



MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL WEEKLY NOTES

April 30, 2026





EARLY WOES, LATE RALLIES

Major League relievers have combined for a 4.25 ERA this season, which is on pace to be the ninth-highest ERA by relievers in a single season in the Divisional Era (since 1969), while it is the 11th-highest in a single season since 1969 prior to May. The Texas Rangers have an MLB-best 2.82 ERA by their bullpen, while the San Francisco Giants pace the National League with a 3.03 ERA among their relievers. It is the 12th time in Senators/Rangers' history that the club enters May with a bullpen ERA under 3.00, also achieving the feat in 2012 (1.98); 1998 (2.99); 1993 (2.31); 1991 (2.01); 1989 (1.95); 1984 (2.28); 1983 (2.28); 1979 (2.94); 1975 (2.40); 1971 (2.89) and 1969 (2.92).

The Houston Astros' bullpen enters play on Thursday with an MLB-worst 6.27 ERA, while the St. Louis Cardinals' 5.20 ERA from relievers is the highest mark in the National League. American League bullpens own each of the four highest bullpen ERAs, with Houston followed by the Los Angeles Angels (5.66); Kansas City Royals (5.38); and Minnesota Twins (5.30). Five National League bullpens are within the seven-lowest bullpen ERAs across the Majors, with the Giants followed by the Atlanta Braves (3.08); Cincinnati Reds (3.38); Pittsburgh Pirates (3.52); and Miami Marlins (3.58).

Closers have converted 239 of the 385 save opportunities this year, with the 62.1% successful save conversion marking the sixth-lowest in a season before May 1st in the last 50 seasons. The mark is only higher than 1995 (59.3%); 1987 (61.0%); 1994 (61.5%); 1986 (61.5%); and 1980 (61.5%). Mason Miller of the San Diego Padres has converted each of his first 10 save opportunities of the season, marking the fourth consecutive year in which at least one closer has registered 10-or-more saves before May. Of the eight pitchers to register 10 saves prior to May 1st since 2022, Miller is the third Padres reliever (fourth occurrence), joining Josh Hader (10 SV in 2023) and Robert Suarez (2x: 12 SV in 2024 & 2025).

Of the 4,109 runs scored across Major League Baseball through Wednesday's games, 1,418 (34.5%) have been scored in the seventh inning-or-later, including 982 (23.9%) in the eighth inning-or-later, and 495 (12.0%) runs in the ninth inning-or-later. Per Elias, the 23.9% of runs scored in the eighth inning-or-later is on pace to be the highest percentage in Major League history. Since 1900, 1943 is the only other season with a percentage above 23%, was 1943, when 23.1% of all runs scored came in the eighth inning-or-later.

Note: if all 11 games are completed on Thursday (457 G entering Thursday), the 468 games played before May 1st would be the most all-time, surpassing the 458 games played in 2025.

2026 BULLPEN ERA	
TEAM	BULLPEN ERA
Texas Rangers	2.82
San Francisco Giants	3.03
Atlanta Braves	3.08
Seattle Mariners	3.31
Cincinnati Reds	3.38
Pittsburgh Pirates	3.52
Miami Marlins	3.58
Boston Red Sox	3.67
Colorado Rockies	3.76
Chicago Cubs	3.77
New York Yankees	3.79
Los Angeles Dodgers	3.88
Milwaukee Brewers	3.94
New York Mets	4.01
Toronto Blue Jays	4.10
Athletics	4.11
Baltimore Orioles	4.14
San Diego Padres	4.15
Philadelphia Phillies	4.20
Cleveland Guardians	4.34
Detroit Tigers	4.51
Chicago White Sox	4.88
Arizona Diamondbacks	4.93
Tampa Bay Rays	4.96
Washington Nationals	5.00
St. Louis Cardinals	5.20
Minnesota Twins	5.30
Kansas City Royals	5.38
Los Angeles Angels	5.66
Houston Astros	6.27



UNBLEMISHED

Entering play on Thursday, 11 starting pitchers have begun the 2026 season with an unbeaten record through at least five starts. The group includes Michael Soroka and Eduardo Rodriguez of the Arizona Diamondbacks; Edward Cabrera of the Chicago Cubs; Tyler Glasnow and Emmet Sheehan of the Los Angeles Dodgers; Foster Griffin of the Washington Nationals; Parker Messick of the Cleveland Guardians; Randy Vásquez of the San Diego Padres; Will Warren of the New York Yankees; Jack Kochanowicz of the Los Angeles Angels; and Max Meyer of the Miami Marlins.

It is the ninth time in Diamondbacks' history that multiple pitchers have not taken a loss across their first five starts of the year, with the pair seeking to become the third set of D-backs pitchers to remain unbeaten through their first six starts of a season, joining Brian Anderson/Randy Johnson in 2000 and Patrick Corbin/Robbie Ray in 2018. Since 2019, Glasnow and Sheehan are the 24th and 25th Dodgers pitchers to not be handed a loss across their first five starts of the season. The Dodgers had more than two occurrences of a pitcher not taking a loss across his first five starts of the season in 2020 (3 SP), 2021 (6 SP), 2022 (6 SP) and 2025 (3 SP). Prior to being tagged with the loss on Tuesday night, Angels starter José Soriano was 5-0 through six starts, marking the 15th time in franchise history that multiple pitchers went undefeated through their first five starts of a season.

Below is a look at the complete list of starters who are undefeated through their first five starts of 2026:

2026 UNBEATEN MAJOR LEAGUE STARTERS (min. 5 Games Started)										
PLAYER	W-L	GS	IP	H	R (ER)	BB	SO	ERA	AVG	NEXT SCHEDULED START
Michael Soroka, AZ	4-0	5	27.2	25	8 (8)	7	34	2.60	.240	Today @ MIL
Edward Cabrera, CHC	3-0	6	35.1	30	14 (12)	12	29	3.06	.234	TBD
Tyler Glasnow, LAD	3-0	6	38.2	19	11 (11)	13	47	2.56	.146	TBD
Foster Griffin, WSH	3-0	6	33.2	26	10 (10)	10	30	2.67	.210	Saturday vs. MIL
Parker Messick, CLE	3-0	6	36.1	22	7 (7)	10	38	1.73	.177	Saturday @ ATH
Randy Vásquez, SD	3-0	6	33.2	28	11 (11)	11	34	2.94	.228	Sunday vs. CWS
Will Warren, NYY	3-0	6	31.1	29	13 (9)	7	37	2.59	.240	Friday vs. BAL
Jack Kochanowicz, LAA	2-0	6	35.0	24	14 (12)	18	24	3.09	.189	Sunday vs. NYM
Eduardo Rodriguez, AZ	2-0	6	32.2	30	12 (11)	16	22	3.03	.236	TBD
Emmet Sheehan, LAD	2-0	5	26.1	24	14 (14)	9	28	4.78	.242	Friday @ STL
Max Meyer, MIA	1-0	6	30.0	24	12 (11)	12	33	3.30	.207	Saturday vs. PHI



2026 INTERLEAGUE TRACKER

League	2026 Record	Batting Average	ERA
American League	65-90	.236 (1,222-for-5,177)	4.38
National League	90-65	.248 (1,286-for-5,179)	4.03

In 2025, American League teams defeated National League teams 367 times in an MLB-record 720 Interleague games (previous record: 690 G in 2023 and 2024).
It was the third year of MLB's balanced schedule.



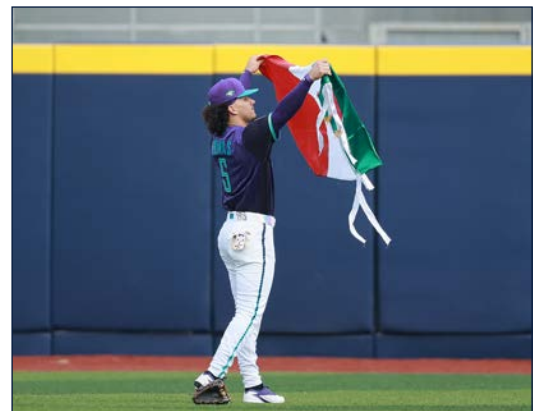
DEVELOPS

DEVELOPS ON THE DIAMOND

WELCOME TO THE SHOW: Travis Bazzana, the number one overall pick in the 2024 MLB Draft, made his Major League debut with the Cleveland Guardians on Tuesday against the Rays at Progressive Field. Bazzana earned the call to the Majors following a 24 game stint with the Columbus Clippers, the Guardians Triple-A affiliate. Across his 24 games, the lefty-batter hit .287 with two homers, 10 RBI, 11 doubles, two triples, 21 walks and eight stolen bases. The 2018 International College Showcase alumni, who already made history as the first overall pick in MLB history to come from Australia, entered his name into the Guardians' history books in his debut game. With the tying run on second in the bottom of the ninth, the Hornsby, Australia native was issued an intentional walk after working the count to 2-0. With the walk, the Oregon State alumni became just the second player in Guardians history to be intentionally walked in a debut game.



HOME SWEET HOME: The Mexico City Series presented by T-Mobile between the Arizona Diamondbacks and San Diego Padres was something of a homecoming for Breakthrough Series alumni and Diamondbacks outfielder Alek Thomas. Thomas, who was a member of Team Mexico during the 2023 and 2026 World Baseball Classics, took the field in Mexico on Saturday and Sunday at Estadio Alfredo Harp Helú. In the first game, Thomas capped off a four-run inning for the Diamondbacks with a loud two-run homer, scoring Jose Fernandez. In the second game, the centerfielder tallied two hits and scored two runs in Arizona's late comeback win. Thomas said, "It's an honor to play here in Mexico City, it's definitely really special to me and my family."



JUST HOW HE DRUW IT UP: On Wednesday, DREAM Series and Hank Aaron Invitational alumni Druw Jones made history with the Amarillo Sod Poodles, the Arizona Diamondbacks Double-A affiliate. In their matchup against the Midland RockHounds, after grounding out to leadoff the game, Jones tripled in the third inning, singled in the fifth, doubled in the sixth and hit his first homer of the season in the ninth, marking the first cycle in Amarillo history (see Jones hit for the cycle [here](#)).



BRONX TALE: Hank Aaron Invitational alumni George Lombard Jr. and Puerto Rico Nike RBI alumni Elmer Rodríguez moved up in the New York Yankees organization this week. Lombard got the call up to Triple-A on Tuesday after slashing .312/.400/.571 with four homers, 10 RBI, eight doubles, 18 runs, 12 walks and four stolen bases across 20 games with the Double-A Somerset Patriots. Rodríguez made his Major League debut on Wednesday, starting on the mound against the Texas Rangers in Arlington. The Puerto Rican native tossed 4.0 innings, allowing two runs on four hits with three strikeouts.

MEXICO CITY PLAY BALL: On Saturday, current and former Padres and Diamondbacks players, alongside members of the Commissioner's Ambassador Program held a PLAY BALL event at Estadio Alfredo Harp Helú in support of the John Langdon Down Foundation. Infielder Jose Fernandez and relief pitcher Juan Morillo represented the Diamondbacks at the event, while former players Jake Peavy and Mark Loretta represented the Padres. Also in attendance, Scott Kazmir, Jed Lowrie, Jason Kendall and Jeremy Guthrie from the Commissioner's Ambassador Program, along with MLB Network analyst Yonder Alonso. Following the on-field action, MLB Together presented the foundation with a \$15,000 donation and the participants left with a bat and ball set, MLB Together goodie bag and hat from the Clubs.





GOLDEN TICKET SEASON

On March 27th, Texas Tech pitcher NiJaree Canady received the first 'Golden Ticket' for the 2026 AUSL College Draft. Delivered by softball legends, AUSL ambassadors or league leadership, these Golden Tickets are presented to college softball players to signify they have been drafted to AUSL. Since Canady received the first Golden Ticket, 16 more have been handed out to the top collegiate softball players in front of their teammates, coaches and family members. The AUSL College Draft is set to take place on Monday, May 4th at 7:00 p.m. ET on ESPN2. Not only do the Golden Tickets recognize the future of professional softball, they are given out in style and celebration. Click the links below the chart to see the best in the world find out they are going to the pros. Recipients of Golden Tickets so far include:



2026 AUSL GOLDEN TICKET RECIPIENTS		
Player	College	Position
NiJaree Canady	Texas Tech University	Pitcher
Reese Atwood	University of Texas	Catcher
Leighann Goode	University of Texas	Infielder
Sydney Stewart	University of Arizona	Catcher
Karlyn Pickens	University of Tennessee	Pitcher
Dakota Kennedy	University of Arkansas	Outfielder
Kenzie Brown	Arizona State University	Pitcher
Taryn Kern	University of Stanford	Infielder
Maya Johnson	Belmont University	Pitcher
Jocelyn Erickson	University of Florida	Catcher
Kenleigh Cahalan	University of Florida	Infielder
Jordan Woolery	UCLA	Infielder
Megan Grant	UCLA	Utility
Taylor Tinsley	UCLA	Pitcher
Amari Harper	University of Oregon	Utility
Ailana Agbayani	University of Oklahoma	Infielder
Peja Goold	Mississippi State University	Pitcher

- [Patrick Mahomes joins Kim Ng in giving first Golden Ticket to NiJaree Canady](#)
- [Sabrina Ionescu announces Amari Harper's Golden Ticket](#)
- [Natasha Watley and Jen Schroeder deliver Golden Tickets to three UCLA players](#)
- [Holly Rowe surprises Kenzie Brown with a Golden Ticket](#)
- [Karlyn Pickens receives her Golden Ticket from Jennie Finch](#)

NEW SEASON, NEW TEAMS

The inaugural AUSL season, which ended with the Talons capturing the league championship and Bandits infielder Erin Coffel taking home league MVP honors, exceeded all expectations. The league sold out 24 games, merchandise sales topped \$1 million, the Championship Series averaged 230,000 viewers on ESPN, and the league received over 237 million social media impressions and 450,000 new followers gained. In October, AUSL and ESPN inked a multi-year deal, solidifying ESPN, which will carry 50 exclusive games as well as the best-of-three Championship Series, as the home of the league.

Building on the immense success of the AUSL's inaugural season, the league wasted no time upgrading. New in the 2026 season: home stadiums and two new teams. Beginning on June 9th, the Oklahoma City Spark and Portland Cascade will join the existing Carolina Blaze, Chicago Bandits, Texas Volts and Utah Talons for the AUSL's first six-team season. The Blaze will call Smith Family Stadium in Durham, North Carolina home; while the Chicago bandits will play at The Stadium at the Parkway Bank Sports Complex in Rosemont, Illinois; The Spark will host games at Tom Heath Field at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; the Cascade will play at Hillsboro Ballpark in Hillsboro, Oregon; the Volts will play at Dell Diamond in Round Rock, Texas; and the Talons will play home games at Dumke Family Stadium at University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah.

A number of AUSL players have thrown out first pitches at MLB games in the past weeks, with Sydney Sherill (5/5 @ PHI), Ana Gold (5/6 @ NYY) and Sharlize Palacios (5/7 @ SD) still to come. The AUSL and MLB will host a media day on Friday, May 8th at MLB's headquarters in New York.



- [Bri Ellis at Daikin Park](#)
- [Jayda Coleman at American Family Field](#)
- [Mary Iakopo at Rate Field](#)
- [Alyssa Brito at Target Field](#)
- [Payton Gottshall at Progressive Field](#)



WELCOME TO THE SHOW

Since April 23rd, 10 players have made their Major League debut, including seven pitchers and three position players.

There have now been 60 players to make their Major League debut this season, including 37 pitchers and 23 position players.

- 23-year-old Travis Bazzana, the Cleveland Guardians top prospect and 16th overall MLB prospect *per MLB Pipeline*, made his debut on Tuesday against the Tampa Bay Rays at Progressive Field. In his debut game, the top Australia native reached base twice on two walks, one of which being an intentional walk in the ninth inning. With two outs and the tying run on second, Tampa Bay elected to intentionally walk the debuting Bazzana, making his one of two in Guardians franchise history to be issued a free pass in their debut game.
- 22-year-old JR Ritchie, the Atlanta Braves second-best prospect and 79th overall MLB prospect *per MLB Pipeline*, toed the rubber for this Major League debut on Thursday against the Nationals at Nationals Park. In his debut outing, the right-hander entered the history books, becoming the first hurler in franchise history to throw 7.0-or-more innings, strike out seven-or-more, walk two-or-less and earn the win in a debut outing with the Club.
- 22-year-old Elmer Rodriguez, the New York Yankees third-best prospect *per MLB Pipeline*, toed the rubber for his Major League debut on Wednesday against the Texas Rangers at Globe Life Field. The right hander faced 20 batters across his 4.0 innings of work, giving up two runs on four hits with three strikeouts. The Trujillo Alto native became just the third Puerto Rican-born pitcher to debut for the Yankees, and the first since Juan Padilla made his Major League debut in 2004.

Overall, the Chicago White Sox pace the Majors with either players making their debut followed by the Boston Red Sox with five. The teams with four players making their debut include the Cleveland Guardians, Milwaukee Brewers and Toronto Blue Jays, followed by the Minnesota Twins, Philadelphia Phillies and Texas Rangers with three players making their debut. The Baltimore Orioles, Detroit Tigers, Houston Astros, Los Angeles Angels, Pittsburgh Pirates and St. Louis Cardinals have seen two players make their Major League debut while the Arizona Diamondbacks, Atlanta Braves, Chicago Cubs, Cincinnati Reds, Colorado Rockies, Los Angeles Dodgers, Miami Marlins, New York Mets, New York Yankees, San Diego Padres, San Francisco Giants, Seattle Mariners, Tampa Bay Rays and Washington Nationals have all seen one player make their debut. The Athletics and Kansas City Royals remain the two Clubs yet to have a player make their Major League debut this season.

MLB Debuts, April 23rd-April 29th

PLAYER	CLUB	POSITION	DEBUT DATE
Peyton Gray	Texas Rangers	RHP	April 23 rd
JR Ritchie	Atlanta Braves	RHP	April 23 rd
Riley Cornelio	Washington Nationals	RHP	April 24 th
Tyler Davis	Chicago White Sox	RHP	April 25 th
Yohendrick Pinango	Toronto Blue Jays	LF	April 26 th
Sung-Mun Song	San Diego Padres	3B/2B	April 26 th
Alex Hoppe	Seattle Mariners	RHP	April 27 th
Travis Bazzana	Cleveland Guardians	2B	April 28 th
Brian Fitzpatrick	Milwaukee Brewers	LHP	April 29 th
Elmer Rodriguez	New York Yankees	RHP	April 29 th



ABS OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

MLB introduced the Automated Ball-Strike (ABS) Challenge System powered by T-Mobile beginning with the 2026 season. The system will rely on the same Hawk-Eye tracking technology that fuels MLB's Statcast data. *What to know about the challenge system:*

- Only batters and pitchers/catchers may initiate a challenge. Managers, coaches and other players may not be involved.
- Each team starts the game with two challenges. Teams will lose the ability to challenge after they do so incorrectly twice. Teams will start each extra inning with a challenge regardless of whether they have already exhausted their challenges in the first nine innings.
- The ABS zone is set as follows: The width is 17 inches, identical to home plate. The top of the zone is set at 53.5% of a player's measured height without cleats. The bottom is set at 27% of the player's measured height. The strike zone is captured as the ball passes through the middle of the plate, not the front.
- In MLB, challenges will not be permitted when a position player is pitching.

SEASON DATA

OVERALL
53%
OVERTURNS

1,882 CHALLENGES
1,006 OVERTURNED
876 CONFIRMED

BATTERS
46%
OVERTURNS

870 CHALLENGES
399 OVERTURNED
371 CONFIRMED

FIELDERS
60%
OVERTURNS

1,012 CHALLENGES
607 OVERTURNED
405 CONFIRMED

2026 ABS CHALLENGE TOTALS

CLUB	CHALLENGES (BATTER)		CHALLENGES (FIELDER)		CHALLENGES (TOTAL)	
	Challenges	W-L	Challenges	W-L	Total Results (Batting & Fielding)	Win %
Arizona Diamondbacks	19	10-9	29	21-8	48 (31 overturned, 17 confirmed)	64.6%
Kansas City Royals	25	16-9	37	22-15	62 (38 overturned, 24 confirmed)	61.3%
San Diego Padres	21	11-10	41	27-14	62 (38 overturned, 24 confirmed)	61.3%
St. Louis Cardinals	22	12-10	34	22-12	56 (34 overturned, 22 confirmed)	60.7%
Cincinnati Reds	28	15-13	20	14-6	48 (29 overturned, 19 confirmed)	60.4%
Detroit Tigers	36	16-20	21	18-3	57 (34 overturned, 23 confirmed)	59.6%
Chicago Cubs	27	12-15	34	24-10	61 (36 overturned, 25 confirmed)	59.0%
Seattle Mariners	33	16-17	37	25-12	70 (41 overturned, 29 confirmed)	58.6%
New York Mets	28	14-14	27	18-9	55 (32 overturned, 23 confirmed)	58.2%
Los Angeles Dodgers	21	9-12	38	24-14	59 (33 overturned, 26 confirmed)	55.9%
Athletics	30	18-12	40	21-19	70 (39 overturned, 31 confirmed)	55.7%
Philadelphia Phillies	27	13-14	24	15-9	51 (28 overturned, 23 confirmed)	54.9%
Los Angeles Angels	39	16-23	38	26-12	77 (42 overturned, 35 confirmed)	54.5%
Toronto Blue Jays	35	17-18	31	19-12	66 (36 overturned, 30 confirmed)	54.5%
Texas Rangers	24	13-11	22	12-10	46 (25 overturned, 21 confirmed)	54.3%
Colorado Rockies	36	14-22	47	31-16	83 (45 overturned, 38 confirmed)	54.2%
Tampa Bay Rays	26	12-14	41	24-17	67 (36 overturned, 31 confirmed)	53.7%
Minnesota Twins	46	20-26	42	27-15	88 (47 overturned, 41 confirmed)	53.4%
Miami Marlins	22	7-15	59	36-23	81 (43 overturned, 38 confirmed)	53.1%
Milwaukee Brewers	24	8-16	42	26-16	66 (34 overturned, 32 confirmed)	51.5%
Houston Astros	29	15-14	36	18-18	65 (33 overturned, 32 confirmed)	50.8%
New York Yankees	43	18-25	32	20-12	75 (38 overturned, 37 confirmed)	50.7%
Boston Red Sox	20	10-10	16	8-8	36 (18 overturned, 18 confirmed)	50.0%
Pittsburgh Pirates	31	14-17	28	15-13	59 (29 overturned, 30 confirmed)	49.2%
Baltimore Orioles	34	16-18	21	11-10	55 (27 overturned, 28 confirmed)	49.1%
Atlanta Braves	35	14-21	35	19-16	70 (33 overturned, 37 confirmed)	47.1%
Chicago White Sox	29	14-15	51	22-29	80 (36 overturned, 44 confirmed)	45.0%
San Francisco Giants	26	11-15	29	13-16	55 (24 overturned, 31 confirmed)	43.6%
Cleveland Guardians	31	11-20	29	15-14	60 (26 overturned, 34 confirmed)	43.3%
Washington Nationals	23	7-16	31	14-17	54 (21 overturned, 33 confirmed)	38.9%



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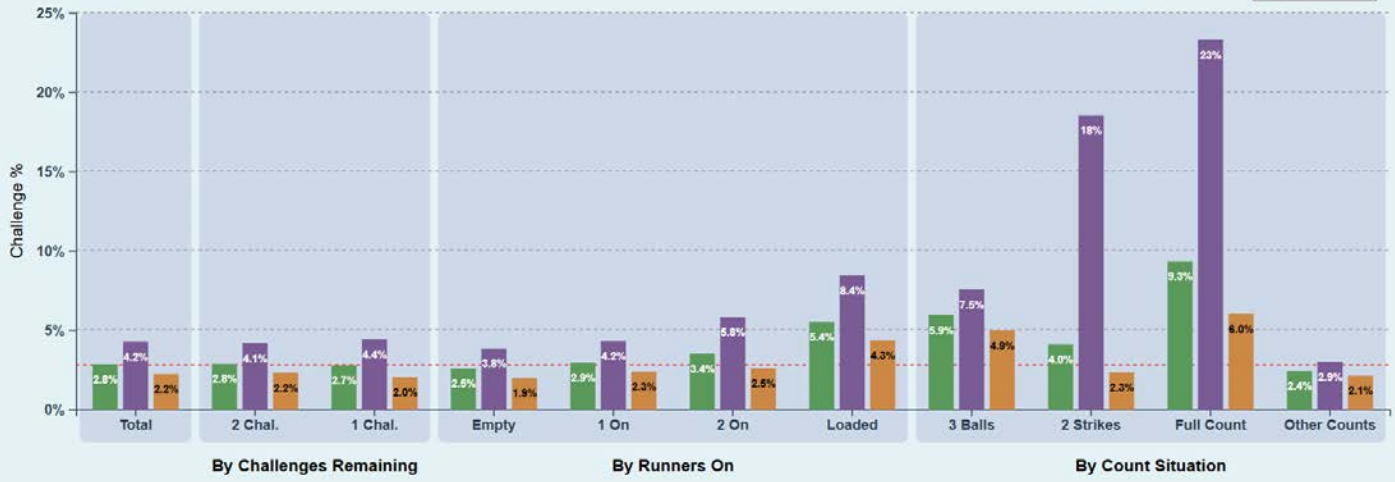
ABS Overturn% Breakdown 2026 – MLB, Regular Season

OVERTURNS CHALLENGES
SITUATION INNINGS



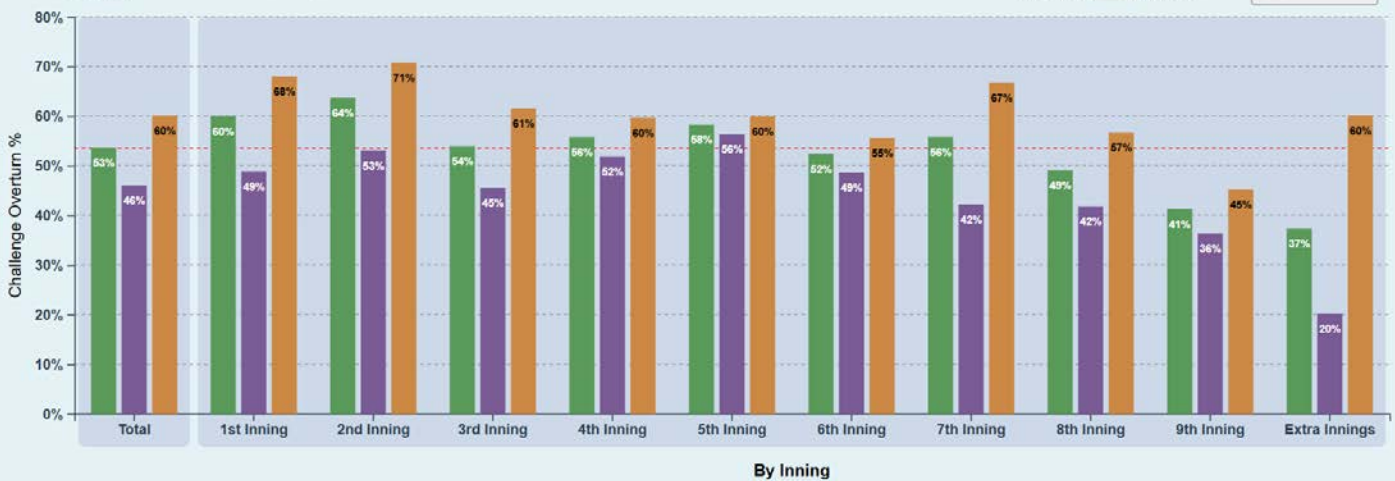
ABS Challenge% Breakdown 2026 – MLB, Regular Season

OVERTURNS CHALLENGES
SITUATION INNINGS



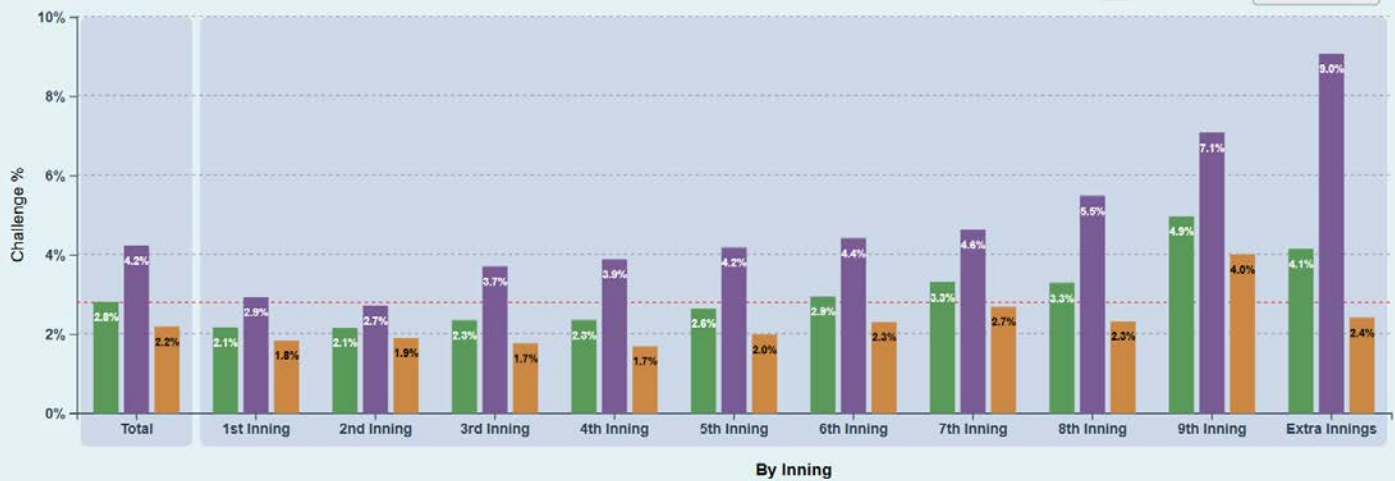
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OVERTURNS CHALLENGES
SITUATION INNINGS



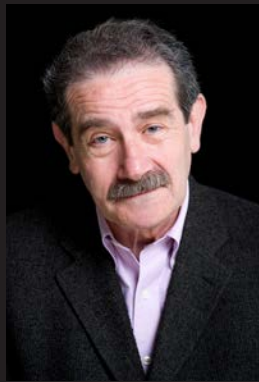
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SITUATION INNINGS



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AMERICA'S NATIONAL GAME



CELEBRATING AMERICA'S

250TH

By John Thorn | Official Historian of Major League Baseball

It is often said nowadays that baseball has yielded its place as America's Game to football, or basketball, or even soccer. But baseball secured its place as a democratic institution long ago. Writing of the sport's worldwide ambitions last week, I deferred a Whitman quotation ("it's our game," he said in 1889. To me, Walt's remark foretells the innovation of "the people's game" as one most often played at night.

On May 24, 1935, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt flipped a switch at the White House that turned on the lights at Cincinnati's Crosley Field for Major League Baseball's first night game. Radio had already made baseball the game for fans too distant from the ballpark and for women, often homebound.

Baseball had first been described, somewhat hopefully, as the national pastime in 1856—when games commencing in late afternoon often were "overtaken by the shades of night." Impending sundown prompted teams that were evenly matched to "play for a draw," at a time when games were decided by the first to reach 21 runs. Even after nine innings became the rule, World Series contests were called for darkness, under debatable circumstances, in 1907, 1912, and 1922 ... nullifying all bets as to outcome.

Baseball became, in the years after the Civil War, indisputably the national pastime. Yet not until the Yankees in 1920—featuring a newcomer named Ruth and a home park leased from the New York Giants—did a team draw a million spectators for its 77 home games. In the National League later in that decade, only the Chicago Cubs drew a million. But in the brief span of 1930-1933, amid the Great Depression, both leagues' attendance declined by a stunning 40 percent: from more than 10 million to little more than 6 million. What was to be done?

Night games were the answer, as they had seemed to be ever since 1880, when the first attempt took place at Nantasket Beach. Only eleven months after Thomas Edison perfected the incandescent bulb, teams representing two Boston department stores—Jordan Marsh and R.H. White—played a nine-inning night game at the beach on Strawberry Hill, on September 2, 1880. The demonstration game was intended to convince entire towns of the possible benefits of electric street lighting, rather than gas-powered.



Ethan Allen of the Phils, batting against Paul Derringer of the Reds on May 24, 1935

Cincinnati's general manager Larry MacPhail had finally advanced the notion of staging big-league games around the hours of the working fan. The 1934 Reds had drawn an anemic 206,773 fans, fewer than 2700 per game. Club owner Powel Crosley petitioned the National League for the right to play seven games at night in 1935; the league reluctantly agreed, barely justifying the investment in lights. For the first of those games, skeptics were reduced to silence when it attracted an audience of 20,422—more typical of a game played on a holiday and unmatched by the Reds for any home date in 1934.

Two experiments followed in 1883, inconclusively as to benefit. In 1887, the American Association's New York Mets toyed with the idea of installing lights on the ground and shining them upwards. In Indianapolis in August 1888, owner John T. Brush installed flaming gaslights for possible National League play. On June 18, 1909, the three Cahill brothers staged a game at Cincinnati's park, the "Palace of the Fans," that was played by two local Elks lodges.

In 1915, the Federal League saw evening competition as a support for its faltering war with Organized Baseball. David Pietrusza wrote, in *Total Baseball*:

The Brooklyn Tip-Tops began installing lights in the final weeks of the 1915 season, projecting a few evening dates. Unfortunately, the games never materialized. If they had, the entire circuit was poised to schedule evening tilts on a regular basis for 1916—had the Feds survived, that is.

All the while, Black ballclubs, as well as nominal Indians, toured with portable arc lighting as early as 1902. An evening contest between the Sioux Indians and the Kingston Colonials (NY) was played under the visitors' lights at the local Driving Park. In 1930 Kansas City Monarchs owner J.L. Wilkinson transported lights to his team's road games. A flatbed truck carried the arc lights and its engine generated the power. "What the talkies are to movies," he is said to have said, "lights will be to baseball."

On June 24, 1927, Lynn and Salem of the New England League tangled under a General Electric installed system, but the great breakthrough came three years later, when Organized Baseball played its first night game in Independence, KS on April 28, 1930. Four days later, some 8,000 fans attended a night game in Des Moines, IA, an experiment that many in MLB deemed a success.

MacPhail and Crosley felt constrained by the National League's mandate to play only seven games at night in 1935, barely enough to justify the investment. When the initial spike in attendance fell off, the former was fired by the latter and signed with the Dodgers for 1938. Ebbets

INTERESTING EVENT.

The great match between the Base Ball Nines of

JORDAN, MARSH & CO.

—AND—

R. H. WHITE & CO.

will come off on THURSDAY EVENING, Sept. 2, at Strawberry Hill. They will play for the Parse offered by the

NANTASKET BEACH RAILROAD CO.

This will be the first Ball Match ever played in the evening, and it will be done under the new system of lighting by Electricity, now in operation at Strawberry Hill. The basis will leave Litchfield's wharf, 468 Atlantic Avenue, at 3.30, 5.30 and 6.30 P. M., and return after the match is over. Ladies will find pleasant accommodations, but they should go in the 3.30 and 5.30 boats if possible.

Admission Free.

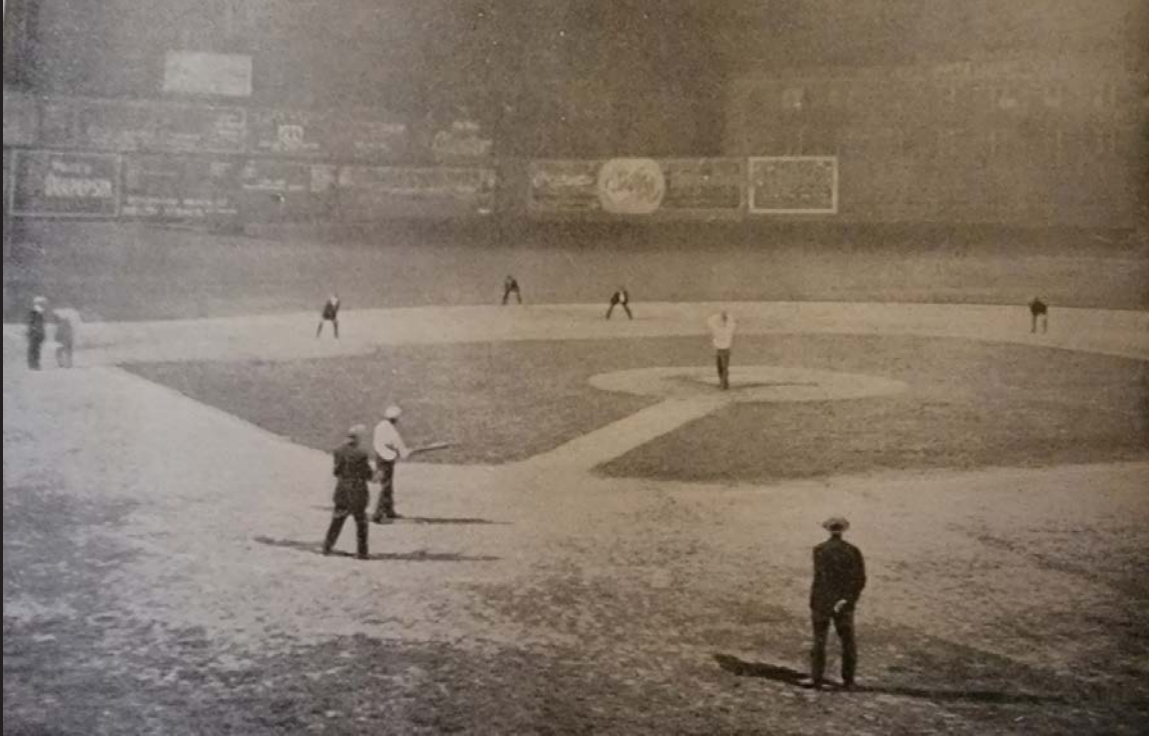
Ad from Boston Daily Journal, September 1, 1880

Field then installed lights and, on June 15, in Brooklyn's first night game, Johnny Vander Meer of the Reds tossed the second of his successive no-hitters.

As radio and night ball widened baseball's fandom, the next media hurdle was television—which, like radio, had been scorned by owners fearful of its impact on fannies in the ballpark. As David Voigt wrote:

In 1946 a record 18.1 million fans attended major league games and in 1948 [that figure] peaked at 21.3 million. Thereafter annual attendance sagged, falling below the 20 million mark during the 1950s. For this turnabout, some owners blamed television for making a free show of the games.... The steadily increasing number of night games now transformed major league baseball into a primarily nocturnal spectacle, except at Wrigley Field in Chicago.... However, it is unlikely that any owner of this era could have envisioned a coming time when television revenue would exceed that of ticket sales at games.

After early skepticism about the quality of the game played under the lights, by such owners as Clark Griffith and Tom Yawkey, the first World Series game was played at night in 1971. Today they all are ... likewise for about two-thirds of all MLB games.



The night game of June 18, 1909, in Cincinnati; from The Book of Baseball, edited by Patten and McSpadden, 1911



Sporting Life trade card: Night ball in 1886



Des Moines over Wichita at night, 1930



Ad for the Capehart television, 1950

WEEKLY AWARDS

Outfielder Carlos Cortez of the Athletics was selected the American League Player of the Week, and infielder Ildemaro Vargas of the Arizona Diamondbacks was named the National League Player of the Week.

Cortez won his first career award, marking the first honor for the Athletics since Nick Kurtz won back-to-back awards on July 21st and July 28th last year. It is the first recognition for an A's outfielder since Lawrence Butler won on September 3, 2024. Vargas also earned his first career honor, marking the first award for the Diamondbacks since Eugenio Suárez won four times last year, last winning on July 21st.



PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Carlos Cortez
Athletics



Ildemaro Vargas
Arizona Diamondbacks



PLAY OF THE WEEK



Nico Hoerner
Chicago Cubs

Chicago Cubs second baseman Nico Hoerner earned his first career Play of the Week Award, marking the fourth honor for Chicago since the award's inception in 2019. Other Cubs to win the award include Albert Almora Jr. on July 27, 2020; Javier Báez on May 31, 2021; and Mike Tauchman on July 30, 2023. With the Dodgers leading 4-3 in the bottom of the seventh inning, Hyeseong Kim hit a hard grounder to Michael Busch at first base, who deflected the ball towards Hoerner as the two-time Rawlings Gold Glover made a barehanded catch and quickly threw the ball to pitcher Ryan Rolison to get the out at first base.

2026 WEEKLY AWARDS

DATE	AL PLAYER OF THE WEEK	NL PLAYER OF THE WEEK	PLAY OF THE WEEK
March 30 th	Chase DeLauter, CLE .353 (6-for-17), 4 HR, 5 RBI, 5 R, .353 OBP, 1.059 SLG	Sal Stewart, CIN .700 (7-for-10), 1 HR, 2 RBI, 3 2B, 3 BB, 2 R, .769 OBP, 1.300 SLG	Nasim Nuñez's Acrobatic Diving Stop
April 6 th	Yordan Alvarez, HOU .471 (8-for-17), 3 HR, 8 RBI, 7 BB, 7 R, .615 OBP, 1.118 SLG	Andy Pages, LAD .583 (14-for-24), 2 HR, 7 RBI, 2 2B, 2 BB, 5 R, 1 SB, .615 OBP, .917 SLG	Jo Adell's Game-Saving Home Run Robbery
April 13 th	José Soriano, LAA 2-0, 0.60 ERA (1 ER/15.0 IP), 5 H, 3 BB, 20 K, 0.53 WHIP, .102 OPP AVG	James Wood, WSH .545 (12-for-22), 3 HR, 8 RBI, 6 BB, 8 R, 2 SB, .655 OBP, 1.091 SLG	Jordan Beck's Home Run Robbery
April 20 th	José Ramírez, CLE .364 (8-for-22), 4 HR, 5 RBI, 12B 8 BB, 8 R, 5 SB, .533 OBP, .955 SLG	Nico Hoerner, CHC .346 (9-for-26), 2 HR, 11 RBI, 1 BB, 4 R, 2 SB, .357 OBP, .577 SLG	Jackson Merrill's Home Run Robbery
April 27 th	Carlos Cortez, ATH .542 (13-for-24), 3 HR, 7 RBI, 2 2B, 1 3B, 4 R, .542 OBP, 1.083 SLG	Ildemaro Vargas, AZ .364 (8-for-22), 4 HR, 12 RBI, 1 2B, 1 3B, 7 R, 5 SB, .364 OBP, 1.045 SLG	Nico Hoerner's Heads-Up Barehanded Snag

SARAH'S FAVORITE NOTES OF THE WEEK

I'm Sarah Langs, a researcher for MLB.com, and I'm honored to have this space to share some of my favorite notes to wrap up each week of this wonderful sport.

BIRTHDAYS ARE IMPORTANT: Celebrating your 20th birthday in a MLB game is already an achievement, given that most players are still in the Minors at that age. But Konnor Griffin didn't just play last Friday, he put on a show, crushing his first career home run. He became the fourth player in MLB history to homer on his birthday at age 20 or younger, joining Aramis Ramirez in 1998, Buddy Lewis in 1936 and Fred Carroll in 1884, according to the Elias Sports Bureau. But none of those other homers were of the first career variety, like Griffin's. He became the 25th player in history to hit his first career home run on his birthday, and the youngest of the group, per Elias. Griffin finished the day with three hits, becoming the youngest player since at least 1900 with three hits in a game on his birthday.

NOBODY BEATS THE MIZ: Jacob Misorowski had his high velocity on full display on Saturday. His 102.7 mph strikeout of Oneil Cruz was the fastest strikeout pitch by a starter under pitch tracking (2008). Misorowski had eight strikeouts at 100.0+ mph in the game, the second-most by a pitcher in a game under tracking (9/17/22 Hunter Greene 9). Four of those were at 101.0+ mph, the second-most in a game (9/17/22 Greene 8). And two of those were at 102.0+ mph, tied for the most by a starter in a game (9/17/22 Greene).

BE LIKE MIKE: Mike Trout's home run on Sunday was his 797th career extra-base hit. That broke a tie with Garret Anderson for the most in Angels history. The only other active players who lead a franchise all-time in extra-base hits are José Ramírez (CLE) & Giancarlo Stanton (MIA).

BENNIE BARRELS: Ben Rice hit his 10th home run of the season on Monday, giving both him and Aaron Judge at least 10 each already. They're the second duo of Yankees teammates to each reach 10 homers before the 30th team game, joining 1956 Mickey Mantle and Yogi Berra. They're also the second duo of MLB teammates to each have at least 10 home runs and 20 walks before their team's 30th game, joining Mark McGwire and Jim Edmonds for the 2000 Cardinals.

HE HAS POWER: With another homer on Monday, Munetaka Murakami's first 12 MLB extra-base hits have been home runs. That extended the longest such streak to start a player's MLB career since at least 1900. The prior longest was 10, by 2016 Dae-ho Lee, per Elias. That was Murakami's 29th career MLB game. His 12 homers tied 2019 Will Smith for the third-most in a player's first 29 career MLB games, behind only 2018-19 Aristides Aquino (14) and 2017 Rhys Hoskins (13).

ELECTRIC ELLY: Elly De La Cruz hit his 10th homer of the season on Tuesday and reached eight stolen bases. He became the seventh player with at least 10 home runs and eight stolen bases before his team's 30th game of a season since the modern SB rule was adopted (1898). He joined 2002 Vladimir Guerrero, 1997 Larry Walker, 1996 Barry Bonds, 1995 Mo Vaughn, 1987 Eric Davis and 1922 Ken Williams.

SHOTIME: Shohei Ohtani made his fifth pitching start of the season on Tuesday and continued his impressive run, emerging with a 0.60 ERA. That's the fifth-lowest ERA in the first five starts of a season by a Dodgers pitcher since earned runs became official in the NL (1912). He trails only 1981 Fernando Valenzuela (0.20), 1985 Valenzuela (0.21), 1972 Don Sutton (0.42) and 1926 Jesse Petty (0.57).

CHURN UP THE WALKS: Nick Kurtz has drawn a walk in 18 consecutive games through Wednesday. That's the fourth-longest streak since walks have been tracked for batters (1910 NL, 1913 AL). He trails 1947 Roy Cullenbine (22), 2002-03 Barry Bonds (20) and 1941 Ted Williams (19).

JUST KEEP HITTING: Ildemaro Vargas has a 26-game hitting streak entering Friday. 23 of those have been to open the season. That's tied with 2006 Edgar Renteria for the third-longest hitting streak to start a season in the last 90 years, behind 1976 Ron LeFlore (30 games) and 1937 Gee Walker (27).

CURRENT IRONMAN: Matt Olson has played 814 consecutive games entering Friday, dating to May 2, 2021. His streak is the 11th-longest in MLB history. The only other streaks of at least 700 consecutive games to begin in the divisional era (1969) are, of course, 1982-98 Cal Ripken Jr. (2,632 games), as well as 1975-83 Steve Garvey (1,207), 2000-07 Miguel Tejada (1,152), 1978-83 Pete Rose (745) and 1981-86 Dale Murphy (740).

For more great notes and baseball tidbits, follow Sarah on Twitter ([@SlangsOnSports](#))



UPON FURTHER REVIEW

Through Wednesday night's games, Major League Baseball has had 292 replay reviews, which have taken an average of one minute and twenty-five seconds. The 292 replay reviews consist of 249 Manager Challenges and 43 Crew Chief Reviews.

292 Replay Reviews
62 Confirmed (21.2%)
86 Stands (29.5%)
143 Overturned (49.0%)
1 Rules Check (0.3%)
0 Record Keeping (0.0%)
1:25 Average Time

The Dodgers initiated their first two replay reviews of the season yesterday. According to Elias, Los Angeles is the first team to not challenge within the first 30 games of a season since the start of replay review (2014). Previously, the 2014 Cardinals and the 2021 and 2025 Brewers held the longest such stretch to begin a season (all challenging for the first time in their 22nd game of the season). The Dodgers had a total of 55 challenges in each of the last two seasons, ranking fourth-most in 2025 and third-most in 2024.

LINE DRIVES

Compiled from Club Game Notes

APRIL POWERS: The Tigers have turned in several remarkable individual offensive performances during the month of April: Kevin McGonigle set the April franchise record for any left-handed batter with 32 hits in the month. He is the first Tigers rookie to record 32 hits in any calendar month since Willie Castro (34 hits) in September 2020. McGonigle will also be the first left-handed batter in club history to enter May 1 with at least 11 doubles. Kerry Carpenter has recorded six home runs this month. He is the only left-handed batter in franchise history to hit six or more homers in back-to-back Aprils. Dillon Dingler will be the first catcher in Tigers history to begin May 1 with at least 19 RBI, surpassing the previous record of 18 set by Alex Avila in 2011. The team enters the final day of April with a .766 OPS, which is the club's highest OPS in April in 11 years (since 2015). Detroit's .254 team batting average this month is currently the second-best in the American League.

PRETTY OFFENSIVE: The Nationals rank second in Major League Baseball with 170 runs, the second most by a Nationals club in team history (2005-pres.) through its first 31 games behind the 2017 National League East champion Nationals (194). Washington has scored 32 runs in the first inning, the most in Major League Baseball. The Nationals have scored 62 runs in the seventh inning or later, the most in MLB. Washington has scored at least five runs 20 times this season, the most in Major League Baseball.

AWALKINAMISHCOUNTRY: Nick Kurtz has drawn a walk in 18 consecutive games, which is an on-going Athletics record and the longest in the Majors since Barry Bonds had a 20-game streak from Sept. 9, 2002-April 1, 2003. It matches the longest single-season streak by a Major Leaguer over the last 79 years (Bonds, Sept. 9-28, 2002) and is third longest in American League history. He has 28 walks in April, which is second most in Athletics history to the record of 31, set by Rickey Henderson in 1982. Kurtz has 32 walks overall, which is tied with Trout (LAA) for the most in the Majors and he ranks 10th in on-base percentage (.415).

PIRATING: Pittsburgh has at least one stolen base in 16 of its last 19 games, a stretch that began on April 10 at Chicago (NL). The Pirates' 26 steals in that time are the most in Major League Baseball (Tampa Bay, 22, is second). Pittsburgh's 87.9 stolen-base rate (29-for-33) in 2026 ranks second in MLB, behind Philadelphia (89.5 percent, 17-for-19). Eight different Pirates have stolen a base, Oneil Cruz has a team-best 10 steals, while Konnor Griffin (seven) & Jake Mangum (five) are second and third, respectively.

THE SIXTH SENSE: Luis Arraez enters play today with an MLB-best 67 consecutive plate appearances without a strikeout. The last pitcher to strike out Arraez was Phillies lefty Tanner Banks, who got him swinging on April 7 at Oracle Park. The 67 plate appearances also mark the longest such streak by a Giant since Nori Aoki went 95 plate appearances without striking out from June 3-August 5, 2015. Arraez is hitting .340 against NL East opponents throughout his career, his highest average vs. any single division. According to Stats, LLC, it's also the second-highest average vs. NL East opponents among active players, trailing Yandy Diaz (.346) (min. 150 PA).

BOBBY BASEBALL: Bobby Witt Jr. has hit safely in 10 consecutive games, during which he's batting .357 (15-for-42) with 7 extra-base hits (1.047 OPS). This marks his 11th career double-digit-game hit streak, most in the Majors since his 2022 debut season, ahead of Francisco Lindor (10).

HISTORIC HOMERS: Jordan Alvarez is off to one of the most prolific starts in franchise history. His 11 home runs through the club's first 30 games of the season are the second-most in franchise history. He has had a torrid start to his season, hitting .355 with 11 home runs and 26 RBI. Alvarez leads the AL in OPS (1.199), RBI (26), SLG (.736), OBP (.463) and Total Bases (81) while ranking second in batting avg. (.355) and WAR (1.9). Additionally, Alvarez' current 13-game hitting streak is tied for the longest active streak in the AL (McGonigle-DET) and matches his career-best, done May 2-16, 2023.

TAG TEAM CHAMPS: Elly De La Cruz (10 home runs) and Sal Stewart (9 home runs) are the second pair of Reds teammates since 1900 to collect at least nine or more home runs apiece before the end of April in the same season (also: Austin Kearns and Adam Dunn in 2003). Only three teams in Major League history have boasted two players with 10 or more home runs before May 1, including this year's Yankees (Aaron Judge and Ben Rice). Tuesday's two-run home run in the 8th inning off Tanner Gordon, marked De La Cruz' 10th of the season. He joins Hall of Famer Tony Perez (1970) as the only Reds players in club history to hit 10 or more homers before the first of May.

SORI STORIES: José Soriano is 5-1 with a 0.84 ERA (42.2 IP - 4 ER) and 49 strikeouts after his first seven starts of the season. He leads the American League in ERA and wins, is tied for second in strikeouts (49), ranks second in opponents' batting average (.154), fifth in innings pitched (42.2 IP), and is fifth in WHIP (0.94). José Soriano is the third pitcher all-time to finish April with five or more wins, 49+ strikeouts and an ERA under 1.00 on the season. The only others to do so are Randy Johnson (2000 Diamondbacks) and Jered Weaver (2011 Angels).

VARGY'S HOT STREAK: Ildemaro Vargas' 22-game hit streak to start a season is tied for MLB's third-longest streak since 1940. Ildemaro Vargas' hitting streaks have also etching their place in the D-backs record books: His 22-game hitting streak to start the season is the franchise record, his single-season 22-game hitting streak is the third-longest in club history, and including streaks spanning multiple seasons, his 25-game hitting streak is the third-longest in club history.

DEFENSIVE DOINGS: The A's have committed just one error in their last 10 games and have six for the season, which is the fewest in the majors ahead of the Padres (8). Jacob Wilson has a 69-game errorless streak, which is the longest in Athletics history by a shortstop...is one of two qualified shortstops in the majors without an error (Witt, KC). Tyler Soderstrom has a 99-game errorless streak as an outfielder.

MO-MONEY MO-BALLER: On Monday night, Moisés Ballesteros hit his first career grand slam, becoming the youngest Cub to hit a grand slam (22 years and 170 days old) since Nelson Matthews did so on Sept. 16, 1962 vs. Dodgers (21 years, 57 days old). Since April 7, has hit safely in 14 of his 18 games with an at-bat, batting .457 (21-for-46) with five doubles, five home runs, 14 RBI and a 1.391 OPS. In that span, his .457 average, .500 OBP, .891 SLG and 1.391 OPS all lead the majors (min. 50 PA). He recorded an extra-base hit in five-straight games from April 22-27, the youngest Cub to accomplish the feat since Johnny Evers from Sept. 7 (2)-12, 1903.



MLB ON-AIR THIS WEEK

(All Times ET)

Friday, May 1st:	Cincinnati Reds @ Pittsburgh Pirates Kansas City Royals @ Seattle Mariners	6:45 p.m. 9:45 p.m.	Apple TV Apple TV	
Saturday, May 2nd:	Cincinnati Reds @ Pittsburgh Pirates Los Angeles Dodgers @ St. Louis Cardinals Texas Rangers @ Detroit Tigers	4:05 p.m. 7:15 p.m. 7:15 p.m.	FS1 FOX FOX	
Sunday, May 3rd:	Texas Rangers @ Detroit Tigers	7:20 p.m.	Peacock/NBCSN	
Monday, May 4th:	Milwaukee Brewers @ St. Louis Cardinals	7:45 p.m.	FS1	
Tuesday, May 5th:	Los Angeles Dodgers @ Houston Astros	8:10 p.m.	TBS	
Thursday, May 7th:	Tampa Bay Rays @ Boston Red Sox St. Louis Cardinals @ San Diego Padres	7:10 p.m. 10:10 p.m.	ESPN ESPN	

Competitive NL Central Division Takes National Spotlight This Week

Please note: Games on FS1 and TBS are available locally on Regional Sports Networks and/or via Club DTC products for fans watching in the Clubs' market

Thursday, April 30th:	Detroit Tigers @ Atlanta Braves Kansas City Royals @ Athletics	12:15 p.m. 3:05 p.m.	
Friday, May 1st:	Arizona Diamondbacks @ Chicago Cubs San Francisco Giants @ Tampa Bay Rays	2:20 p.m. 7:10 p.m.	
Saturday, May 2nd:	Arizona Diamondbacks @ Chicago Cubs Kansas City Royals @ Seattle Mariners	2:20 p.m. 9:40 p.m.	
Sunday, May 3rd:	Chicago White Sox @ San Diego Padres	4:10 p.m.	
Monday, May 4th:	Atlanta Braves @ Seattle Mariners	9:40 p.m.	
Tuesday, May 5th:	Pittsburgh Pirates @ Arizona Diamondbacks	9:40 p.m.	
Wednesday, May 6th:	Los Angeles Dodgers @ Houston Astros Texas Rangers @ New York Yankees	2:10 p.m. 7:05 p.m.	
Thursday, May 7th:	Cincinnati Reds @ Chicago Cubs	2:20 p.m.	

Please note: Most games are available locally on Regional Sports Networks and/or via Club DTC products for fans watching in the Clubs' market

SiriusXM

American League SiriusXM Channels		National League SiriusXM Channels	
Athletics	Channel 841	Arizona Diamondbacks	Channel 840
Baltimore Orioles	Channel 843	Atlanta Braves	Channel 842
Boston Red Sox	Channel 844	Chicago Cubs	Channel 845
Chicago White Sox	Channel 846	Cincinnati Reds	Channel 847
Cleveland Guardians	Channel 848	Colorado Rockies	Channel 849
Detroit Tigers	Channel 850	Los Angeles Dodgers	Channel 854
Houston Astros	Channel 851	Miami Marlins	Channel 855
Kansas City Royals	Channel 852	Milwaukee Brewers	Channel 856
Los Angeles Angels	Channel 853	New York Mets	Channel 858
Minnesota Twins	Channel 857	Philadelphia Phillies	Channel 860
New York Yankees	Channel 859	Pittsburgh Pirates	Channel 861
Seattle Mariners	Channel 864	San Diego Padres	Channel 862
Tampa Bay Rays	Channel 866	San Francisco Giants	Channel 863
Texas Rangers	Channel 867	St. Louis Cardinals	Channel 865
Toronto Blue Jays	Channel 868	Washington Nationals	Channel 869

Channel 89

Visit <https://www.mlb.com/watch> for details on where to watch!