

Rangers lose to Tigers, 8-6

Written by Don Wallace
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ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Manager Ron Washington has a hard time comprehending that his Texas Rangers have the longest losing streak in the major leagues at seven games.

Victor Martinez and J.D. Martinez homered on consecutive pitches by different Texas pitchers and the Detroit Tigers stretched their winning streak to six games, 8-6 over the Rangers on Wednesday night.

"We've got to score some runs, and we've got to pitch better," Washington said.

The unrelated Martinez sluggers hit their homers in the fifth — Victor leading off against Joe Saunders (0-4) before J.D. went deep on the first pitch thrown by reliever Shawn Tolleson. They also had consecutive doubles when the AL Central-leading Tigers went ahead to stay with three runs in the first inning.

Texas dropped to a season-worst 12 1-2 games behind Oakland in the AL West, its largest deficit since the end of the 2008 season. The Rangers are 16-21 at home, where they have lost six of their last seven, though Washington still sees plenty of fight in his injury plagued team.

"They're battling. They're leaving their heart out there on the field. They're coming to the ballpark every day, and they're preparing," he said. "We've just to get consistent in a few areas. Once we get consistent in a few areas, we'll start putting things back together. I have complaints about the way they're going about their business."

Detroit's first five hits were for extra bases before Torii Hunter's RBI single in the third made it 5-0.

The Tigers led 3-0 only five batters into the game. Rajai Davis led off with a triple into the right-center gap, Ian Kinsler walked on four pitches and Miguel Cabrera had a sacrifice fly before the consecutive Martinez doubles.

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Tigers starter Anibal Sanchez (5-2) struck out five and allowed four runs in 5 1-3 innings. The right-hander is 5-0 in his eight starts since coming off the disabled list May 18 after missing three weeks with a cut on his right middle finger.

Joe Nathan, the Texas closer the last two seasons before leaving in free agency, gave up a run in the ninth before clinching his 16th save in 21 chances.

Carlos Pena homered and scored twice in his second game back with the Rangers, the team he made his major league debut for in 2001 before being traded the following winter.

Texas scored three times in the fourth, which started when Shin-Soo Choo singled before Adrian Beltre's RBI double. Pena singled and came home on a single by Robinson Chirinos.

The Rangers trailed 6-3 when left-hander Saunders left after giving up seven hits and walking five.

"The results weren't there, but it felt like it could have been and should have been better than it was. I thought I made some pretty decent pitches," Saunders said. "This game is very maddening, but you've just to keep going out there and making pitches and focus on what you can control."

Victor Martinez hit his 20th homer of the season. J.D. followed with his ninth homer, the sixth during a 14-game hitting streak that is the longest active in the majors — he is hitting .418 (23 for 55) with eight doubles and 17 RBIs in that span.

"Vic's been swinging the bat well all year, right-handed, left-handed, you take your pick," manager Brad Ausmus said. "The thing about J.D. is his power. When he gets hot, the ball is going to travel."

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NOTES: Texas rookie 2B Rougned Odor struck out for the third time in the eighth, but made it to the third base after a wild pitch and a throwing error by C Bryan Holaday. Odor was initially called out sliding into third base by umpire Tim Welke even as the ball rolled free, but the umpiring crew conferred and changed the call to safe without a replay. ... When Pena homered in the sixth, the ball landed in a pan of brisket set up in a seating area in the right-field corner.