

Pregame Notes

2008 AL EAST CHAMPIONS ♦ 2008 AL CHAMPIONS ♦ 2010 AL EAST CHAMPIONS ♦ 2011 AL WILD CARD ♦ 2013 AL WILD CARD



TAMPA BAY RAYS SEASON-ENDING GAME NOTES

Final Record: 90-72 • Home: 51-30 • Road: 39-42 • All-Time: 1590-1810

9 Innings: 85-65 • Extras: 5-7 • 1-Run: 28-31 • AL East: 41-35 • AL Central: 21-11 • AL West: 21-13 • IL: 7-13 • vs. RH: 63-52 • vs. LH: 27-20
March: 1-2 • April: 12-12 • May: 15-13 • June: 13-14 • July: 13-12 • August: 17-10 • September: 19-9 • Pre-ASB: 49-47 • Post-ASB: 41-25

RAY MATTER—The Rays finished 90-72, their most wins since 2013 (92) and their sixth 90-win campaign in 11 seasons as the Rays...only three other teams—the Red Sox (7), Dodgers (7) and Yankees (6)—have as many 90-win seasons since 2008...this was the club's seventh winning season, all since 2008, one of eight teams with that many over that span...the Rays finished with a 10-win improvement over last season, the 4th-largest improvement in the AL and tied for the 6th-largest in the majors...this was the second consecutive year they recorded a double-digit increase, after going 68-94 in 2016, 80-82 in 2017 and 90-72 this season.

90-WIN SEASONS, SINCE 2008

Boston Red Sox	7
Los Angeles Dodgers	7
Tampa Bay Rays	6
New York Yankees	6
St. Louis Cardinals	5
Chicago Cubs	5

- + The Rays finished in 3rd place in the AL East, and their 90 wins were tops in the majors among teams missing the postseason...it was the third time since the second Wild Card was introduced in 2012 that a team won at least 90 games and missed the postseason, following the 2013 Rangers (91; who lost, 5-2, in the "Game 163" tie-breaker against the Rays) and 2012 Rays (90)...the Rays finished 7 GB of the Athletics for the AL's second Wild Card, the largest post-season deficit for a 90-game winner in the Wild Card era (1994).
- + The Rays went 30-28 this season against the AL's five postseason teams, including 21-11 (.656) from June 22 through season's end... they went 18-12 at home against the AL's five postseason clubs.
- + The Rays went 19-9 (.679) in September, 2nd in the AL and tied for 3rd in the majors...they went 41-25 (.621) following the All-Star break, 3rd in the AL and 4th in the majors...they ended the season going 9-1-2 in their last 12 series and 12-2-2 in their last 16 series.
- + The Rays swept 12 series this season—one 4-game series, nine 3-game series and two 2-game series—to tie a club record (2013).

IN-SEASON TURNAROUND—The Rays finished 18 games over .500, one shy of matching their high-water mark of the season...they were a season-high-tying 9 games under .500 through games of April 17 (4-13), but after that went 86-59 (.593), 7th in the majors and 5th in the AL.

- + According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the Rays became the first team to fall at least 9 games under .500 and get back over .500 before the end of May since the 2009 San Diego Padres did it.
- + The Rays were under .500 through games of July 6 (43-44) and within 3 games of .500 for 38 consecutive games from July 7–Aug 20...they were only one game over .500 through games of Aug 18 (62-61), but after that went 28-11 in the final 39 games this year.
- + According to *The Athletic's* **Jayson Stark**, the Rays became the first team in AL history to start 3-12 or worse and finish at least 10 games over .500, and only the second AL team to start 3-12 or worse and finish over .500, following the 1996 Red Sox (85-77)...in addition, the only NL team in the last 70 years to start 3-12 or worse and finish at least 18 games over .500 were the 1951 Giants (98-59) that won the NL pennant on **Bobby Thomson's** walk-off homer.

DOMESWEET DOME—The Rays went 51-30 (.630) at home, tied with the Brewers for 3rd in the majors behind the Red Sox (57-24) and Yankees (53-28)...it was the fourth time in club history they won 50 home games, and they tied 2013 for 3rd-best record in club history behind 2008 (57-24) and 2009 (52-29)...it was their second consecutive winning season at home, after finishing .500 or lower in three straight seasons from 2014-16...they went 39-14 (.739) in their last 53 home games following a 12-16 start.

- + The Rays swept nine series at home, the most in a single season in franchise history...twice they swept a series of at least 3 games against a team with the best record in baseball (June 22-24 vs. NYY, Aug 24-26 vs. BOS)—they did that once (home or away) in the franchise's first 20 seasons combined (June 17-19, 2008 vs. CHC).
- + From Aug 9–Sep 10, the Rays went on a club-record 12-game home winning streak, the longest streak for any team this season...the Rays swept a multi-series homestand for the first time in franchise history, going 7-0 against the Royals and Red Sox from Aug 20-26.
- + The Rays went 8-1 on their June 22–July 1 homestand against the Yankees (3-0), Nationals (2-0) and Astros (3-1)...it was the first time in club history they won three consecutive series all over teams who made the postseason the year prior...the sweeps of the Yankees and Nationals marked the first time in club history they swept consecutive series over postseason teams from the year before.
- + The Rays won in walk-off fashion nine times, their most since a club-record-tying 13 walk-off wins in 2013...they hit five walk-off homers, tied with the Blue Jays for most in the AL and tied for 2nd

in the majors behind the Cardinals (8)...it was their 2nd-most for a season behind 2011 (7), and more than the 2014-17 seasons combined (2)...on July 22 vs. MIA, the Rays won on a **Daniel Robertson** walk-off grand slam, the first walk-off grand slam in club history.

SPREAD THE WEALTH—The Rays set single-season club records by using 54 players, 31 pitchers, 17 starting pitchers and 23 rookies...the 17 starting pitchers were most in the majors, ahead of the Angels (16) and Twins (16)...in comparison, the Rays used eight starting pitchers last season, and the 16 starters this year were more than the team's total from the previous three seasons combined (14, 2015-17)...the 23 rookies tied for 4th in the majors behind the Blue Jays (25), Orioles (24) and Marlins (24).

- + Seventeen of the 35 players on the season-ending active roster were rookies, including 10 of the 19 pitchers...20 of the 35 on the season-ending active roster appeared in a game at some point for Triple-A Durham this season, excluding rehab assignments.
- + Only three players from the Opening Day roster remained on the active roster all season: **C.J. Cron**, **Sergio Romo** and **Jesús Sucre**.
- + Of the nine position players (including DH) who led the 2017 Rays in games played, only one—**Kevin Kiermaier**—finished the 2018 season still in the organization...the same could be said for the top three pitchers in games started, and top four in relief apps.
- + The Rays enter the offseason having already made 16 trades involving 40-man players since January 1, their 2nd-most for an entire calendar year behind the 18 trades in 2017.

FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH—According to Stats LLC, the Rays were the first team in major league history to use at least 23 rookies and finish at least 18 games over .500...their rookies combined for 814 games, most in the majors and a single-season club record...the rookie pitchers combined for 604 IP, a club record and most in the majors...the Rays used nine different rookies as the starting pitcher, totaling 71 starts, 2nd-most in the majors behind the Marlins (73)...29.3 pct. of the club's home runs were hit by rookies, and 44.2 pct. of their innings pitched were covered by rookies.

- + Twelve players made their major league debut for the Rays this season, a club record ahead of 2002 (10) and 2003 (10).
- + According to *The Athletic's* **Jayson Stark**, the Rays were only the second team since the club's inaugural season to use at least eight rookie pitchers in 12+ games and at least eight rookie position players in 12+ games, joining the 2013 Astros that finished 51-111.
- + On June 15 at NYY, the Rays started rookies at all four infield positions for the first time in franchise history, and they were the first team to do this without the benefit of expanded rosters since the Rockies on Aug 8, 2012 at LAD, according to the Elias Sports Bureau...on Aug 10 at TOR, they started rookies at all four infield positions and catcher for the first time in franchise history.

PITCHING PLANS—In March, the Rays announced a season-opening rotation of **Chris Archer**, **Blake Snell**, **Nathan Eovaldi** and **Jake Faria**...all four pitchers spent time on the disabled list and two were traded in July...as a result, the Rays used other starters in 92 of 162 games (56.8 pct.).

- + The Rays went into the season using bullpen days as needed for traditional starters...on May 19, they debuted the concept of the opener—using a reliever to start games, generally facing 3-9 batters, depending on matchups...they used traditional starters in 84 games, openers in 55 games and employed a bullpen day 23 times.
- + **Sergio Romo's** start on May 19 at LAA snapped the Rays streak of consecutive games started by a pitcher under the age of 30 at 603 in a row...he became the first 30-plus pitcher to start a game for the Rays since 35-year-old **Erik Bedard** on July 3, 2014 at DET.
- + Rays starters went 3 IP or fewer 71 times this season, most by a team since Baseball Reference data is available (1908), ahead of the 1949 St. Louis Browns (40)...their starters went 2 IP or fewer 61 times, most ever by a team ahead of the 1977 Mariners (27).

RAYS PITCHING BY THE NUMBERS

	Games	Record	Starter ERA	Reliever ERA	Team ERA
Traditional Starters	84	46-38	3.49	3.83	3.61
Bullpen Days	23	12-11	3.86	3.48	3.64
Openers	55	32-23	4.64	3.88	4.00

PITCHING POINTS—The Rays pitched to a 3.74 ERA this season, 2nd-best in the AL behind the Astros (3.11)...following the debut of the opener on May 19 at LAA, Rays pitching ranked 2nd in the AL and 3rd in the majors

with a 3.50 ERA, trailing the Dodgers (3.19) and Astros (3.39)—prior to that date, their 4.43 ERA ranked 9th in the AL and 22nd in the majors.

- + Despite trading four veteran pitchers in the week prior to MLB's non-waiver trade deadline, the Rays led the majors with a .221 opp avg. and ranked 4th with a 3.39 ERA from Aug 1–season's end.
- + The Rays had a 3.61 ERA in the 1st inning, best in the AL ahead of the Astros (3.78), and 2nd-best in club history behind 2012 (2.83)... they went on a 28-game streak without allowing a 1st-inning run from June 12–July 12, four shy of the longest in the live ball era.
- + 24 different pitchers recorded a win for the Rays, most in the majors (Twins, 23) and a single-season club record ahead of 2017 (20).
- + The Rays lost 14 times this season when allowing 2 runs or fewer, most in the majors and a single-season club record...they lost 23 times when yielding 3 runs or fewer, tied with the Giants for most in the majors and 2nd-most in club history behind 2014 (24).

BEFORE & AFTER THE OPENER DEBUT ON MAY 19

	After Opener Debut		Through May 18	
	MLB Rk.	AL Rk.	MLB Rk.	AL Rk.
ERA	3.50	3rd	4.43	22nd
WHIP	1.18	4th	1.26	9th
Opp Avg.	.225	3rd	.241	11th
Opp OBP	.296	3rd	.310	9th
Starter ERA	3.33	3rd	4.32	17th
Bullpen ERA	3.59	6th	4.57	26th

REDEFINING RELIEF—The Rays bullpen combined for 824.1 IP—56.2 pct. of the team's total—shattering the major league record by 167.1 IP, ahead of the 2012 Rockies (657 IP)...prior to this season, only four teams—the 2017 Marlins (612 IP), 2017 Reds (610 IP), 2012 Rockies and 2003 Rangers (601.1 IP)—saw their bullpens surpass 600 IP, and all four of these teams finished with losing records...Rays relievers this season totaled:

- + 62 apps of at least 50 pitches and 29 apps of at least 70 pitches, both the most since Baseball Reference data is available (1908);
- + 91 decisions, most since Baseball Reference data is available;
- + 150 apps of at least 2 IP, most since the 1985 Braves (158);
- + 74 apps of at least 3 IP, most since the 1982 Red Sox (81);
- + 46 apps of at least 4 IP, most since BB-Ref data is available;
- + 31 apps of at least 5 IP, most since the 1917 Athletics (34)—the other 29 teams combined for 34 apps of this type this season.

THROWING BLANKS—The Rays recorded 14 shutouts this season, tied with the Athletics and Red Sox for 2nd-most in the AL behind the Indians (17), and their most since 2014, when their 22 shutouts were an AL-record for the DH era (1973)...they achieved this despite not recording their first shutout until May 28 at OAK, the 2nd-to-last team in the majors with one (Blue Jays)...their 9 shutouts on the road were tied with the Cubs and Mariners for most in the majors, and were their most since 2014 (11).

- + Four times this season the Rays recorded back-to-back shutouts, while the other 29 clubs combined to do that 16 times...the Rays recorded back-to-back shutouts only nine times in the franchise's first 20 seasons (1998–2017), and never four times in a season.
- + The Rays went on a scoreless streak of 27 IP from Aug 18–21 to tie Sep 12–15, 2013 for the longest in franchise history...they also recorded a scoreless streak of 26 IP from June 24–28.

ABOUT THE OFFENSE—The Rays ranked 3rd in the AL with a .258 avg., their best since 2009 (.263) and highest rank since 2005 (.274, 3rd)... they were 2nd in the AL with a .333 OBP, their best since 2009 (.343) and highest rank in franchise history...their avg. increased by 13 points and their on-base pct. increased by 16 points over last year...after the All-Star break, the Rays led the AL with a .343 OBP, up from .327 in the first half.

- + The Rays led the majors with a .271 avg. through games of April 29...it marked the latest into a season they led the majors in avg.
- + While Major League Baseball broke its own strikeout record for an 11th consecutive season, the Rays offense cut their strikeout total by 150, from a then-AL record 1,538 in 2017 to 1,388 this season.
- + The Rays offense recorded double-digit runs 11 times, their most since 2012 (12), and they scored 8 runs or more 29 times, their most since 2010 (37)...they scored 8 runs or more in a franchise-record five consecutive games from April 20–26 vs. MIN, at BAL.
- + The Rays recorded 128 SB, 2nd in the majors to the Indians (135) and their most since 2012 (134)...five players reached double-digit steals, tied for most in the majors...**Mallex Smith's** 40 SB ranked 2nd in the AL behind KC **Whit Merrifield** (45) and were the most by a Ray since **Carl Crawford** (47) and **Melvin Upton Jr.** (42) in

2010...the Rays were also caught a major-league-most 51 times.

- + The Rays led the AL with 43 3B, 2nd in the majors to the Diamondbacks (50) and their most since a club-record 46 3B in 2004...**Mallex Smith** tied CWS **Yolmer Sánchez** for the AL lead with 10 3B.
- + The Rays were hit by pitch 101 times, 2nd-most in AL history and two shy of tying the 2008 Indians (103) for the AL record.

POWER BALL—The Rays finished the season with 150 HR, 4th-fewest in the majors and 2nd-fewest in the AL, and 78 HR fewer than their club-record 228 HR last season...only 31.8 pct. of their runs scored via the home run, lowest in the majors, compared to 48.0 pct. in 2017, 3rd-highest in the majors...24 different players hit at least 1 HR, most in the majors and a club record ahead of 2015 (23)...despite this, the Rays had only four players reach double digits, tied with the Tigers for fewest in the majors and tied with 2001 for their fewest in a single season in franchise history.

- + **C.J. Cron** hit 30 HR and finished with 20.0 pct. of the team's homers...this was the second time the Rays finished a season with only one player with at least 15 HR (**Evan Longoria** in 2014)...every other team this season had at least two players with 15 HR or more.
- + The Rays went 34-7 (.829) this season when hitting multiple homers in a game, 3rd-best winning pct. in the majors when doing so, but their 41 games of this type were 6th-fewest in the majors.
- + The Rays won 28 games this season without the benefit of a home run, most in the majors ahead of the Pirates (27)...sixteen times they scored at least 5 runs without the benefit of a home run.
- + The Rays hit back-to-back-to-back homers in the 3rd inning on May 29 at OAK for the fourth time in franchise history.

CHANGES IN RAYS OFFENSE OVER 2017-18 SEASONS

	2017	2018	Change	Improvement
SO/PA Ratio	25.0%	22.4%	-2.6%	1st
Batting Avg.	.245	.258	+0.013	1st
On-Base Pct.	.317	.333	+0.016	1st
Avg. with RISP	.227	.251	+0.024	2nd
Stolen Bases	88	128	+40	3rd
Home Runs	228	150	-78	30th

HOT & COLD—The Rays were one of two teams in the majors with seven separate winning streaks of 5 games or more, joining the Astros (8), and it was their most since 2010 (7)...in comparison, they had one 5-game winning streak over the previous three seasons, coming in **Kevin Cash's** first month on the job...the Rays also endured two 8-game losing streaks and a 5-game losing streak, and it marked the first time in club history they went on three separate winning streaks of 5 games or more and three separate losing streaks of 5 games or more within the same season.

- + According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the Rays were the first team with an 8-game winning streak and an 8-game losing streak by the end of April since the 1985 Minnesota Twins, who won nine straight from April 11–20 and lost nine straight from April 21–30.
- + Following the All-Star break, the Rays didn't have a losing streak longer than 3 games.

CLOSE SHAVES—36.4 pct. of Rays games this season were decided by 1 run, and they went 28-31 (.475) in these games...the 59 1-run games were the most for a team since the 2016 Mariners (60) and were a single-season club record...the 31 1-run losses tied the Diamondbacks for most in the majors and were a club record, passing 2015 (30)...the Rays went 18-12 (.600) in 1-run games after June 19, compared to 10-19 (.344) before that.

MINOR MATTERS—All nine Rays affiliates finished the regular season at least 10 games over .500, and they combined for a 539-354 (.604) record... that total record is the best since MLB Advanced Media data is available (2005), and the only other organization to post a .600 winning pct. or better (2009 Giants, .603) went on to win the World Series in three of the next five seasons...the club's seven stateside affiliates went 444-307 (.591), the first time their domestic minor league affiliates finished No. 1 in the organizational standings, according to *Baseball America*.

- + A club-record six affiliates made the postseason, and Durham, Bowling Green and the DSL Rays1 won titles, the first time the Rays ever had three affiliates win it all...it was the third time the Rays had multiple full-season affiliates win league titles.