

Encarnacion homers again as Jays beat Tigers

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

TORONTO — Edwin Encarnacion hit his fourth homer in two days and extended his hitting streak to a major-league-best 25 games Sunday as the Toronto Blue Jays defeated the Detroit Tigers 9-2.

MAJOR LEAGUE ROUNDUP

Encarnacion, who hit three home runs and equaled the club record with nine RBIs on Saturday, went 2-for-3 and was hit by a pitch on Sunday. He hit his 30th of the season with two outs in the first.

Josh Donaldson, Kevin Pillar and Russell Martin also homered on Sunday for the Blue Jays, who completed a three-game sweep of the Tigers.

Blue Jays left-hander Mark Buehrle (14-6) allowed five hits, two walks and two runs (one earned) in six-plus innings to earn the win. Tigers right-hander Alfredo Simon (11-9) allowed six runs and four home runs among six hits in five innings to take the loss.

Nationals 7, Marlins 4

WASHINGTON — Leadoff man Jayson Werth had a homer, double, walk and three RBIs and Washington, despite another abbreviated start by Stephen Strasburg, battled back to beat Miami.

The Nationals won their fourth series in a row but remained 5 1/2 games back of the first-place Mets.

The Marlins jumped out to a 3-0 lead on a homer by Justin Bour in the first but the bullpen couldn't hold up after starter Brad Hand (4-4) allowed five runs in 4 2/3 innings and fell to 0-6 against the Nationals.

The winning pitcher was former starter Doug Fister (5-7), who came on in the fifth after Strasburg gave up seven

hits and four runs in four innings while throwing just 60 pitches.

Rays 3, Royals 2

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Kevin Kiermaier hit the go-ahead home run in the bottom of the sixth inning to lift Tampa Bay over Kansas City.

The Rays' bullpen combined for four shutout innings, with Xavier Cedeno (3-1) earning the win. Brad Boxberger pitched a perfect ninth inning for his 32nd save of the season.

Luke Hochevar (1-1) took the loss for the Royals, who failed to sweep the season series against the Rays.

Indians 9, Angels 2

CLEVELAND — Josh Tomlin pitched seven strong innings and Cleveland took advantage of a couple of gift hits that produced runs to complete a three-game sweep of Los Angeles.

The Indians have won five in a row while the Angels have lost eight of their last 10. The only bright spot for the Angels was center fielder Mike Trout, who came into the game hitting .194 in the month of August, but was 4-for-4.

In seven innings the right-hander Tomlin (3-1) gave up two runs on six hits, with eight strikeouts and no walks.

Rockies 5, Pirates 0

PITTSBURGH — Jorge De La Rosa pitched into the seventh inning for just his second win in his last 10 starts before being ejected and Ben Paulsen hit a two-run triple as Colorado beat Pittsburgh.

De La Rosa (8-6) allowed four hits in six-plus innings while striking out seven and walking one. The left-hander's only other win since July 11 came Aug. 7 against the Nationals at Washington. Relievers Scott Oberg,



DAN HAMILTON-USA TODAY SPORTS

Toronto Blue Jays designated hitter Edwin Encarnacion hits a three-run home run against the Detroit Tigers in the first inning at Rogers Centre on Sunday.

Christian Friedrich, Jairo Diaz and John Axford completed the four-hit shutout.

De La Rosa and manager Walt Weiss were ejected for arguing with home plate umpire Jeff Nelson as Weiss went to the mound to remove De La Rosa from the game in the seventh.

Brewers 4, Reds 1

MILWAUKEE — A strong performance by right-hander Wily Peralta and a solo home run by Ryan Braun led Milwaukee over Cincinnati.

Peralta (5-8) was coming off his worst outing of the season, a 2 2/3-inning effort last Tuesday in Cleveland, but he started out strong on Sunday, hitting the mid-90s with his fastball in the first inning. His offense gave him a slim lead to work with, going up 1-0 on Braun's 24th home run of the season.

Reds left-hander John Lamb (0-3) allowed five hits over his six innings of work. He allowed Milwaukee's first two runs and didn't walk a batter while striking out eight.

Padres 9, Phillies 4

PHILADELPHIA — San Diego finally solved Philadelphia for a win to avoid a season sweep.

The Padres, who came in 0-5 this season against the Phillies, got homers from Matt Kemp, Justin Upton and Yangervis Solarte, while right-hander James Shields threw seven innings of one-run ball and struck out eight.

The long balls by Kemp and Upton came early against right-hander Alec Asher, who was making his major league debut. Despite the loss, the Phillies are 18-5

2 in 25 series against the Padres since 2004.

Yankees 20, Braves 6

ATLANTA — Nathan Eovaldi, supported by three early home runs, extended his league-leading winning streak to nine games in New York's rout over Atlanta.

Jacoby Ellsbury, Chase Headley and Stephen Drew each went deep over a two-inning span to help the Yankees sweep the three-game series and send the Braves to their 12th loss in 13 games.

It marked the 12th time this season the Yankees have scored double-digit runs, and the second time this series. The 38 runs are the most scored by the Yankees in a three-game series this year.

Twins 7, Astros 5

MINNEAPOLIS — Ervin

Santana pitched seven solid innings, scattering six hits, allowing no runs while striking out 10 batters as Minnesota took the rubber game of a three-game series.

Santana had just one clean inning but was able to steer clear of trouble. Five of the six hits allowed by Santana were singles and he didn't walk a batter.

Santana became the first Twins starter to pitch at least six innings since Aug. 20, a span of eight games. Despite the recent rough patch by its starters, the win was Minnesota's eighth in its last 10 games.

Rangers 6, Orioles 0

ARLINGTON, Texas — Derek Holland allowed just three hits and struck out 11 in a complete-game shutout as Texas completed a three-game sweep of Baltimore.

Holland recorded his eighth career shutout, and he matched his career high for strikeouts.

Holland (2-1) struck out all nine Baltimore starters at least once and didn't walk a batter. It marked the first time in his career he struck out at least 10 without walking a hitter.

Delino DeShields and Elvis Andrus each had two hits and drove in a run.

White Sox 6, Mariners 5 (11 innings)

CHICAGO — Seattle was one out away from beating Chicago for the third consecutive game but threw it away in the ninth inning.

A throwing error by shortstop Brad Miller with two outs in the bottom of the ninth allowed the game-tying run to score and forced extra innings. The White Sox then won it in the 11th on a single by Tyler Saladino to earn a split in the four-game series.



ANDY MARLIN | USA TODAY SPORTS

Boston's Mookie Betts slides into third with an RBI triple in the seventh inning against the New York Mets on

Red Sox

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I was just throwing it hopefully to hit David on the run to get him to tag him."

Right-hander Tyler Clippard (2-0) struck out third baseman Pablo Sandoval to preserve the tie and set the stage for Cuddyer's redemption.

With one out in the bottom of the seventh, Wright walked against left-hander Robbie Ross (0-2). Second baseman Daniel Murphy beat out a potential double-play ball and stole second on the first pitch from right-hander Heath Hembree. It was just the second stolen base of the season for Murphy.

"I felt the key play was Dan stealing second," Mets manager Terry Collins said. "You've got to surprise teams once in a while to win games."

Murphy scored easily when Cuddyer singled sharply to left for his third hit in as many at-bats.

"It was nice to be able to come through," Cuddyer said.

Cuddyer reached base in all four plate appearances — he walked in the sixth — and scored in the first and sixth innings. He is batting .375 with three

three-hit games in 17 games since Aug. 10, when he came off the disabled list after missing three weeks with a sore left knee.

Cuddyer also delivered a takeout slide of Red Sox shortstop Xander Bogaerts to prevent a double play in the fourth.

"He's an outstanding player and a pro," Collins said. "He plays the game the way it's supposed to be played. Never see him not hustle. Never see him not give everything he's got."

Clippard threw a perfect eighth before right-hander Jeury's Familia earned his 35th save despite allowing two hits in the ninth. He struck out Betts with runners at the corners for the final out as the Mets (72-58) remained 5 1/2 games ahead of the Washington Nationals in the National League East.

Syndergaard laced an RBI single in the second. Second baseman Juan Uribe had a go-ahead two-run double in the sixth, when Recker added an RBI single two batters later.

Syndergaard allowed four runs on six hits and one walk while striking out three over 6 2/3 innings.

First baseman David Ortiz hit a go-ahead two-run homer in the sixth for the Red Sox (60-70), who

limited the Mets to 10 runs in the three-game series. New York scored 73 runs in a seven-game winning streak snapped by Boston on Friday.

"These guys played really good baseball for three days," interim Red Sox manager Torey Lovullo said.

The homer was the second of the weekend for Ortiz and the 494th of his career, which broke a tie with Lou Gehrig and Fred McGriff for 27th place all-time.

Ortiz was 4-for-8 against the Mets but still headed home impressed with New York's pitching.

"The Mets, with that pitching staff, man, they're not too far from walking into the money," Ortiz said.

Red Sox left-hander Wade Miley allowed four runs on nine hits and one walk while striking out six over six innings.

NOTES: Red Sox interim manager Torey Lovullo said RHP Jean Machi is the team's new closer. RHP Junichi Tazawa, who was injured beginning a double play Friday night, will return to eighth-inning duties. ... Red Sox LF Hanley Ramirez (right shoulder) missed his third straight game. He was working out at first base, his projected position next season, before the game.

Patriots

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glimmer of hope that a settlement could be within reach.

With emphasis on the phrase "could be," because predicting these kinds of things can be tricky. But my sense is that there is at least a chance that something can be worked out before Berman is forced to come out with a yes or no decision on the case.

"I would say it's 50-50 at this point," a person familiar with the inner workings of the case said. "There is a lot of uncertainty with which way Judge Berman might rule, and I think that is at least creating an opening for a settlement. I'm not saying there will be a settlement, but I'm saying there could be."

That kind of assessment was not the prevailing one earlier this month, when both sides seemed rooted to their positions. Brady's camp has been adamant that there should be neither a suspension nor an admission of guilt. The NFL wanted the four-game sanction to stand and Brady to acknowledge the findings of Ted Wells' report, which concluded that it was "more probable than not" that the footballs were purposely deflated before the game and that Brady was at least "generally aware" of the tampering.

Just a few weeks ago, the outcome seemed to be a fait accompli: Both sides were willing to have Berman make a ruling, and the loser would look to have the decision overturned in the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

Neither side has publicly said what it would take to reach an agreement, but the risks associated with not settling are coming into focus for both sides.

"There are pressure points for both sides," a person involved in the case said. "The timing of the judge's decision and the start of the season, plus the unpredictability of what a federal judge might rule, are creating pressure for everyone involved."

The NFL clearly is not happy with the negative publicity surrounding the case, especially as the season approaches without a resolution. Even Giants president and co-owner John Mara, who has supported Goodell's decision to



BRIAN SNYDER | REUTERS

Street vendor Julio Cortez (left) sells "Free Brady" T-shirts in Boston, recently. Lawyers for the National Football League and its players union are scheduled to meet in federal court today to discuss a potential settlement of litigation over New England Patriots star quarterback Tom Brady's Deflategate suspension.

uphold Brady's suspension, has acknowledged that he is "sick" of the attention on the case.

If no agreement is reached, it will be because both sides believe it is to their advantage to get a decision from Berman and proceed from there.

If Berman, who has been openly critical of the NFL in his questioning of league attorney Daniel Nash during two open court sessions in recent weeks, rules in favor of Brady, there is an immediate victory for the quarterback and NFLPA attorneys. His suspension likely would be overturned and he almost certainly would be eligible to play for the entire 2015 season, even if the league appeals.

If Berman rules for the league, Brady would file an appeal and seek an injunction that would allow him to play until the case is resolved. It is uncertain how long the appeals court would take to rule on the matter, but it's conceivable a ruling wouldn't come until after the season ends.

The downside of having Berman issue a ruling is that the controversy would continue through the appeals process. Neither side seems particularly interested in having that happen, as the intense scrutiny of the case has been emotionally draining. The prospect of additional court hearings would only prolong the turmoil.

The confluence of these factors, combined with the approaching deadlines of a Berman ruling and the start of the season, appears to have created at least the possibility of a middle ground.

The NFL, which remains

confident that case law is on its side, might be willing to have the suspension reduced, possibly by two games. But the league almost certainly will demand that the NFLPA agree to uphold Article 46 of the collective-bargaining agreement, which allows Goodell to impose discipline regarding matters of conduct detrimental to the league. The league will not accept an agreement that either challenges or overturns that power.

Brady reportedly was willing to accept some form of discipline, possibly for acknowledging his mistake in destroying the cellphone he had used from November 2014 through early March 2015. His preference is to pay a fine and not serve a suspension.

The NFL wants an acknowledgment of wrongdoing from Brady, but there could be a way to agree on a statement in which the quarterback acknowledges in a broader sense that mistakes were made and that he is the one who ultimately bears responsibility for the preparation of footballs used in the game. Brady is unwilling to say he or Patriots equipment staffers John Jastremski and Jim McNally actually tampered with the footballs. But a careful wording of his acceptance of some accountability could be enough for him to not admit guilt yet still accept a sanction that upholds the NFL's authority to impose such a penalty.

So maybe, just maybe, there's a chance to resolve the matter once and for all.

That day can't come soon enough. Not for Brady. Not for Goodell.

Not for the rest of us.