

Lackey leads Red Sox over Rangers, 5-1

Written by Administrator
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BOSTON (AP) — Veteran right-hander John Lackey and rookie outfielder Jackie Bradley Jr. teamed up to give the Red Sox their first win at home.

Lackey provided the pitching, Bradley contributed hitting and fielding, and Boston stopped a three-game slide with a 5-1 victory over the Texas Rangers on Monday night.

"I definitely want to pound the strike zone," Lackey said. "I want people to know I'm going to throw strikes. If you're going to get me you better get me quick because I'm coming after you."

He did, throwing mostly fastballs with plenty of movement.

"They certainly weren't straight," Texas manager Ron Washington said. "We had some opportunities against Lackey, but he showed why he's one of the best pitchers in the American League."

Bradley singled in Boston's first two runs and made two outstanding catches in the first three innings. He battled the lights to grab Donnie Murphy's liner in the second, then raced back to the warning track in right field for a one-handed grab against J.P. Arencibia in the third.

Which did he enjoy more, his hits or his catches?

"I'll take both," Bradley said. "Whatever helps the team."

The Red Sox never lost more than three straight last year when they won the World Series. By winning Monday night, they avoided dropping their first four home games for the first time since 1984.

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Lackey (2-0) allowed an unearned run and five hits in seven innings five days after giving up two runs over six innings in a 6-2 win at Baltimore. Chris Capuano pitched the eighth and Koji Uehara escaped a second-and-third jam in the ninth in a non-save situation.

Tanner Scheppers (0-1) allowed Bradley's run-scoring hits in the second and fourth, and Boston added three runs in the eighth.

"For the most part I kept the ball on the ground," said Scheppers, who lasted five innings. "I've got to give the team more innings. I've got to go deeper in the ballgame. Forcing the manager's hand in the fifth inning is not what a starting pitcher should do."

Bradley, Mike Napoli and A.J. Pierzynski each had three singles for the Red Sox.

Boston took a 1-0 lead in the second on an RBI single by Bradley after singles by Xander Bogaerts and Pierzynski.

Texas tied it in the fourth on a sacrifice fly by Mitch Moreland.

Bradley came through again in the fourth with another run-scoring single after Pierzynski singled and went to third on a single by Jonathan Herrera.

Then the Rangers left runners at second and third with a chance to tie the game in the seventh. The threat ended when Arencibia grounded out to second as Lackey pounded his glove while walking off the mound after facing his final batter.

"It took a couple of pitches with a couple of people on base," Lackey said. "Got it done."

Boston reached Seth Rosin for three runs in the eighth when Pierzynski singled, went to second

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on a walk to Herrera and scored when Bradley bunted for a single and first baseman Prince Fielder threw wildly for an error. The other runs scored on a single by Daniel Nava and a fielder's choice groundout by Dustin Pedroia.

NOTES: Elvis Andrus and Alex Rios have hits in each of Texas' seven games. ... Martin Perez (0-0) pitches for Texas against Felix Doubront (1-0) in the second game of the three-game series Tuesday. ... Washington said Yu Darvish, whose first start was delayed until last Sunday by back stiffness, will have his usual four days off before pitching Friday even though Texas has an off day Thursday. Scheppers' next start will be pushed back to the weekend. ... The Red Sox signed free-agent infielder Ryan Roberts and sent infielder Brock Holt to Triple-A Pawtucket. ... The Rangers placed LHP Joe Saunders on the 15-day disabled list with a bruised left ankle.