

The Boston Red Sox Monday, March 20, 2017

*** *The Boston Globe***

Twins punish Red Sox pitching

Nick Cafardo

SCORE: Twins 13, Red Sox 8

RECORD: 10-12-2

BREAKDOWN: Drew Pomeranz spotted the Twins two runs after getting two outs in the first inning, then allowed a solo shot to Ben Paulsen in the second as Minnesota mounted a 3-1 lead. Hanley Ramirez hit a mammoth solo shot in the first inning that went well over the Green Monster, his third of spring training. The Red Sox scored four in the third on Josh Rutledge's sac fly, a two-run triple by Marco Hernandez, and an RBI by Steve Selsky. The Twins put up five in the fourth to take an 8-6 lead, and the Red Sox scored one in the fourth on Mitch Moreland's RBI single. The Sox really didn't come close after that as the Twins kept piling on runs. The Sox bullpen after Craig Kimbrel was horrendous.

THUMBS UP: Marco Hernandez continues to make a case for himself for the 25th spot. He successfully executed a double steal of home when Selsky broke for second while Hernandez broke for home. Catcher Chris Gimenez went for the out at second, which enabled Hernandez to beat the throw back to home plate, scoring Boston's second run in the second inning. Hernandez also had two triples to center in his first two-at-bats. The second drove in two runs . . . Ramirez also singled after his long homer in the first . . . Bryce Brentz, who is out of options and is probably gone from the Red Sox soon, homered in the eighth, showing off his righthanded power . . . Kimbrel pitched a 1-2-3 inning in the third with a strikeout . . . Mitch Moreland had two more hits to left field and a third to right field.

THUMBS DOWN: Pomeranz allowed three runs, two hits (including a home run) and three walks in two innings. He left the game with left triceps tightness . . . Selsky made an overthrow of a grounder to first base in the fifth for an error . . . Manager John Farrell notes that what killed the Red Sox were two-out walks . . . Hector Velazquez continued on his downward spiral, allowing four earned runs in two innings.

MEDICAL UPDATE: Pomeranz left the game with left triceps tightness.

AROUND THE BASES: The Selsky fielding tour continued as the versatile righthanded hitter started the game in right field and wound up at third base (where he made a throwing error). Selsky has played all three outfield spots and the corner infield spots. Farrell admitted the third base experiment with him is a work in progress. Selsky has worked his way into the mix for the 25th spot . . . There were 9,898 fans at JetBlue Park, another sellout. Red Sox fans are just killing the ticket sales . . . Old friend Craig Breslow pitched in relief for the Twins and went 1⅓ innings and allowed two hits and one run . . . The Red Sox used Trevor Kelley, a Brad Ziegler-like submariner, in the ninth inning.

NEXT GAME: Monday at 1:05 at JetBlue Park vs. the Orioles. Kyle Kendrick opposes Wade Miley. Game is broadcast on WEEI 850 AM

Drew Pomeranz takes a seat after tweaking his triceps

Nick Cafardo

FORT MYERS, Fla. — Given Drew Pomeranz's struggles and injury and Kyle Kendrick's success, one wonders whether Kendrick may be in Boston's starting rotation on Opening Day.

Pomeranz left Sunday's game after two innings due to tightness in his left triceps. The team said it was for precautionary reasons, as Pomeranz has had issues with his left arm. He received a stem cell injection to his elbow in the offseason and started a little slower in spring training.

"My triceps got tight toward the end of the first inning," Pomeranz said after the Sox were shellacked by the Twins, 13-8, before a sellout crowd at JetBlue Park. "Talked to the trainers in between innings and went back out, and it stayed tight the whole time. Nothing crazy. I think just my workload has been a lot more than usual this week. In the second inning it didn't loosen up, so we decided to call it quits. I could have thrown one more but it's only my second start so might as well give it rest.

"This is a different spot [than the injection], back of the arm — triceps. It's probably a result of getting back into the swing of things. I don't think it's anything serious. Like I said, I could have gone out there and thrown another one. I'll come in tomorrow, and hopefully everything will be fine. I never thought I was going to be perfect from the beginning and be ready to go. I started to feel better this week. I increased the workload and intensity, so maybe it just tightened up on me a little bit. Before that I felt really good, best my arm had felt to this point. It's just part of early season, preseason."

Pomeranz did not think it would affect Opening Day.

"I was just one inning away from having a normal outing," he said. "I've had a little tweak in my triceps before. It gets tight and I come in the next day and it's fine."

Red Sox manager John Farrell said that the team will always act cautiously in a situation where shoulder tightness occurs, and that he hopes Pomeranz can do his normal between-start work and stay on track.

Pomeranz allowed three runs, two of them in the first inning after walking two batters with two outs. After throwing 47 pitches, allowing three walks and two hits, he retired for the day.

Kendrick is scheduled to start today's game against Baltimore. He's 2-0 with a 1.50 ERA in four starts and one relief appearance.

Fun and games

The Red Sox had some good old-fashioned fun with an intrasquad skills competition Sunday morning. The losers will have to make the trek to Tampa to play the Yankees. There was controversy during the pitcher bunting drills when David Price's squad thought they had won. But Ruben Amaro called for a "bonus round," which the Blue Team wound up winning on a perfectly placed bunt by Carson Smith.

The Price team called foul because they were only supposed to get five bunts per player, but it appeared that Smith got six chances. The Price team wound up losing the obstacle course competition, anyway.

Farrell said he wanted to keep things light.

"You always get a feel for when things may start to stagnate a bit, particularly this year. . . . But I think it's always important to keep it light in spots but still competitive, and this is a team-building opportunity for us as well."

Abad on way back

Fernando Abad, who was on the Dominican WBC team, is expected back to the team in the next two days, Farrell said. Abad may find himself in a competition for the second lefty spot, as Farrell has really liked the work of Edgar Olmos, who in six appearances has a 1.17 ERA. In 42 relief appearances for the Orioles' Triple A Norfolk club last season, he went 4-4 with a 2.88 ERA with 76 strikeouts in 68⅓ innings . . . Even a passed ball that scored a run in Saturday's game against the Orioles didn't deter Farrell from commenting on how far Blake Swihart has come as a catcher defensively. While Farrell acknowledged that Swihart should have blocked the ball, he also commented how Swihart is far more sound mechanically than he's ever been. Swihart is also hitting .370 in 27 at-bats, which is second to Dustin Pedroia's .435 in 23 at-bats.

Moreland keeps hitting

Mitch Moreland keeps wowing the Sox brass. Three more hits Sunday against the Twins, all singles sprayed to left and right center . . . Even with Marco Hernandez's terrific spring training (two triples and a walk on Sunday), Farrell said after the game that the 25th man would ideally be a righthanded bat. That would seem to lean toward Josh Rutledge, who is a Rule 5 pick from the Rockies and would have to stay on the team or be returned the the Rockies. Steve Selsky is also making a case for himself . . . Robbie Ross Jr. was pummeled for five runs in two-thirds of an inning, but Farrell said he thought it was just one of those bad spring training games. There didn't seem to be any injury reason for the poor performance.

What are the Red Sox' biggest concerns?

Nick Cafardo

FORT MYERS, Fla. — The Red Sox were the best team on paper entering camp, but are they still?

There are concerns. John Farrell outlined some of them Sunday.

“Your concerns are when your guys aren't on the field regularly,” the manager said. “We've got to obtain some answers to those questions. And we are getting Hanley [Ramirez] on the field at first base defensively. It's getting Tyler Thornburg to the mound, and it's the unknown timetable for David Price.

“So while you feel good in some ways, you're always left wanting more. You always want your team to be as complete as possible. In the absence of those individuals, then you always go to Plan B. As of today, Joe Kelly steps into the eighth inning. How does everyone take on additional responsibility in that bullpen. We love their abilities, love the track record that some of them have given us. That's part of putting the pieces of that jigsaw puzzle together.”

So let's look at the concerns, one by one:

1. Thornburg — He was, in essence, a backup plan. Plan A was to re-sign Koji Uehara, but at much less than the \$9 million he made each of the last two seasons. He threw no harder than 88 miles per hour on a good day, yet he got batters out.

The Red Sox may miss Uehara more than they'll ever know. Yes, he turns 42 in a few weeks, and his career won't go on much longer, but Uehara was Boston-tested. He knows how to pitch here. Nothing bothered him.

The Cubs offered him a one-year \$6 million deal, and he took it, which indicates the Red Sox' offer was much lower. We'll see how this plays out.

Dave Dombrowski unloaded some pretty good prospects for Thornburg, who was really impressive for the 73-win Brewers last season. But Thornburg didn't take well to the Red Sox' shoulder strengthening program; apparently, Milwaukee's shoulder program isn't as extensive. Thornburg misinterpreted the offseason training requirements and has suffered from soreness this spring. It's likely that he'll have to start the season on the disabled list.

Thornburg had what looked to be a strong bullpen session Saturday. Pitching coach Carl Willis was encouraged by what he saw.

“He felt much improved [Saturday],” Farrell said. “After he goes through his throwing today we'll decide what's next for him. It could be a minor league game or it could be another bullpen. I don't have a deadline. If he's able to get into a minor league game and you count all the games between now and Opening Day, he has the ability to get four games in and we'll evaluate it as we get closer to Opening Day.”

Dombrowski gave up corner infielder Travis Shaw, shortstop prospect Mauricio Dubon, righthander Josh Pennington, and a player to be named. That's quite a haul for a setup man, but that's the price of pitching these days.

The Red Sox have had real issues with relievers they've acquired the last few years. Prior to last season, Dombrowski traded for righty setup man Carson Smith and lefthander Roenis Elias from Seattle, and neither has made an impact in Boston.

Before Dombrowski arrived, the Red Sox picked up Joel Hanrahan (along with Brock Holt) from the Pirates to be their closer for the 2013 season, and Hanrahan was shut down in May, had Tommy John surgery, and hasn't pitched in the majors since. The Sox gave up Mark Melancon as part of the deal and Melancon has become one of the most efficient closers in baseball.

And don't forget Andrew Bailey, whom the Red Sox traded for prior to the 2012 season, sending Josh Reddick to Oakland. At the time, Bailey was one of the best young closers in the game. But he quickly came up lame and also underwent Tommy John surgery.

The Red Sox survived the loss of Smith last season, but as Farrell pointed out, if Thornburg misses more time, Kelly, Matt Barnes, Heath Hembree, and Robbie Ross Jr. have to take on bigger roles.

2. Ramirez — The situation is getting a little worrisome, because the Red Sox really thought he would be back in the field by now. Ramirez has said his shoulder is getting better and he's sticking with the throwing program, but progress has been slow.

The Red Sox need Ramirez to play 40 or so games at first base (with the remainder at DH) because they need the Mitch Moreland platoon to work. Even though Moreland hit lefties better than righties last season, the Sox believe he's best served by sitting against tough lefties. In those games, Ramirez can play first and give Farrell the chance to use others at DH.

3. Price — The lefthander will not be ready for the start of the season after feeling discomfort in his pitching elbow/forearm in late February. He only recently started throwing again, but not off a mound. He has said he doesn't feel the discomfort anymore. So now it's a matter of building back up gradually.

It's prudent to let Price take his time getting back. The Red Sox have decent options to round out the rotation. It's always difficult not to have your \$31 million pitcher on the mound from the get-go. He's one of Boston's Big Three. So the Red Sox want him to feel right, no matter how long it takes. Even if it takes all of April.

So the best team on paper has suffered a few paper cuts in camp.

*** *The Boston Herald***

Drew Pomeranz removed from Red Sox start with triceps tightness

Jason Mastrodonato

FORT MYERS — Not that Drew Pomeranz was ever deemed totally healthy to begin with, but the Red Sox may have suffered another blow to their starting rotation.

Pomeranz, who is still a couple starts behind his fellow rotation mates in terms of progress, had to leave his second start of the spring with triceps tightness in his pitching arm. The Red Sox said he was removed for precautionary reasons after two innings.

They weren't very pretty innings, either.

Pomeranz's curve fooled a couple Twins hitters, but he left one hanging to Ben Paulsen that was launched for a home run and he labored throughout his 47 pitches. His walked three batters and allowed three runs.

"The first inning, my triceps got a little tight toward the end," he said. "I told the trainers in between that inning, went back out and it stayed tight the whole time. Nothing crazy. Just a little triceps tightness. I think my workloads have been a little higher this week. Who knows. I threw that second inning and it didn't really loosen up. We just decided to call it quits. I could've thrown one more but it's still the second start and we'll give it a little rest."

His first start five days ago against the Blue Jays wasn't much better when he allowed two runs, including another homer, in two innings.

The schedule would allow him to start two more times before the regular season begins, making it seem unlikely that he'd be ready to go right away.

Asked if slowing down his progression might benefit him, Pomeranz said, "I don't know. I never thought I was going to be perfect going in and would feel ready to go from the beginning. That's just part of it. I started feeling better this past week, increased my workload a little bit, was throwing with a little more intensity and maybe it just tightened up on me."

Pomeranz received a stem-cell injection in his arm during the offseason.

"Yeah that's a different spot," he said. "This is just strictly just back of the arm, triceps. Probably just part of getting back into the swing of things."

The 28-year-old left-hander has looked shaky since the Red Sox acquired him from the Padres last July. They had a chance to rescind the trade after it was determined the Padres did not disclose all of Pomeranz's injury history, but the Sox chose not to, in need of Pomeranz' services down the stretch. He had a 2.47 ERA with San Diego but a 4.59 ERA with the Sox.

Marco Hernandez' strong spring puts him in mix for spot or trade bait

Jason Mastrodonato

FORT MYERS — Marco Hernandez might be playing himself out of Boston.

He's been too good this spring.

Hernandez, who has almost no chance at making the Red Sox roster out of camp because he hits left-handed and the team needs a right-handed complement to Pablo Sandoval at third base, connected on two triples yesterday to push his Grapefruit League average to .405 with a 1.218 OPS. If he keeps playing this well, the Sox may be able to use him as a trade chip should they develop any additional roster needs early in the season (it appears like that need could eventually be starting pitching).

The 24-year-old Hernandez was acquired from the Cubs for pitcher Felix Doubront before the 2015 season and impressed in a short stint with the Sox last year, hitting .294 in 56 plate appearances. He reported to camp with additional muscle to provide a bit more power and still runs the bases with flare.

"He's had an outstanding spring," manager John Farrell said. "He's lighting things up. The way he runs the bases, he tries to stretch it to get an extra 90 feet and gets thrown out but still, you love the bat speed, the athleticism in multiple ways. So everything he can possibly do, he's doing.

"Where this leads us over his final 10 days, we'll figure all that out but he's done himself a world of good in this camp."

Brock Holt, who also hits left-handed, is being targeted as the primary utility man. Holt is making \$1.95 million this year, his first in salary arbitration, and has at least two more years left of team control.

Farrell said Hernandez is competing for the 25th man spot, but also noted that he preferred a right-handed batter for that position, meaning Rule 5 pick Josh Rutledge is the leading candidate.

Hernandez is at least proving he could be a capable backup in Triple A should a need arise at second, third or short.

“To think back when we acquired him for Felix Doubront, he’s grown in a number of ways,” Farrell said. “Physically he’s maturing. He’s getting bigger, he’s getting stronger. He did a great job in the offseason of getting himself in shape with morning workouts and playing at night in the Dominican Winter League. He’s an explosive player. He can run. He’s got tremendous bat speed.

“We have him in this competition for a utility job. There’s a lot of people . . . this is an everyday player if you really start to break him down and look at what he’s capable of doing. Yet he’s in a group that’s talented, that’s deep, so finding his place is ongoing.”

Moreland heats up

Mitch Moreland’s 2016 numbers with Texas weren’t dazzling (.233, .730 OPS) and they might have been why the Sox landed him for “only” \$5.5 million, but his new team remains convinced that he’s going to have much more success while playing half of his games at Fenway Park.

The left-handed-hitting Moreland roped three singles yesterday (pushing his spring average to .375) and two of them were to left field.

At Fenway, singles and fly balls to left can often turn into doubles and home runs.

“What he’s showed is the ability to go to the other field,” Farrell said. “He’s let some pitches travel deep in the strike zone, particularly in RBI situations . . . he’s got a really good idea of what he’s trying to do in those situations. We love the fact that he’s hit so many balls to left-center, to the left-field line. We feel like that’s really going to play well at Fenway, which is one of the primary reasons we targeted him. His swing fits in that ballpark well. He’s fit in in every other way that we could have hoped, both in the clubhouse, defensively, it was a very good fit when we targeted him in the free agent season.”

Ross a bit off

Lefty reliever Robbie Ross Jr. had a rough day, allowing five runs on five hits and two walks in 2/3 of an inning.

“He’s capable of more,” Farrell said. “He’s certainly capable of better.”

Craig Kimbrel impressed with a dominant inning. The closer has allowed three runs in four innings but has walked only one.

“He’s been very good with his direction,” Farrell said. “That was the area to focus on coming into camp. Two of the last three outings, the last two, he’s been very crisp.” . . .

The manager was asked for general concerns at this point in spring training.

“Your concerns are when guys aren’t on the field regularly,” he said. “We’ve got some answers yet to obtain here in camp. That’s getting Hanley (Ramirez) at first base defensively. It’s getting (reliever Tyler) Thornburg to the mound. It’s somewhat of the unknown timeframe or timetable with (starter) David Price. So while you feel good in some ways, you’re always wanting more. You’re always wanting your team to be as complete as possible.”

Drew Pomeranz suffers another injury

Jason Mastrodonato

FORT MYERS — Drew Pomeranz is injured again, and a trade made when the Red Sox were desperate for starting pitching help last July continues to look questionable.

The 28-year-old saw his workload increased over the last week and he believes that may have contributed to the tightness he felt in the triceps of his pitching arm yesterday. He had to be removed after just two innings in his second spring training start.

“I don’t think it’s anything serious,” he said. “I could’ve gone back out there and thrown another one. I feel like it’s something I’ll come in tomorrow and be fine.”

But with Opening Day two weeks from today, it still seems unlikely, if not unthinkable, that Pomeranz would be ready to go the first time through the rotation. He was already off to a late start thanks to the stem-cell shot he received during the offseason and is now unsure if he’ll have to slow down his progression even further.

“I don’t know, I never thought I was going to be perfect going in and would feel ready to go from the beginning,” he said. “That’s just part of it. I started feeling better this past week, increased my workload a little bit, was throwing with a little more intensity and maybe it just tightened up on me.”

Manager John Farrell said it was too soon to start guessing when Pomeranz might be ready to pitch.

Guessing has been about all the Sox have been able to do since trading pitching prospect Anderson Espinoza to the San Diego Padres to acquire Pomeranz last summer.

At the time, the Sox were desperate. Sean O’Sullivan, the worst pitcher on the worst team in baseball in 2015, had started four games for them already. Their starting depth was thin and Pomeranz represented a multi-year solution, since he’s under contract through 2018.

Even when president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski learned that the Padres withheld medical information about Pomeranz before trading him, Dombrowski had his hands tied. Should he rescind the trade, an option made available to him by Major League Baseball, and lose an effective pitcher that the Red Sox badly needed down the stretch?

Dombrowski chose not to do that. And to blame him for that decision would be shortsighted, since it was the Sox’ lack of starting depth in their minor leagues that led to such desperation in the first place.

This is a franchise that hasn’t developed a homegrown starting pitcher that stuck since Clay Buchholz, who was drafted in 2005.

The Sox are still hoping Henry Owens and Brian Johnson can provide depth, but with Pomeranz’ status even more uncertain and David Price still waiting to throw off a mound following an elbow injury, the club is again left searching for answers.

That likely means that 32-year-old Kyle Kendrick, who hasn’t pitched in the majors since 2015 and had a 5.11 ERA from 2013-2015, will get a chance to start the season in the rotation behind Rick Porcello, Chris Sale, Eduardo Rodriguez and Steven Wright, assuming Wright continues to see improvement in his shoulder, which hasn’t been fully healthy since he injured it last August. Kendrick is on a minor league deal and has shown well this spring (1.50 ERA in 18 innings, 16 strikeouts).

The Red Sox are staying hopeful about Pomeranz, who didn’t look sharp even prior to feeling discomfort yesterday.

Pomeranz' curve fooled a couple Twins hitters, but he left one hanging to Ben Paulsen that was launched for a home run and he labored throughout his 47 pitches. He walked three and allowed three runs.

"The first inning, my triceps got a little tight toward the end," he said. "I told the trainers in between that inning, went back out and it stayed tight the whole time. Nothing crazy. Just a little triceps tightness. I think my workloads have been a little higher this week. Who knows. I threw that second inning and it didn't really loosen up. We just decided to call it quits. I could've thrown one more but it's still the second start and we'll give it a little rest."

His first start five days ago against the Blue Jays wasn't much better, when he allowed two runs, including another homer, in two innings.

Pomeranz said the stem-cell injection he received during the offseason was unrelated to the new injury.

"Yeah that's a different spot," he said. "This is just strictly just back of the arm, triceps. Probably just part of getting back into the swing of things."

Farrell remained concerned.

"Whenever you feel discomfort in the triceps of the throwing arm, we're going to be careful with it," the manager said. "He felt like he could've continued but we didn't feel like it was appropriate to push it at this point. So we'll reevaluate him when he comes in tomorrow and see what the next steps are for him."

And now the Red Sox are right back where they started, desperate for starting depth without any homegrown talent emerging from the minor leagues.

*** *The Providence Journal***

Drew Pomeranz leaves start with left triceps tightness

Brian MacPherson

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- Drew Pomeranz left his second start of spring training Sunday afternoon with what the Red Sox announced as tightness in his left triceps. Pomeranz had thrown 47 not particularly effective pitches in his two innings of work, yielding a two-run double in the first inning and a home run in the second.

The tightness first surfaced in the first inning, Pomeranz said, and didn't alleviate in the second inning. He'd been scheduled to pitch three innings.

"Nothing crazy," he said. "It's just a little triceps tightness."

"We're going to be careful with it," Boston manager John Farrell said.

The departure of Pomeranz offers an acute reminder of just how thin the Red Sox rotation has become. With David Price out, Pomeranz was lined up to be the team's No. 5 starter. But because Pomeranz, like Steven Wright, had started spring training a turn behind the rest of the rotation, his margin for being ready to start the season was thin. Even one missed turn at this stage might be enough for the Red Sox to start him on the disabled list to ensure he has built up to 85-90 pitches.

If Pomeranz is not ready to start the season, veteran Kyle Kendrick is the clear next starter in line. Kendrick has a 1.50 ERA with 16 strikeouts and three walks in 18 innings pitched this spring. He pitched most of last season at Triple-A Salt Lake in the Angels organization, and he had a 6.32 ERA in 27 starts with Colorado the year before that.

Farrell wasn't ready to start discussing contingency plans yet.

"It's too early to speculate on that right now," he said.

Pomeranz received a stem-cell injection in his elbow after last season to deal with discomfort he felt in September and October. That discomfort only makes his departure Sunday more ominous.

"It's not related to the area that was addressed in the offseason," Farrell said.

"This was strictly in the back of the arm, the triceps," Pomeranz said. "It's probably just part of getting back into the swing of things."

Boston acquired Drew Pomeranz from San Diego at the All-Star break last July in exchange for top prospect Anderson Espinoza. It was later revealed that San Diego had withheld pertinent medical information; Boston was given the chance to rescind the trade but declined to do so. Padres general manager A.J. Preller was suspended for 30 days for manipulating medical files.

Pitching as an 18-year-old in the Single-A Midwest League, Espinoza compiled a 4.73 ERA with 28 strikeouts and eight walks in 32 1/3 innings pitched after the trade.

With the Dominican Republic eliminated from the World Baseball Classic, Fernando Abad will return to the Red Sox in the next day or two, Boston manager John Farrell said.

Abad made three scoreless appearances out of the bullpen for his home country, yielding two hits and striking out one without issuing a walk. He made four appearances for the Red Sox before he departed, striking out five against two walks and compiling a 2.25 ERA.

"We're looking forward to getting him back in our camp and getting him built back up with a little more frequent usage," Farrell said.

Abad has the inside track on a spot in the Red Sox bullpen by virtue of being out of minor-league options. He compiled a 6.39 ERA in 18 appearances after Boston acquired him from Minnesota on Aug. 1 -- but his splits suggest he could be more effective with more discerning usage. He struck out 24 righties and walked 19 last season, but he struck out 17 lefties and walked just three. Similarly, while righties slugged .500 against him after he came to the Red Sox, lefties slugged just .261.

Boston can avoid paying Abad most of the \$2 million he's owed this season if it releases him before Opening Day. To do so, however, would compromise bullpen depth -- something the Red Sox tend to be loath to. If the Red Sox were going to let Abad go, they would have done so before tendering him a contract back in December.

Red Sox not sweating lack of production from Leon – yet

Brian MacPherson

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- John Farrell can see the underwhelming statistics everyone else can see. He can see that two of his three catchers aren't hitting. He's also not about to put all that much stock in those numbers, not at this stage of spring training.

"We've been in a situation where we have rotated three guys in a starting role, so guys have been getting two at-bats every third day," the Red Sox manager said recently. "The offensive evaluation can be a little unfair."

In other words, Farrell isn't going to make his decisions based on offensive production in spring training -- especially at a defense-first position like catcher.

"There's so much more to the position," he said. "There's so much more to the organization depth needs. So it would be extremely short-sighted to say we are going to declare who is the catching tandem based on batting average."

Last season saw Blake Swihart begin the season as the starting catcher ahead of Ryan Hanigan. By April 15, however, after three straight defeats with Swihart catching, Boston pivoted abruptly -- optioning Swihart back to Triple-A Pawtucket and recalling Christian Vazquez.

An injury to Hanigan in early June opened the door for Sandy Leon to get his chance. Leon never relinquished the job. The ex-Washington farmhand slugged .476 and threw out 41 percent of would-be base-stealers in 78 games and never relinquished the job.

But Leon faced badly at the end of the season, hitting .091 with 15 strikeouts in his final 48 plate appearances of the regular season and then going 1-for-10 -- albeit with a home run -- in the ALDS against Cleveland. It was a decline not out of line with the .187/.258/.225 line he'd posted in his career before last season.

Leon has hit just .188 so far this spring, hardly a rebuttal to the thought that the clock might have struck midnight on him. He has struck out or grounded out in 11 of his 17 plate appearances.

The Red Sox aren't going to put much weight in how his swing looks, however, until he's playing less sporadically.

"To get the results you want, you need at-bats," Red Sox assistant hitting coach Victor Rodriguez said. "With more consistent at-bats, he can get back to where he needs to be."

Leon remains the presumptive Opening Day catcher on the strength of what he did for the Red Sox last season. Vazquez has not made a compelling enough case with the bat to sway Farrell to this point.

"I don't think you can turn a blind eye to what took place a year ago," Farrell said. "I put a lot of merit in that. There's weight to that."

(Swihart has hit to the tune of .370 with a .433 on-base percentage in 10 games. He faces long odds to beat out Leon or Vazquez, however, because he's the only one of the three with minor-league options.)

That the Red Sox can chalk up the late fade of Leon to fatigue rather than regression to career norms only makes that decision easier. Leon routinely caught four out of every five games in August and September. It seems clear in hindsight that he wore down.

"He was tired," Rodriguez said. "You could tell his body was involved in the swing. When you lose trust in your hands, your body is going to take over. He was really good for a long time. I was waiting for that to happen. It was going to happen sometime. It happened toward the end."

Now, though, Leon is fresh again. He'll start to get more consistent at-bats -- both in Grapefruit League games and in minor-league games on the back fields at JetBlue Park. It'll be then that Farrell and the Red Sox can evaluate what they really have in him.

*** *The Springfield Republican***

What value does Hector Velazquez provide the Red Sox and why his spring numbers aren't alarming

Jen McCaffrey

As the weeks click by in Red Sox spring training, it's become increasingly apparent that Kyle Kendrick should be Boston's top choice among depth starters.

The 32-year-old Kendrick has allowed just three runs over 18 innings in five games, four starts.

But while Kendrick's strong impression has put him at the top of the leaderboard, fellow newcomer Hector Velazquez remains a question mark.

On Sunday, Velazquez tossed two innings, allowing four runs on four hits and a walk while striking out two in Boston's 13-8 loss.

Since arriving in Red Sox camp in late February as a relative unknown, the right-hander has made four appearances, including two starts. He's given up a total of 11 runs over nine innings. And yet still remains a relative unknown.

Part of the problem the Red Sox encountered after acquiring Velazquez from the Mexican League in mid-February was managing his significant workload from the previous season.

Velazquez tossed 131 innings over 22 starts in the regular season for his Mexican League club followed by an additional 115 1/3 innings in the Mexican Pacific Winter League (85 1/3 innings) and the Caribbean Series (30 innings).

That amounts to a whopping 246 1/3 innings in 46 starts over the last 12 months. The Red Sox were intrigued with his consistency as he put up a 2.37 ERA with 242 strikeouts and 39 walks, but they've had to pump the brakes on evaluating him fully this spring given his absence of a true offseason for the righty.

The Red Sox plan to keep Velazquez to three-inning stints or shorter before stretching him out. It's possible he even remains in extended spring training to prolong his rest period before joining a minor-league rotation, likely in Triple-A Pawtucket.

"More than anything, we're just trying to protect it a little bit and slow him down so that he rejuvenates and stays fresh," manager John Farrell said recently.

The pursuit of Velazquez began last fall when Red Sox president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski called for a greater scouting emphasis on the Mexican League.

The duties fell to vice president of player personnel Jared Banner and his team, who scoured their contacts in Mexico and mined statistical data to identify Mexican League players they should target.

Over the course of the winter, the 28-year-old Velazquez popped onto their radar. He was coming off a breakout season with a 2.47 ERA, 120 strikeouts and just 16 walks in 131 innings in 22 regular season starts.

The Red Sox had video and saw his numbers, but it wasn't until the Caribbean Series in February that scouts were able to get an eye on him.

He quickly wowed player personnel assistant Marcus Cuellar and Puerto Rican player personnel crosschecker Edgar Perez, but there wasn't much time as other teams, including the New York Yankees, were eyeing him as well.

"(They) saw what they were looking for in the first outing," senior vice president of player personnel Allard Baird said. "Said we'll see him again, but that really rang the bell to start the work on the makeup of the player on the field, off the field, his history."

What exactly were they looking for?

"No. 1 you looked at him as an athlete and his adjustability, even though he's 28 years old, he was a former position player, his game and field awareness, how he handled in pressure situations, believing that was

going to be transferrable over here, how he held runners, his times to the plate, how his fielding would be, those little things make it easier," Baird explained. "Then besides that, he's not a guy that's going to out-stuff anybody, it's going to be a lot of contact outs, so believing he was going to have the ability to control and command his pitches gave us confidence with our professional instruction that we saw some value, bring him in our organization and we'll see how it all works out."

Red Sox's Marco Hernandez steals home, hits 2 triples, batting .405 and doing everything right

Christopher Smith

Marco Hernandez is doing everything he can to make the Boston Red Sox's Opening Day 25-man roster.

He even stole home in Boston's 13-8 loss to the Twins on Sunday.

The infielder has had a terrific spring training. He went 2-for-3 with two triples, one walk and two runs Sunday.

The 24-year-old left-handed hitter is 15-for-37 (.405 batting average) with a .488 on-base percentage, .730 slugging percentage, 1.218 OPS, four triples, four doubles, six RBIs, nine runs, six walks and two stolen bases in 14 spring training games.

He's competing with Josh Rutledge for the utility infielder job. And although he has played fantastic in camp, there's a good chance he'll begin 2017 at Triple-A Pawtucket because of depth purposes.

Hernandez has minor league options. Meanwhile, the Red Sox re-acquired Rutledge from the Rockies via the Rule 5 Draft. And so Rutledge must remain on the 25-man roster the entire season, barring DL stints, or be offered back to Colorado.

Rutledge also is a right-handed batter. The right-handed hitter better complements super utility man Brock Holt, a left-handed hitter, and third baseman Pablo Sandoval, a switch-hitter who is a much better hitter from the left side.

Hernandez certainly is making the decision much more difficult for the Red Sox though.

Drew Pomeranz, Boston Red Sox lefty, leaves start with tightness in left triceps

Christopher Smith

Drew Pomeranz left his second spring training start after just two innings today for precautionary reasons because of tightness in his left triceps.

Pomeranz allowed three runs, all earned, on two hits (one homer) and three walks while striking out one.

He has allowed five runs in 4 innings in his two starts combined.

Pomeranz experienced forearm soreness at the end of the 2016 season, causing him to be scratched from his start at Yankee Stadium on Sept. 29. He pitched out of the bullpen against the Indians in the ALDS, then underwent a stem cell shot in his forearm/elbow in October after the playoffs.

"I don't think it's anything too serious," Pomeranz told reporters, via MLB.com. "I could've gone back out there and thrown another one. I feel like it's something I'll come in tomorrow and be fine.

"I think my workloads have been a little higher this week," Pomeranz added. "Who knows? I threw that second inning and it didn't really loosen up. We just decided to call it quits. I could've thrown one more but, it's still the second start and we'll give it a little rest."

David Price (shoulder) already is expected to begin the year on the DL. If Pomeranz also starts the 2017 regular season on the DL, Kyle Kendrick likely will earn the No. 5 spot in the rotation.

Kendrick has allowed just three runs in 18 innings this spring.

Rusney Castillo, Sam Travis, Dustin Pedroia among Boston Red Sox's top hitters this spring training

Christopher Smith

Eleven Boston Red Sox hitters who have recorded more than 20 at-bats this spring are hitting over .300.

Of the 11 though, only six are expected to make the Opening Day roster.

Rusney Castillo (.385), Marco Hernandez (.382), Blake Swihart (.370), Sam Travis (.344) and Deven Marrero (.333) all are expected to begin 2017 at Triple-A Pawtucket.

Hernandez has a shot at making Boston's 25-man Opening Day roster as a utility infielder. He's competing with Josh Rutledge for the job.

But Rutledge likely will win the roster spot for depth purposes. The Red Sox re-acquired Rutledge via the Rule 5 Draft. He, therefore, must remain on the 25-man roster the entire season, barring DL stints, or be offered back to the Colorado Rockies.

Hernandez, meanwhile, has minor league options remaining.

Marrero, a 2012 first-round draft pick, has had an impressive camp after batting .198 at Pawtucket last year. He made adjustments in the offseason and quickly has put last year behind him.

Swihart has been Boston's best hitting catcher but manager John Farrell said much more goes into the catcher decision than batting average.

Swihart, unlike Christian Vazquez and Sandy Leon, has minor league options. The Red Sox need to preserve their depth at that position.

There's a chance Travis, an impressive first base prospect, could make the team out of camp if Hanley Ramirez (shoulder) isn't ready to play first base vs. left-handed starters. But it's more likely he'll begin the year at Pawtucket and then make his major league debut later on during the 2017 season.

Dustin Pedroia: .435/.462/.478/.940, one double, two RBIs, five runs, two walks, four strikeouts, one stolen base, 23 at-bats.

Rusney Castillo: .385/.407/.615/1.023, one homer, three doubles, six RBIs, six runs, one walk, seven strikeouts, three stolen bases, 26 at-bats.

Marco Hernandez: .382/.462/.618/1.079, two triples, four doubles, four RBIs, seven runs, five walks, five strikeouts, one stolen base, 34 at-bats.

Blake Swihart: .370/.433/.444/.878, one triple, two RBIs, three runs, three walks, seven strikeouts, 27 at-bats.

Sam Travis: .344/.432/.719/1.151, three homers, three doubles, 10 RBIs, seven runs, four walks, eight strikeouts, 32 at-bats.

Deven Marrero: .333/.385/.417/.801, three doubles, four RBIs, four runs, two walks, seven strikeouts, 36 at-bats.

Pablo Sandoval: .333/.350/.615/.965, three homers, two doubles, 11 RBIs, six runs, one walk, 11 strikeouts, 39 at-bats.

Mitch Moreland: .310/.382/.517/.900, one homer, three doubles, 11 RBIs, three runs, four walks, eight strikeouts, 29 at-bats.

Chris Young: .310/.333/.517/.851, one homer, three doubles, six RBIs, five runs, one walk, six strikeouts, one stolen base, 29 at-bats.

Andrew Benintendi: .306/.395/.611/1.006, two homers, five doubles, eight RBIs, four runs, six walks, four strikeouts, one stolen base, 36 at-bats.

Mookie Betts: .300/.353/.500/.853, one homer, three doubles, four RBIs, nine runs, three walks, two strikeouts, two stolen bases, 30 at-bats.

*** *RedSox.com***

Red Sox hold friendly team skills competition

Ian Browne

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- You could tell it was going to be a different kind of Sunday morning at Red Sox camp just by looking at the daily workout sheet.

T-Target hitting, infield accuracy skills, pitching/bunting accuracy, PFP/Gauntlet and obstacle course were the activities listed prior to the 1:05 p.m. ET game against the Twins.

The Red Sox had their own version of the Olympics on Sunday, as they split into two teams -- red and blue -- with some obvious motivation hanging out there for the victor.

The winner got to avoid Tuesday's two-hour bus ride to Tampa, while members of the losing team will make that trip to face the Yankees.

"We shocked the world," said Brock Holt, a member of the underdog blue squad that beat a team captained by Dustin Pedroia.

"They said we were a 16 seed!" said a gleeful Josh Rutledge.

"Big upset," said Holt.

In another corner of the clubhouse, things were more subdued.

"This game is under protest," quipped Pedroia, who will be joined in Tampa by Jackie Bradley Jr., Andrew Benintendi, Hanley Ramirez and starting pitcher Chris Sale.

Others will join Holt and Rutledge in getting some downtime on Tuesday, including blue team captain Chris Young, right fielder Mookie Betts, third baseman Pablo Sandoval, and first baseman Mitch Moreland.

There was actually a draft that took place a couple of days ago to determine how the teams would be separated.

"You always get a pulse and the feel for when things may start to stagnate a little bit because of the length of Spring Training, particularly this year because of the number of additional days," said Red Sox manager

John Farrell. "It's always important to keep it light in some spots, but yet a competitive element to it. This is a team-building opportunity for us as well."

The skill competitions took place on separate fields, and the teams came into the final event -- the obstacle course relay -- in a tie.

Team Pedroia bolted in front, but then the underdogs came back in a big way to win the race decidedly.

"The MVP of the obstacle course was Robby Scott and [Chandler] Shepherd," said Holt. "We were down by a lot, I was worried. Me and Rut did cut the deficit a little bit. But they did really good and brought us all the way back."

Hernandez making big push for roster spot

Ian Browne

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- The way the Red Sox roster is constructed, right-handed hitter Josh Rutledge is the better fit for the final utility spot over lefty Marco Hernandez.

However, Hernandez is giving the club a little more to think about with each passing day.

The 24-year-old infielder belted two triples in Sunday's 13-8 loss to the Twins and is hitting .405 in Spring Training.

"He's had an outstanding spring. He's lighting things up," said Red Sox manager John Farrell. "The way he runs the bases ... you love the bat speed, the athleticism in multiple ways. So everything he can possibly do, he's doing. Where this leads us over his final 10 days, we'll figure all that out, but he's done himself a world of good in this camp."

Boston already has one of the best utility players in the game in Brock Holt, who is a left-handed hitter. Hernandez also hits from the left side, which is why Rutledge at least looks like the better fit on paper. If Rutledge makes the team, he is a good fit playing third base against lefties. Switch-hitter Pablo Sandoval is a far better hitter against righties.

Rutledge was also selected in the Rule 5 Draft, which means the Red Sox would have to offer him back to the Rockies if he doesn't make the 25-man roster.

While some players find a niche in a utility role, the Red Sox think it's too early to put a ceiling like that on Hernandez, who still has Minor League options. Hernandez can play second, short and third.

"To think back when we acquired him for Felix Doubront, he's grown in a number of ways," said Farrell. "Physically, he's maturing. He's getting bigger, he's getting stronger. He did a great job in the offseason of getting himself in shape with morning workouts and playing at night in the Dominican Winter League. He's an explosive player.

"We have him in this competition for a utility job. There's a lot of people who think he is an everyday player if you really start to break him down and look at what he's capable of doing. Yet he's in a group that's talented and deep, so [the competition] is ongoing."

Pomeranz exits early with tight left triceps

Ian Browne

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- Red Sox left-hander Drew Pomeranz departed Sunday's shaky start against the Twins after two innings due to tightness in his left triceps, but said the move was precautionary.

"The first inning, my triceps got a little tight toward the end," said Pomeranz, who left an eventual 13-8 loss to Minnesota. "I told the trainers in between that inning, and went back out and it stayed tight the whole time. Nothing crazy. Just a little triceps tightness."

With David Price out indefinitely with a left elbow strain, the Red Sox are hoping Pomeranz can open the season in the starting rotation. Pomeranz was scheduled to pitch three innings against the Twins.

"I don't think it's anything too serious," Pomeranz said. "I could've gone back out there and thrown another one. I feel like it's something I'll come in tomorrow and be fine."

"It's not related to the area he addressed in the offseason," said Red Sox manager John Farrell. "But still whenever you feel discomfort in the triceps of the throwing arm, we're going to be careful with it. He felt like he could've continued, but we didn't feel like it was appropriate to push it at this point. So we'll reevaluate him when he comes in tomorrow and see what the next steps are for him. Whether that's a bullpen on his normal day and keep him on his five day, that would be ideal, but we'll adjust as need be."

But Pomeranz was already on a more conservative schedule than the other starters this spring and has been playing catch-up due to a left forearm injury he pitched through down the stretch last season.

"I think my workloads have been a little higher this week," said Pomeranz. "Who knows? I threw that second inning and it didn't really loosen up. We just decided to call it quits. I could've thrown one more but, it's still the second start and we'll give it a little rest."

If Pomeranz and Price both start the season on the disabled list, veteran non-roster invitee Kyle Kendrick could be in line to be Boston's fifth starter.

However, Pomeranz still thinks he can start the season in the rotation.

"I don't think this is going to really affect too much," Pomeranz said. "I was one inning shy with what I was supposed to do so I'll just make up for it next time."

In Sunday's outing, Pomeranz gave up two hits, three runs and three walks over two innings, notching one strikeout. Of his 47 pitches, 24 were for strikes.

"I felt good going out there today," said Pomeranz. "It was the best my arm had felt to this point and then I get a little tightness. It's all part of this early season, Spring Training stuff, and it happens sometimes."

Moreland, Hanley strong against Twins

Ian Browne and Rhett Bollinger

FORT MYERS, Fla. -- The Twins rode a balanced attack led by Danny Santana, Eduardo Escobar, Benji Gonzalez and Ben Paulsen en route to a 13-8 victory over the Red Sox in a Sunday slugfest at JetBlue Park.

Hanley Ramirez hit a towering home run and Mitch Moreland went 3-for-3 to lead the Red Sox.

Marco Hernandez, who is trying to win a spot on the Red Sox's bench, continued his strong Spring Training with two hits, both of which were triples. Hernandez also stole home as part of a double steal.

The Red Sox had some cause for concern when lefty Drew Pomeranz departed after two shaky innings with tightness in his left triceps. Pomeranz doesn't think the injury is serious and hopes to make his next start.

"I don't think it's anything too serious," Pomeranz said. "I could've gone back out there and thrown another one. I feel like it's something I'll come in tomorrow and be fine."

Justin Haley, a right-hander the Twins selected from the Red Sox in the Rule 5 Draft, gave up five hits and four runs over two innings. Haley is hoping to win a spot in the bullpen. Chris Gimenez, vying to be Minnesota's backup catcher, had a hit and two RBIs.

"I thought I made some good pitches," Haley said. "I'd love a better turnout. If I could turn back time and rethrow those two innings, I think I'd be good."

Santana played the full game and went 2-for-6 with a pair of RBIs.

Red Sox outfielder Bryce Brentz, who is out of Minor League options and faces long odds to make the team, belted a home run off the bench.

Twins Up Next: Right-hander Tyler Duffey, who is competing for the fifth spot in Minnesota's rotation, starts against the Blue Jays as the Twins make the trip up to Dunedin, Fla., for a 12:07 p.m. CT start. Lefty Adalberto Mejia, who is also competing to be in the rotation, will pitch in relief.

Red Sox Up Next: Kyle Kendrick will start Monday's 1:05 p.m. ET (Gameday Audio) game against the Orioles. It is a start that takes on added importance after Pomeranz's injury. Kendrick, a non-roster invitee, could be the first starter the Red Sox call on if an opening develops in the rotation. Heath Hembree, who has had a strong camp, will pitch out of the bullpen. Former Red Sox lefty Wade Miley will pitch for the Orioles.

*** *ESPNBoston.com***

Red Sox pitcher Drew Pomeranz leaves spring training start early with tightness in left triceps

Scott Lauber

Left-hander Drew Pomeranz left a start one inning earlier than expected Sunday, and once again, the Boston Red Sox are hoping a starting pitcher hasn't suffered a serious injury.

Pomeranz complained of tightness in his left triceps, a sensation that developed in the first inning against the Minnesota Twins and persisted through the second. He threw 47 pitches and didn't come out for a third scheduled inning.

Although Pomeranz described the issue as "nothing crazy" and told reporters he doesn't believe it's anything serious, the Red Sox must be wary. Pomeranz experienced left elbow/forearm stiffness late last season and received a stem-cell injection over the winter.

"It's not related to the area that was addressed in the offseason," Farrell told reporters, nevertheless adding that the team will "be careful" with Pomeranz.

The Red Sox's pitching depth is already being tested. Veteran right-hander Clay Buchholz was dealt to the Philadelphia Phillies for minor league infielder Josh Tobias in December in order to create payroll flexibility, and lefty David Price has not yet made a spring training start because of elbow stiffness and is set to open the season on the disabled list. The Sox still have five major league starters (Rick Porcello, Chris Sale, Eduardo Rodriguez, Steven Wright and Pomeranz), but Triple-A option Henry Owens has slid on the depth chart during a horrendous spring in which he is overhauling his mechanics.

If Pomeranz is not ready to begin the season on time, veteran right-hander Kyle Kendrick likely would be first in line to take his spot. Kendrick hasn't allowed a run in 15 consecutive spring training innings and has a 1.50 ERA in 18 innings overall.

Pomeranz is expected to be re-evaluated Monday. Farrell told reporters that it's "too early to speculate" on whether Pomeranz will miss his next start.

The Red Sox acquired Pomeranz from the San Diego Padres last July for 19-year-old pitching prospect Anderson Espinoza. An investigation by Major League Baseball revealed that the Padres failed to disclose Pomeranz's accurate medical information, but the Red Sox declined the chance to rescind the trade.

* **WEEI.com**

How Red Sox Rookie Andrew Benintendi Is Handling This Unprecedented Amount Of Attention

Rob Bradford

FORT MYERS, Fla. — A few days ago, it was a Sports Illustrated photographer telling Andrew Benintendi to jump toward the camera, lay down on the grass, and simulate making all kind of catches.

“That,” Benintendi said with a smile, “was kind of weird.”

But all of this is a little weird for the 22-year-old. At least it should be.

Benintendi has been marching through his first big league camp with perhaps more potential distractions than any Red Sox rookie before him. Sports Illustrated was just one example of those trying to tug on the outfielder's time. Sunday it was the MLB Network. There have been at least 10 other formal requests to go along with the daily wave of media heading to his locker.

“He's been up there with [Chris] Sale, [Rick] Porcello, [David] Price, [Dustin] Pedroia. He's been up there with those guys. Really only Mookie [Betts, Price and Sale have had more requests,” said Red Sox media relations director Kevin Gregg. “He's been requested like he's been a regular player for a long time now. This is by far the most I've seen for a rookie.”

Is it a concern for the man who is largely responsible for helping Benintendi direct this traffic?

“No, I don't because I think he had a good routine in place and he frequently checks in with us about his time and what he needs to do,” Gregg added. “He's done a good job of balancing it.”

Benintendi's manager agrees.

“I think he's handled it well,” John Farrell said. “He's a very even-tempered personality and having seen that because of maybe some of the additional requests take away from his personal routine, creating frustration. He's a pretty level-headed person.”

Watching Benintendi, it's hard to remember this is his first spring training with the big leaguers. A year ago, he was on the back fields sitting with 40,000 few Twitter followers than he currently boasts. Now, he's weaving in and out of the land mines that come with his current existence while hitting .308 with a .981 OPS in 39 Grapefruit League at-bats.

“I remember coming over and I didn't know what to do,” said Benintendi of the two games he played in with the major league team last spring training (going 3-for-4). “It was like a ‘What do I do with my hands?’ kind of moment. Now it's good.”

Somewhat surprisingly, Benintendi said he was not only expecting the out-the-ordinary attention, but feels like he was equipped to handle it. Life in the spotlight as one of college baseball's best players, along with living with the label as the game's No. 1 prospect, offered ample warning.

“Sometimes you might feel like a bad guy saying no all the time, but we have to get our stuff done,” he said. “But I'm a lot more prepared than I was a year ago.”

*** CSNNE.com**

Drew Pomeranz Exits With Tricep Tightness In Red Sox' 13-8 Loss To Twins

Henry McKenna

Drew Pomeranz's departure wasn't the only thing that went wrong for the Boston Red Sox in their 13-8 loss to the Minnesota Twins on Sunday at JetBlue Park. The Twins offense scored five runs in the fourth inning and four runs in the seventh inning on the way to a comfortable win over the Sox.

Pomeranz, who had a recent procedure on his flexor tendon, didn't sound concerned with his departure from the game when the Red Sox were trailing, 3-1, after two innings. He was scheduled to play three.

"The first inning, my triceps got a little tight toward the end," Pomeranz said, via RedSox.com. "I told the trainers in between that inning, and went back out and it stayed tight the whole time. Nothing crazy. Just a little triceps tightness."

Hanley Ramirez (2 of 3), Mitch Moreland (3 of 3) and Marco Hernandez (2 of 3) each had a multi-hit game. Ramirez and Bryce Brent had homers. Hernandez had a triple.

Kyle Kendrick will get the start in the Sox' next game against the Baltimore Orioles on Monday at 1:05 p.m. ET.