

Pats' Gronkowski leaves practice with injury

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski pulled up with a possible injury while running a route during Monday's joint practice with the Chicago Bears.

NFL NOTEBOOK

According to ESPN.com, Gronkowski took himself out after going for a pass from quarterback Tom Brady in 7-on-7 drills along the sideline. The severity of the injury was unknown.

Gronkowski, 27, walked to the sideline after the play and met with a trainer before heading to the lower practice field. After about 10 minutes there, he retreated to the locker room, ESPN reported.

The 6-foot-6, 265-pound Gronkowski, who had 72 catches for 1,176 yards and 11 touchdowns last season, takes a beating in the regular season, so he is likely to sit out the entire preseason in an effort to keep him fresh. He hasn't played in a pre-season game since 2012.

The Patriots and Bears will hold two more joint practices Tuesday and Wednesday ahead of their preseason game at Gillette Stadium on Thursday night.

Bucs sign Dotson to extension

Tampa Bay Buccaneers starting right tackle Demar Dotson received a three-year contract extension on Monday.

NFL Media's Ian Rapoport reported the deal for the 30-year-old Dotson is worth approximately \$6 million per season and runs through the 2019 season.

Signed as an undrafted free agent out of Southern Mississippi in 2009, Dotson started all 16 games during the 2013 and 2014 seasons before sustaining a torn MCL last summer. Dotson, who is 6-foot-9, 315 pounds, made three starts and played in just six contests in 2015. In seven seasons, he has played in 76 career games (52 starts).

Dotson's role is a pivotal one as the Buccaneers look to continue with the development of former top overall pick Jameis Winston.

49ers QB out for season

Quarterback Thad Lewis is out for the season with a torn ACL, San Francisco 49ers coach Chip Kelly said Monday.

Lewis, a college free agent out of Duke in 2010, was hurt on a 1-yard run in the third quarter of Saturday's pre-season opener against the Houston Texans.

The 49ers' No. 2 quarterback in the game, Lewis was 12 of 21 for a team-high 97 yards before being lifted for rookie Jeff Driskel.

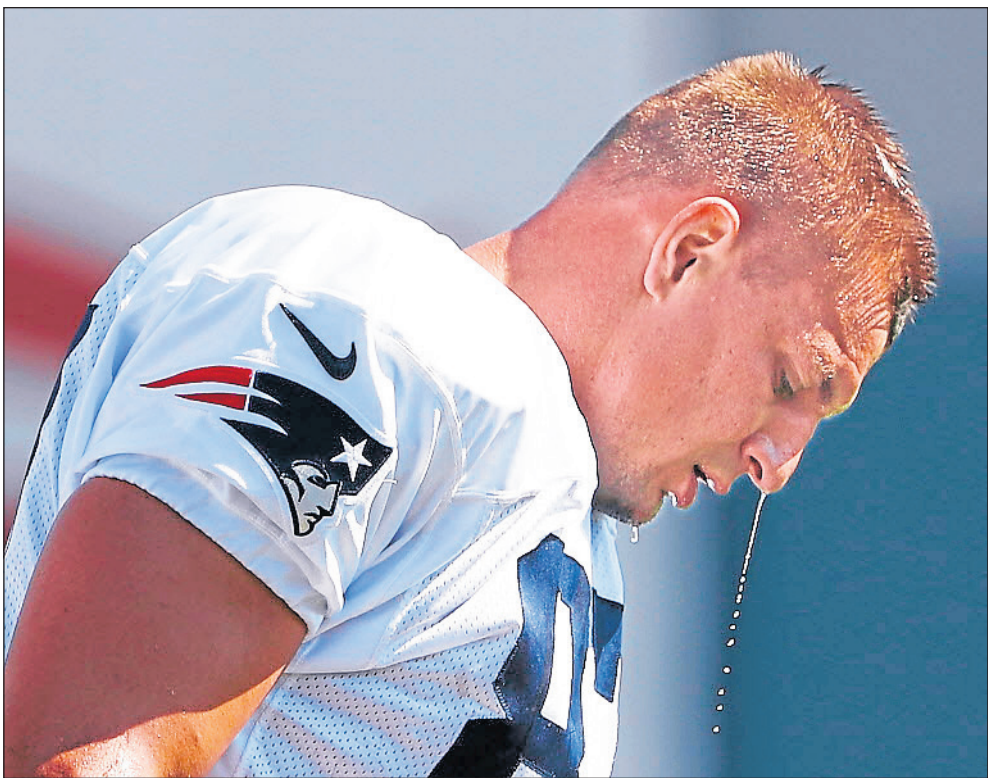
The 49ers' QB competition for the starting job pits Colin Kaepernick against Blaine Gabbert.

Bills sign Biermann

The Buffalo Bills signed veteran outside linebacker Kroy Biermann on Monday after IK Enemkpali tore his right ACL in Saturday night's preseason opener.

Biermann's deal is for one year, a source told ESPN's Adam Schefter. Enemkpali was waived/injured to make room for Biermann.

The 30-year-old Biermann, who worked out Monday morning and signed a



WINSLOW TOWNSON | USA TODAY SPORTS

Water drips from the face of New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski during training camp recently at Gillette Stadium.

contract in the afternoon, has played his entire career for the Atlanta Falcons, who made him a fifth-round pick in the 2008 draft.

The 6-foot-3, 255-pound Biermann has played in 114 career games (37 starts) and has totaled 333 tackles, 23.5 sacks, two interceptions, six passes defended, three forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries.

Lions sign Quarless despite suspension

The Detroit Lions signed free agent Andrew Quarless on Monday despite the tight end facing a two-game suspension for firing a gun in public.

Quarless, who played the previous six seasons with the Green Bay Packers (2010-15), was suspended under the league's personal-conduct policy as a result of the incident in Miami Beach on July 4, 2015. He was sentenced to one year of probation and given a \$1,000 fine after pleading no contest in November.

A fifth-round draft selection by the Packers in 2010 out of Penn State, Quarless recorded 89 receptions for 940 yards and six touchdowns in 60 games (27 starts). In eight postseason games (two starts), he totaled 10 receptions for 85 yards and one touchdown.

Broncos' Walker injured

Denver Broncos defensive end Vance Walker was carted off the field with a right leg injury on Monday.

Walker, who had just returned to practice from an ailing back, sustained an injury to his right leg during 7-on-7 drills and remained on the ground for several minutes as he was tended to by team trainers. The 29-year-old is expected to undergo an MRI exam to determine the severity of the injury.

Walker recorded 33 tackles and two sacks in 15 games last season for the Broncos. A seventh-round pick of the 2009 draft, Walker has collected 172 tackles

and 12 sacks in 104 career games with Atlanta, Oakland, Kansas City and Denver.

Billings out with torn meniscus

Cincinnati Bengals rookie defensive tackle Andrew Billings underwent knee surgery on Monday to repair a torn meniscus and could miss the entire season, according to multiple reports.

Selected in the fourth round of the 2016 draft, Billings was carted off the field during a joint practice with Minnesota on Wednesday. The 6-foot-1, 311-pound Billings was expected to provide depth as a run stopper behind Geno Atkins for the Bengals, who still have Domata Peko, Marcus Hardison, Pat Sims, DeShawn Williams and Brandon Thompson on the roster.

Browns' Gordon returns to practice

Cleveland Browns wide receiver Josh Gordon was activated from the non-football injury list Monday and returned to practice.

Gordon's participation in practice was his first since December 2014. The 25-year-old had been reinstated from a one-year suspension on July 25, but a quad injury kept him on the sideline for an additional two weeks.

Gordon has run afoul from the NFL due to multiple violations of the league's substance-abuse policy. He also will sit out the first four games of the upcoming season, although coach Hue Jackson told reporters that he has yet to decide if Gordon will play against Atlanta in Thursday's preseason contest.

Red Sox

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Kipnis and got Abraham Almonte to pop out to second on a 3-2 pitch to end the game.

"Our backs were to the wall, but (Kimbrel) did what he's been doing for so many years," Farrell said.

"We had a chance," Cleveland manager Terry Francona said. "We had a lot of deep at-bats, but Kimbrel throws 98. You can't hit that and his slider."

The contest was a makeup of a game that was postponed on April 7 due to inclement weather.

Boston has won four in a row while Cleveland's four-game winning streak came to a halt.

Boston's blasts came off Cleveland starter Josh Tomlin (11-6), who came into the game tied for the American League lead with 27 home runs allowed.

Trailing 2-1, the Red Sox started the sixth inning with a single to left field by Dustin Pedroia. Tomlin struck out Xander Bogaerts for the first out, but Ortiz hit Tomlin's first pitch deep into the seats in right field, a drive estimated at 427 feet, for his 27th home run. Ortiz is 3-for-17 in his career against Tomlin and all three hits are home runs.

"I left a cutter in a good spot to hit a home run, and that's what he did," Tomlin said.



DAVID RICHARD | USA TODAY SPORTS

Boston Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz (right) celebrates his two-run home run with center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr. in the sixth inning Monday against the Cleveland Indians at Progressive Field.

Tomlin retired the next hitter, Mookie Betts, on a fly ball to center for the second out. But Bradley worked the count to 3-2 then pounded a ball over the right-field wall for his 19th home run, giving Boston a 3-1 lead.

"When you make mistakes to guys who are that caliber of hitter, they are going to do some damage," said Tomlin, who gave up three runs on seven hits with three strikeouts and no walks in 7 2/3 innings.

"You've got to beat Tomlin because he's not going to beat himself. He doesn't walk anybody," Farrell said.

"Overall Tomlin was really good. And that's a good lineup that is swinging it well now," Francona said.

Rajai Davis gave Cleveland an early 1-0 lead in the fourth inning, when he belted

ed a 3-2 pitch from Pomeranz over the center-field wall for his 11th home run.

Trailing 3-1, Cleveland made it a one-run game in the eighth inning when Chris Gimenez doubled and scored on a two-out double down the right field line by Davis, cutting the Boston lead to 3-2.

Davis' home run halted a streak in which Pomeranz retired the first nine batters he faced. The 27-year-old left-hander was Cleveland's first-round pick and fifth overall in the 2010 June Draft.

In 2011, the Indians traded Pomeranz to Colorado as part of a trade that brought Ubaldo Jimenez to Cleveland.

On Monday, Pomeranz made his first career start in Cleveland, and it was a

memorable one.

"I was locating really well all day and that helped me get deep into the game," Pomeranz said. "That's the first time I've gotten into the eighth inning, which has been a goal."

Pomeranz gave up two runs on five hits with six strikeouts and two walks in 7 2/3 innings.

"He was in the zone and in command for most of the game," Farrell said. "That's the best stuff we've seen out of him all year."

NOTES: The Red Sox placed INF Hanley Ramirez on the bereavement list, placed RHP Steven Wright (right shoulder strain) on the disabled list and optioned LHP Roenis Elias to Triple-A Pawtucket. The Red Sox also recalled RHP Heath Hembree, INF Marco Hernandez and INF Deven Marrero from Pawtucket. ... Red Sox No. 9 hitters lead the majors in batting average (.289), on base percentage (.350), slugging percentage (.438), OPS (.788), runs, hits, doubles, triples and RBIs. Boston's most used No. 9 hitters and their batting averages: Bradley (.363), C Sandy Leon (.500), Hernandez (.355) and OF Andrew Benintendi (.381). ... Kipnis was given a previously scheduled day off Monday, although he did pinch hit in the ninth inning. ... Indians RHP Danny Salazar is expected to come off the disabled list and start Thursday's game against the White Sox.



ANTHONY GRUPPUSO | USA TODAY SPORTS

New York Yankees designated hitter Alex Rodriguez acknowledges the crowd before his last game as a Yankee Saturday against the Tampa Bay Rays at Yankee Stadium.

A-Rod not coming back this season

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

Alex Rodriguez will not be playing baseball for the rest of the season, his publicist confirmed on Monday.

"I want to put all this talk to rest about

MAJOR LEAGUES

Alex playing for any team this season," publicist Ron Berkowitz wrote in a statement. "It's not happening. Like he said Friday night, he is happy and he is going to take some time to relax and hang with his family and friends."

Rodriguez was released by the New York Yankees on Saturday, one day removed from playing his last game with the club at Yankee Stadium. The 41-year-old will move into a role as an adviser and instructor within the organization.

A three-time American League Most Valuable Player, Rodriguez's name had been linked to the Miami Marlins — perhaps due to convenience since he grew up in South Florida and still lives there.

Rodriguez has fallen off considerably since recording 33 homers and 86 RBIs in 2015, batting just .200 with nine blasts and 31 runs driven in this season.

He has 696 home runs, fourth on the career list behind Barry Bonds (762), Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714).

The 14-time All-Star has a .295 career batting average with 3,115 hits and his 2,086 RBIs are second to Aaron's 2,297.

A-Rod's career has been stained by the use of performance-enhancing substances. He missed the entire 2014 season after his acceptance of a 162-game suspension.

The Yankees are still re-

sponsible for \$27,103,825 remaining on his \$275 million, 10-year contract. He is owed \$7,103,825 of his \$20 million salary for the final 65 days of this season and \$20 million next year.

Cubs apologize for 'exit' song

The Chicago Cubs issued a public apology for a song played by an employee as left-hander Aroldis Chapman walked off the mound during Sunday night's game at Wrigley Field.

Chapman worked a scoreless ninth inning in a 6-4 loss to the St. Louis Cardinals and exited to Prodigy's "Smack My (expletive) Up," drawing plenty of backlash on social media. The Cubs said on Monday that the employee has been fired.

"We apologize for the irresponsible music selection during our game last night," Cubs president of baseball operations Crane Kenney said in a statement. "The selection of this track showed a lack of judgment and sensitivity to an important issue. We have terminated our relationship with the employee responsible for making the selection and will be implementing stronger controls to review and approve music before public broadcast during our games."

Acquired from the New York Yankees prior to the trade deadline, Chapman began the season by serving a 30-game suspension under baseball's domestic-violence policy.

The 28-year-old Cuban was involved in an incident in October, during which he allegedly choked his girlfriend and fired eight shots from his handgun into the air. While no charges were filed, the league conducted an inde-

Report

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a junior, and true freshman Manny Patterson.

"They made some good plays," said Harasymiak.

Junior corners Tayvon Hall and A.J. Dawson did not play because they are nursing injuries.

Goode was the team's 10th-leading tackler a year ago as he was in on 33 tackles including 28 solos. He also led the team in pass breakups with eight, five more than the next highest teammate. He had one interception.

Dawson was in on 24 tackles, and Hall was involved in 19.

"They made some good plays. Najee is growing into a leader for us. He has a lot of experience," said Harasymiak. "Manny is mature for a freshman."

Harasymiak said he is still trying to find three or four reliable safeties out of a pool of six.

Defensively, an area that needs to be addressed is

tackling, according to Harasymiak.

"We have to be better, especially in the open field," said Harasymiak. "That will come."

One thing his defense will have to eliminate during the season is big plays, he said.

That was a problem a year ago, but he pointed out that a lot of them occurred late in the game and resulted from the defense spending too much time on the field because the offense couldn't sustain drives.

UMaine gave up 10 touchdowns of 26 yards or more last season including six that covered at least 43 yards.

"We play an aggressive style of defense that creates a lot of one-on-ones so our guys are going to have to make plays," said Harasymiak, who was the defensive coordinator a year ago before taking over for 23-year head coach Jack Cosgrove, who is now a senior associate director of athletics.

Three key members of the team didn't play on Satur-



BDN FILE

Senior Dan Collins of the University of Maine throws a pass during an Aug. 8 practice in Orono. He is considered the front-runner to be named the starting quarterback while competing with junior Drew Belcher.

day: All-Colonial Athletic Association first-team defensive lineman Pat Richard, leading rusher Nigel Beckford and wide receiver Jordan Dunn.

Richard and Beckford

were coming off postseason surgeries, and Dunn has had a nagging leg injury.

Harasymiak expects all three to see some action in the final scrimmage on 2 p.m. Sunday.