. He’s still yet to surrender more than four earned runs in a single outing this season, and those recent outings against the Seattle Mariners and Kansas City Royals were impressive.

And so while the message voiced by both Fulmer and Renteria on Friday night of moving on to the next start might sound like a cliché, it’s true. Fulmer will get another shot and another shot after that and another shot after that to keep his name in the conversation.

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### **White Sox prospect Michael Kopech: 'Honestly, I feel like my changeup's here'**

By Phil Thompson / Chicago Tribune / May 4, 2018

Michael Kopech sounded as though he has checked off another box on his to-do list before he’s deemed major-league-ready: mastery of secondary pitches.

“I hate to sound like I’m beyond ready, because that’s not what I’m trying to say at all — I do think there are things I need to polish,” the White Sox’s top pitching prospect said during a conference call Friday. “Honestly, I feel like my changeup’s here.”

“I’ve been throwing it more and more. I had more swings and misses on it last month than I probably had in my entire career combined, so I’m comfortable with my secondary stuff right now. The main thing is just getting ahead of guys and staying ahead of them and limiting damage when runners do get on.”

Earlier this week, general manager Rick Hahn said that while Kopech has made progress, in his last start he threw seven changeups and only one went for a strike.

"We want to see more effective use of the changeup in the coming starts," Hahn said, "as well as ideally going deeper in ballgames over the next several."

The Triple-A Charlotte fireballer acknowledged he's not a polished product yet, as evidenced by his outing Tuesday in which he allowed seven hits and three earned runs while striking out six in six innings against Gwinnett.

"I was actually talking to my dad after my last outing (and) I wasn't too happy with it, and I told him I thought I needed it," Kopech said. "I was getting too comfortable and too relaxed. I needed an outing like that that was kind of a grind outing. Situations like that where you know you didn't have your best stuff or the outings where you know you're going to be better the next time out, you really sit there and focus on what you didn't do right and what you should have done right rather than what you did do right."

Those situations also help Kopech check off another box: composure.

"I'm always a fiery guy. I'm a competitor," he said. "One thing I'm going to do is get fired up on the mound, in a good way or a bad way. The only thing I can do is control how I go into the next pitch. I feel like after going through a rough stint in maybe one inning or a rough couple of batters in a row, I've been able to bounce back quick, keep my composure and focus on the next pitch and the next hitter."

Another "Texas tough guy"? Manager Rick Renteria said it during spring training but he repeated it Friday: Kopech reminds him another native Texan: fiery former Red Sox hurler Josh Beckett.

"I've never seen (Kopech) when he's not confident," Renteria said. "He has a tremendous mental makeup. Emotionally, he's as driven as anyone I've seen. ... He reminds me a little bit of Josh Beckett. I had Josh Beckett back in Double A. Same mentality. Has the ability to turn it up a notch when he thinks things are getting out of hand and continues to improve."

Hitting streak? Kopech has hit a batter in each of his last three outings and four this season, but he said it isn't an issue of control, particularly with establishing the inside corner of the plate.

"Throwing inside to a right-handed hitter is easy; that's a spot that I don't struggle with command," Kopech said. "I like to throw inside. I like to keep guys off the plate and I like to keep guys honest ... so I have hit a few batters this year. That's not something I'm going to change."

"I wouldn't say I'm a headhunter, but if you're leaning over the plate and ... you get hit, that's not my fault. I'm going to pitch my game, and if something gets in the way of it, that's just part of it."

Renteria said pitchers have to be able to move batters off the plate with pitches inside. "You have to make hitters uncomfortable. ... You can't be afraid to change the eye level or move the feet a little bit on anybody at any given point."

Still, he understands how one of Kopech's errant 100 mph fastballs can hurt someone.

"The reality is, can those velocities cause pain and damage? Absolutely," he said. "You have to have the ability to be able to work on both sides of the plate to any hitter. That's the process learning to command those zones."

Farquhar receives visitors: Twins players Logan Morrison and Jake Odorizzi paid a visit to Sox reliever Danny Farquhar at the Rush University Medical Center Friday, according to reports. Farquhar's recovering from brain surgery to remove a ruptured aneurysm.

Morrison and Odorizzi were Farquhar's teammates on the 2016 Rays.

"I was really, really blown away, impressed, surprised by how well he's doing," Morrison said, according to the Associated Press. "Walking around, talking, doing great."

Renteria echoed their progress report. "Danny's doing fine. He's moving along well. It's still a guarded situation. I have not visited him. We just know that things are moving along in a positive manner."

Roster moves: The Sox recalled left-hander Jace Fry from Charlotte before Friday night's home game against the Twins and optioned right-hander Juan Minaya to Charlotte.

The 24-year-old Fry, who will wear No. 57, has a 1.35 ERA, 11 strikeouts and no walks in his last five relief appearances for the Knights. Minaya compiled a 10.80 ERA over 3 1/3 innings in five appearances this season.

Learning from Eloy: Double-A Birmingham catcher Seby Zavala shared franchise minor-league player of the month honors for April with Class A Winston-Salem outfielder Luis Alexander Basabe, and both credited star prospect Eloy Jimenez's influence during a conference call Friday.

Basabe, who batted .313 with 16 RBIs in 21 games in April, was teammates with Jimenez in Winston-Salem last season.

"One of the things I learned from him is to go to work with a purpose," Basabe said. "Also be smart when you are in the game, when you are in your at-bats, thinking ahead of the pitcher, thinking ahead of the situation."

Zavala, who had six home runs and 19 RBIs in 22 games in April, said of Jimenez, his Barons teammate: "He works really hard, he knows what he has to do. ... You learn you have to really attack the same things every day and you really don't want to stray from something that works."

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### **Carson Fulmer gives up career-high four home runs in 6-4 loss to Twins**

By Phil Thompson / Chicago Tribune / May 4, 2018

If the young White Sox still have a lot of growing pains to go through, Friday night's 6-4 loss was a case where there was more "pain" than there was "growing."

For Carson Fulmer (5.02 ERA, 2-2), his struggles with command led to him getting battered for a career-high four home runs in 3 2/3 innings — including two back-to-back in a three-homer third — and his second loss of the season.

"I didn't make the pitches I wanted to," he said after the game. "I had a better feel later on in the game. I just missed some spots, and when you miss some spots to a lineup like that you definitely pay for it."

For Yoan Moncada, his nagging hamstring tightness caused him to leave the game in the fifth inning and had him openly contemplating some time off to heal, even if his manager wasn't ready to make that call.

"I can't say that to you because he felt really good today," Renteria said. "So I have to wait till he gets reevaluated (Saturday) to see what's happening. When I went to talk to him he just said he was cramping up again. So they'll check it, and we'll know more in the morning."

Moncada was less circumspect.

"I think with two, three, four days off I will be able to get a rest and recuperate that area and then maybe I can come back 100 percent healthy," he said through a team interpreter. "Right now, it's tough for me to make any assumptions but that's what I think. With a few days off I will be able to play pain-free."

When Moncada left the game, Adam Engel replaced him as a pinch runner after Twins starter Jose Berrios walked him. It's the third time the hamstring has caused him to leave a game in recent weeks. Photos from the White Sox-Twins game at Guaranteed Rate Field on Friday, May 4, 2018.

Before the game, Renteria had praised Fulmer for doing a better job throwing mixing his first pitches and developing some confidence and consistency. Fulmer entered the game looking to build on a modest winning streak of two games but Eduardo Escobar homered off him twice, first in the second inning for the Twins' first run, and again in the third on an 0-2 count.

Brian Dozier hit a 399-foot blast to lead off the third, and Logan Morrison followed up Escobar's homer with a line-drive shot to center.

Jose Abreu made sure the Sox were never out of it, launching his own line-drive shot to center to put the Sox up 2-0 in the first inning and driving in Yolmer Sanchez on a groundout to second in the seventh.

When Twins shortstop Ehire Adrianza's relay on Abreu's grounder scooted past second baseman Brian Dozier in the seventh, the White Sox had men on second and third and a chance to erase a two-run deficit and rally for a second straight night.

Anticipation amped up even more when Twins reliever Ryan Pressly walked Nick Delmonico next, but it faded just as quickly when Matt Davidson stuck out swinging.

The Sox recalled left-hander Jace Fry from Triple-A Charlotte and replaced Chris Volstad in the seventh. Fry struck out Eddie Rosario but threw two wild pitches in the frame, one of which sent Morrison ducking for cover.

The Sox's 9-21 start is their worst since 1950.

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### **White Sox prospect Kopech shows improvement but remains work in progress**

By Chris Kuc/ Chicago Sun Times / May 5, 2018

Now that it appears the White Sox won't be the surprise of the American League this season after all, the narrative the rest of the way shifts back to the future.

The rebuild remains in full swing on the South Side or, more specifically, in the Sox' minor-league system, where prospects are making noise — and making their way toward the majors.

At the head of the class is flamethrowing right-hander Michael Kopech, who was named the organization's top pitcher for April. The 22-year-old with a lightning bolt of an arm is fine-tuning his arsenal while pitching for Class AAA Charlotte, and with each start, he appears a step closer to making his big-league debut.

The Sox want Kopech, who regularly hits triple digits with his fastball, to continue to develop his secondary pitches, most notably his changeup. To that end, Kopech believes he has done just that.

"Honestly, I feel like my changeup is here," Kopech said Friday on a conference call that also featured rising prospects Seby Zavala and Luis Basabe. "I've thrown it more and more. I'm comfortable with it. I had more swings and misses on it last start than I probably have in my entire career combined. I'm comfortable with my secondary stuff right now."

So comfortable that Kopech sports a 2.67 ERA with 35 strikeouts in 27 innings in five starts with the Knights.

"For the most part, everything I'm working on here is for the major-league level," Kopech said. "Keeping my direction toward the plate [and] throwing my changeup in counts that people are fastball-hunting because I'm a fastball pitcher."

Despite the gaudy numbers and early success in the minors, Kopech remains a work in progress. During his last start — a no-decision Monday against Gwinnett — Kopech yielded four runs (three earned) and seven hits with two walks and six strikeouts in six innings.

The semi-rough outing was just all part of the learning process, Kopech said.

“The best thing you can do after a bad outing is learn from it,” he said. “If you don’t, it was a wasted day. I needed it because I was getting too comfortable and too relaxed. I needed an outing that was kind of a grind outing and to take what I could away from it.”

While slugger Eloy Jimenez and Kopech get the most attention, others are also faring well.

Zavala has been tearing up Southern League pitching while with Class AA Birmingham. The 24-year-old catcher — the No. 21 prospect in the Sox’ system — is tied for first in the league with six home runs, is tied for second with 19 RBI and is seventh with a .561 slugging percentage entering Friday.

“I had a good year last year, then went to the Arizona Fall League and had a good fall,” Zavala said.

“I’m not really trying to change too much, just stay consistent with my defense and my approach with hitting.”

Basabe, a 21-year-old outfielder, is the Sox’ No. 13 prospect. He ranks among Carolina League leaders in slugging (second at .629), total bases (second with 56) and batting average (10th at .315).

A strong spring training caught the eye of the Sox’ hierarchy, and Basabe continues to impress with Class A Winston-Salem.

“The experience in spring training was huge for me,” Basabe said. “I learned how to be focused on the game, how to be prepared for every opportunity and how to study the rival pitchers.”

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### **Hawk & Wimpy will broadcast their last White Sox game together Sunday**

By Jeff Agrest/ Chicago Sun Times / May 5, 2018

If you’re going to the White Sox’ game Sunday against the Twins at Guaranteed Rate Field, be sure to record the TV broadcast at home.

Heck, even if you’re not going to the game, set the DVR for 1 p.m. on NBC Sports Chicago anyway. This is one for the time vault.

Ken Harrelson and Tom Paciorek, affectionately known as Hawk and Wimpy, will broadcast a Sox game together for the last time.

Paciorek is filling the analyst role for Steve Stone, who has the series off. Harrelson is calling mostly Sunday home games among the 20 he’ll work in his last season in the booth.

It seems the stars were aligned for the pair to call one more game together.

“They were a great team together,” Sox radio analyst Darrin Jackson said. “It was sad when they broke that team up and I went up there and started working with Hawk. There’s no replacing Wimpy because he was such a great guy and so much fun and entertaining.”

Harrelson and Paciorek called Sox games together from 1991 to ’99. Jackson was a surprise replacement for Paciorek in 2000. He had been a reserve outfielder for the Sox the previous season. Jackson stayed with Harrelson through 2008, and Stone took over the next year.

Hawk and Wimpy were as entertaining as any broadcast pairing in the game. Hawk wove his baseball beliefs and theories into his play-by-play, which never left you wondering whether the Sox were ahead or behind. Wimpy broke down the game with a whimsical sense of humor.

They had their own shtick, but it all worked. Hawk had his Hawkisms – such as “duck snort” and “He gone,” to name two of about 100 – and Wimpy made jokes. He’d call a southpaw a “funky left-hander,” and if the Sox caught a break in a game, he’d say, “We take dah one.” Both with humorous voice inflections.

“Hawk has his own show, simple as that,” Jackson said. “Wimpy was going to give you the fun factor and entertainment factor. And they just played off of each other so well. You couldn’t change either one of them, and everybody accepted who they were. I think that just made it fun.”

Hawk might have been at his best in the booth with Wimpy. The same dynamic didn’t exist with Jackson, and Hawk’s tension with Stone was well-publicized. But at least for one more game, Hawk and Wimpy will get to relive the old days.

“I’m glad that they get this game together,” Jackson said. “It is sad that there’s not going to be any more of them. But with that being said, it wouldn’t surprise me if down the road, there’s some special days where both of them are back together.”

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### **Five observations: Carson Fulmer roughed up despite showing tools for success**

By James Fegan/ The Athletic / May 5, 2018

For the second-straight night, the Twins looked primed to roll over the rebuilding White Sox in Chicago, only to let them hang around and have countless cracks at rallying.

For the first-straight night, they actually hung on, weathering two separate bases-loaded, two-out situations for Matt Davidson to beat the Sox 6-4.

Also for the second-straight night, the Sox (9-21) will have to help a young starter move on from a difficult outing, as Carson Fulmer was roughed up for four home runs in 3 2/3 innings.

“Today was a situation in which he had really good stuff but he wasn’t able to command it as well as he had the previous two starts,” manager Rick Renteria said. “He left a couple pitches that were obviously well struck. Four homers today. He did have a couple of base on balls. He ended up working, even when I left him out there to work in the fourth. He got through [Joe] Mauer and [Brian] Dozier, and I was expecting he’d be able to get through that.”

#### 1. The most important hammy on the South Side

Yoán Moncada’s status with the franchise is something between “cornerstone starting second baseman” and “the most important dude who ever lived.” With that in mind, perhaps the biggest issue of the night for the White Sox — beyond the fact that they’re winning games at a 30 percent clip — is that his tight left hamstring has taken him out of three games in less than a three-week span, and out of two of the last three games. Speaking of the number three, that’s how many times Moncada smashed his helmet on the bench. Whether it was out of pain or frustration, the White Sox will likely be cautious with their leadoff man.

“I think with two, three, four days off I will be able to get a rest and recuperate that area and then maybe I can come back 100 percent healthy,” Moncada said through team interpreter Billy Russo. “Right now, it’s tough for me to make any assumptions but that’s what I think with a few days off I will be able to play pain-free.”

## 2. Not good, but not the disaster it might seem from Fulmer

Fulmer had a lot of success in his last two starts with an approach that seemed more worried about walking his way out of another outing than allowing a solo home run. On Friday night against Minnesota, he allowed three solo homers, and one more booming two-run shot from Eduardo Escobar — his first of two homers and 10 total bases on the night. Obviously that's discouraging stuff. Fulmer missed his spots on a pair of fastballs (egregiously so on one of the Escobar homers) and hung a cutter to Logan Morrison.

"I didn't make the pitches I wanted to," Fulmer said. "I had better feel later on in the game, just missed some spots and when you miss some spots to a lineup like that you're gonna definitely pay for it. I did a good job of getting ahead for the most part, but like I said, missed the spot when I wanted to make a pitch and to a talented lineup like that you're gonna get hit around a little bit."

But amid the command mistakes, he frequently hit 94-95 mph in the early innings and recorded a season-high six strikeouts thanks to an 88-89 mph cutter that was nasty when he got the right level of drop on it. No one wants to hear about Fulmer showing the tools for success after another bad result, but they were there still.

## 3. The same Yolmer Sánchez conversation as always

Sánchez is not a superstar — well, not by pure statistical performance — and he might not be a building block or a surefire mainstay at third base for the rest of his life. But he can man any infield position, and after a three-hit night Friday, and a first month of the season that has seen his strikeout rate drop under 20 percent, his offensive gains from 2017 look sustainable. Amusingly, he drew four pickoff throws from Twins starter José Berríos after singling in the first inning, right before José Abreu launched a two-run homer to score him, and his hustle to turn a ball in the right-field corner into a triple in the third inning was immediately rewarded with an RBI groundout.

## 4. Defensive miscues from players in reserve roles

Omar Narváez's league-leading sixth passed ball of the season turned into an unearned run against Fulmer in the second inning, and those mistakes don't pair well with Narváez's huge early spike in strikeout rate. His novelty has been that of a non-traditionally effective bat-first catcher, so slumping both behind and at the plate is not a great look with Kevan Smith OPS'ing .932 in Charlotte.

Daniel Palka misplayed a relatively routine fly ball from Mauer in the ninth and was slow getting Dozier's first-inning triple from the right-field corner. An offensive hot streak will cover up his defensive limitations for now, but if there are no first-base reps available for him down the road, it will not cover the lean periods.

## 5. Six left on base for Matt Davidson

Davidson ended the night with a 160 wRC+ for the season and went 1-for-4 with a single, so there aren't many signs of cracks in the armor just yet. But the fact that he stranded the bases loaded twice in a two-run loss is a bit of fair warning that he's an intense "three true outcomes" guy who has had to put a ton of maintenance into his swing and approach. Hot and cold streaks will come throughout the year, but so far, the strong moments have clearly made it more than worth it.

"Well he had some opportunities today," Renteria said. "He's actually been doing very, very well for us. He had a couple situations in which he could've broken it open. But he tried to put together as good an at-

bat as possible, he took good swings, he took good passes. Wasn't able to generate what we needed in terms of producing runs, but that's just baseball."