

White Sox clobber Indians 11-0, but lose division

Written by Tom Withers

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CLEVELAND — Rookie Hector Santiago allowed just one hit in seven shutout innings and Chicago beat Cleveland 11-0 before the White Sox were eliminated in the AL Central race when Detroit won the division on Monday night.

Santiago (4-1), who began the season as Chicago's closer, struck out a season-high 10 and allowed only Shin-Soo Choo's two-out single in the third.

With just their third win in 13 games, the second-place White Sox briefly kept their playoff hopes alive. But about an hour after the game, Chicago, which collapsed down the stretch after being in first place for 63 straight days, saw its chances erased completely when the Tigers won 6-3 in Kansas City.

"It's always frustrating, but I told everyone we should walk out of here with our heads held high," White Sox catcher A.J. Pierzynski said. "Nobody thought we would do anything this year, but to be in it until October 1st and have a chance, we did everything we could. We don't have to look back and say we could have done this or we could have done that because at the end of the day, we gave everything we could and did everything we could possibly do.

"We were in the position we wanted to be in and it just didn't work out."

The White Sox scored four runs in the sixth off Corey Kluber (2-5), and added six in the ninth — four on Dayan Viciedo's first career grand slam to make it 11-0.

After lining up and slapping high-fives in the infield, the White Sox headed to their clubhouse aware that the Tigers were already leading the Royals by four runs.

There was nothing more Chicago could do. It was out of the White Sox's hands, and they ate their postgame dinners and watched helplessly on TVs in the clubhouse — several were tuned to the Chicago Bears' Monday night game against the Dallas Cowboys — as the Tigers wrapped up a second straight title.

A season of promise under first-year manager Robin Ventura had crumbled completely.

Santiago and Kluber were locked in a scoreless duel until the sixth, when the White Sox scored four runs on five hits — four coming with two outs.

Dewayne Wise bunted safely with one out, and stole second with two outs before Adam Dunn snapped an 0-for-18 slump by lining a base hit to center. Kluber then walked Paul Konerko before Alex Rios ripped an RBI double off the left-field wall, scoring Dunn to make it 2-0 and forcing a pitching change.

Pierzynski followed with a grounder up the middle off reliever Joe Smith that went off diving second baseman Jason Kipnis' glove and into center field as Konerko scored. Viciedo's single then scored Rios to give the White Sox a 4-0 lead and chance to breathe a little easier.

Santiago was never threatened by the Indians, who managed just three baserunners off the left-hander. Cleveland did not get a runner to second base off Santiago, who won for the first time in five starts.

Dunn added an RBI single in the ninth to make it 6-0.

The White Sox didn't seem to be feeling any pressure before the game. Players sat in front of their lockers, tapping away at the screens of their iPads or watching TV as if it was June 1 and not Oct. 1 with their season hanging by a thread.

Chicago's players, who had spent 117 total days in first place, seemed resigned to their fate.

"If it does become official, it's a huge disappointment," said starter Jake Peavy, who is scheduled to start Tuesday's game. "We feel like we let one slip away. It's extremely frustrating the way things have played out."

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It was a monumental collapse for the White Sox, who led the division by three games on Sept. 17. Since then, they're 4-10 and now have to hope the Royals can somehow sweep three straight from the Tigers.

As for the Indians, they dropped to 2-2 under interim manager Sandy Alomar Jr., who hopes to become Cleveland's permanent manager.

"It'd be great. It'd be awesome," Alomar said before the game. "I played here many years. I'm very proud of this organization. They have treated me great. They brought me back. If it's the time, it's their choice. If it's the time, it's time. If not, there will be some other time."

Alomar took over last week when the Indians fired Manny Acta with six games left. Alomar, who served Acta's bench coach this season, will likely interview with the Indians by the end of the week. He and former Boston Red Sox manager Terry Francona are the only candidates confirmed so far by the club, which has tentatively set up a meeting with Francona on Friday.

NOTES: Pierzynski has 77 RBIs, matching a career-high. ... With his performance, Santiago helped Chicago's set a club record for strikeouts in a season. The White Sox have fanned 1,225 batters, five more than in 2011. ... The roles were reversed in 2005, when the White Sox came in and swept three from the Indians, denying them a chance to win the AL wild card. The series ended with then-Chicago manager Ozzie Guillen putting his hands around his throat and giving Cleveland fans the choke sign. Alomar was asked if he would repeat the gesture. "I respect Ozzie," Alomar said, fighting back a smile. "But I'm not going to do that. It has nothing to do with choking or an organizational rivalry or anything like that. We just play the game, respect the game and go out there and play baseball." ... Dunn has 220 strikeouts, three away from the major league record set by Mark Reynolds with Arizona in 2009.

AL Capsules

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Miguel Cabrera had four hits, including a homer during a five-run sixth inning, and the Detroit Tigers held off the Kansas City Royals 6-3 Monday night to clinch the AL Central title.

Gerald Laird added a bases-loaded double, Rick Porcello (10-12) pitched shutout ball into the sixth inning and Jhonny Peralta went deep off Bruce Chen (11-14) to help Detroit reach the postseason in consecutive years for the first time since 1934-35.

After hanging over the dugout railing the entire ninth inning, the Tigers streamed onto the field and behind the pitchers' mound to celebrate their accomplishment the moment Jose Valverde got Alcides Escobar to ground out to shortstop with a runner on second for his 35th save in 40 chances.

The Tigers (87-73) will have the worst record among AL division champions, which means they'll open the playoffs Saturday at home against the division winner with the second-best mark.

Cabrera, making a run at baseball's first Triple Crown since 1967, broke a tie with Texas slugger Josh Hamilton for the major league lead in homers with his 44th, a solo shot to right.

Prince Fielder also had four hits.

ATHLETICS 4, RANGERS 3

OAKLAND, Calif. — Coco Crisp's latest big hit helped put Oakland back in the playoffs for the first time in six years, and the Athletics beat first-place Texas to remain in contention for a division crown.

Crisp had a go-ahead double in the fifth inning as the A's (92-68) pulled within one game of Texas (93-67) in the AL West with two to go and moved into a tie with Baltimore for the

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American League's top wild card.

Oakland's victory eliminated the Angels and Rays from postseason contention.

Pinch-hitter Brandon Moss delivered a sacrifice fly for insurance and Josh Reddick added an RBI single for the resurgent A's, who must sweep this season-ending series against the two-time reigning AL champions to capture the West title.

Michael Young and Mike Napoli homered against Jarrod Parker (13-8), who is 3-0 against the Rangers this year.

Grant Balfour struck out the side for his 23rd save, giving the young A's their fourth straight victory and sixth in seven games.

Martin Perez (1-4), facing the A's for the third time in his six major league starts, lasted four-plus innings.

YANKEES 10, RED SOX 2

NEW YORK — Robinson Cano, Curtis Granderson, Russell Martin and Mark Teixeira homered in a nine-run second inning, and New York routed Boston to open a one-game lead over Baltimore in the AL East with two games to play.

Baltimore lost at Tampa Bay and dropped into second place, prompting cheers from the Yankee Stadium crowd when the final score was posted before the ninth inning. The Yankees, who clinched their 17th playoff berth in 18 years on Sunday, would ensure their 13th division title in 17 years by sweeping the three-game series against the Red Sox.

New York tied its record for home runs in an inning, achieving the feat for the third time. The offense backed CC Sabathia (15-6), who allowed two runs and four hits in eight innings with seven strikeouts.

Alex Rodriguez hit a sacrifice fly to end a streak of 11 games without an RBI. He tied Stan Musial for fifth place on the career list at 1,950.

Boston, starting what may be its final series under first-year manager Bobby Valentine, has lost six in a row and 10 of 11, reaching 91 defeats for the first time since dropping 100 games in 1965. The Red Sox started just two regular position players, Cody Ross and Jarrod Saltalamacchia.

Clay Buchholz (11-8) was roughed up for a career-high eight runs and six hits — three of them homers — in 1 2-3 innings.

RAYS 5, ORIOLES 3

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Alex Cobb allowed two hits over seven innings, helping Tampa Bay keep its slim playoff hopes alive with a victory over Baltimore.

Ben Zobrist hit his 20th homer and Chris Gimenez had a two-run double off Wei-Yin Chen (12-11) as the Rays pulled away from a 1-all tie in the seventh. Cobb (11-9) yielded a fourth-inning single to J.J. Hardy and a solo homer to Matt Wieters that tied it in the seventh. The Rays won for the 11th time in 12 games, a stretch that's kept them in contention for the second AL wild card. They began the night trailing Oakland by three games and must sweep the Orioles and hope the A's drop three straight to Texas.

Baltimore already is assured of being in the playoffs for the first time in 15 years.

Chris Davis homered for the fifth straight game for the Orioles, a two-run shot off Kyle Farnsworth that trimmed Baltimore's deficit to 5-3 in the ninth.

Fernando Rodney worked out of a jam to earn his 47th save in 49 opportunities.

The Orioles arrived in St. Petersburg for the season-ending series later than expected Sunday night after their plane had to divert to Jacksonville because of a fire in the galley.

ANGELS 8, MARINERS 4

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SEATTLE — Mike Trout had four hits and drove in three runs against Seattle, but it wasn't enough to keep Los Angeles in the playoff chase.

The Angels, with a high payroll and high expectations when the season started, were eliminated from the wild-card race when Oakland beat Texas.

C.J. Wilson (13-10) went 6 1-3 innings for the victory. He allowed six hits and two runs, striking out seven and walking five.

Felix Hernandez (13-9) gave up a season-high 12 hits and seven runs in 5 1-3 innings. He went 0-4 with a 6.62 ERA after Aug. 27.

Trout was a home run shy of the cycle and raised his batting average to .325, four points behind Detroit slugger Miguel Cabrera for the AL lead.

BLUE JAYS 6, TWINS 5, 10 INNINGS

TORONTO — Anthony Gose singled home the winning run in the 10th inning and Toronto rallied to beat Minnesota.

Adam Lind went 4 for 4 and Brandon Lyon (4-0) worked out of a bases-loaded jam to earn the win in front of a season-low crowd of 12,359.

Adeiny Hechavarria hit a one-out single off Brian Duensing (4-12) and moved to second on a wild pitch.

Toronto tied it in the ninth when Yan Gomes hit a two-out homer, snapping Glen Perkins' streak of 12 straight successful save conversions.

Trevor Plouffe homered and had three RBIs for the Twins.

Three-time AL batting champion Joe Mauer went 1 for 5, dropping his average to .322, seven points behind Miguel Cabrera.

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