

## ***The Boston Red Sox Friday, April 13, 2018***

### ***\* The Boston Globe***

#### **Rick Porcello mowed down the Yankees, and the Red Sox got the last laugh**

Peter Abraham

A day after the Red Sox and Yankees brawled at Fenway Park, the most drama on Thursday night was caused by the weather.

Rick Porcello had a no-hitter going through five innings when rain delayed the game for 45 minutes. The righthander remained in the game and retired the Yankees in order in the sixth.

Needing nine outs for history, Porcello lost the no-hitter when Aaron Judge doubled leading off the seventh. He and Sox settled for a 6-3 victory before a crowd of 36,341.

The 10-2 Sox took two of three from their rivals. They open a four-game series against the Orioles on Friday night.

Porcello wasn't contemplating a no-hitter. He just wanted to go deep into the game knowing the bullpen had been extended on Wednesday.

"It wasn't a big deal at all. Went back out there and felt fine," Porcello said.

After Porcello threw seven shutout innings, Marcus Walden took over with a 6-0 lead. He got through the eighth inning but not the ninth.

A walk, an error, and a walk loaded the bases for Gary Sanchez and he lined a three-run double to the triangle in center.

The Sox had to rush closer Craig Kimbrel into the game. He finished the Yankees off for his fourth save, striking out Neil Walker and Tyler Wade to end it.

Porcello (3-0) allowed two hits over seven innings and 99 pitches. He struck out six without a walk to drop his earned run average to 1.83.

To this point, Porcello hasn't just recaptured his form he showed in his Cy Young season of 2016 — he has been even better.

"I feel like me," Porcello said. "I feel like we can go out there attack guys with whatever I've got."

That Sandy Leon, a gifted pitch-caller, has caught all three of Porcello's starts is a significant factor in his resurgence after posting a 4.65 ERA last season.

"Sandy called a hell of a game," Porcello said. "Can't say enough about the pitch mix that he was putting down back there. We were on the same page and I was just trying to hit the glove."

Retired All-Star Carlos Beltran told manager Alex Cora that the difference in Porcello from 2016 to '17 was the changeup.

For Leon, it has been efficiency.

“Getting ahead in the count more,” he said. “Getting early outs, too. Keeping the ball down. Almost every pitch in any count and he can execute it.”

The Red Sox lost first baseman Hanley Ramirez in the first inning when he was hit on the right wrist by a pitch from Sonny Gray.

X-rays were negative and Ramirez has a contusion, the Sox said.

Gray threw a fastball that tailed inside and struck Ramirez. It did not look intentional and Gray appeared distraught.

But given the brawl between the teams in the seventh inning on Wednesday, it heightened tensions at Fenway Park and the crowd booed.

Ramirez has been one of the team’s best players this season, hitting .357 with four extra-base hits and 12 RBIs through 10 games. He also has three stolen bases.

Gray lasted four innings and allowed six runs on seven hits. He walked two and threw three wild pitches.

The Sox took a 4-0 lead in the second inning.

Eduardo Nunez reached in a single before Jackie Bradley Jr. drew a walk. Nunez advanced on a wild pitch and scored on a single by Leon.

A sacrifice fly from Mookie Betts scored Bradley. When Andrew Benintendi grounded to second, Leon beat a throw to the plate from Tyler Wade.

Mitch Moreland, who replaced Ramirez, singled to left field to drive in Holt.

Nunez doubled to open the third inning. Bradley then sent a fly ball down the line in left for what should have been an out. But Giancarlo Stanton overran the ball and it fell in for a double. It was Bradley’s first RBI of the season.

Bradley advanced on a wild pitch and scored when Betts grounded into a force play.

Gray is 0-3 with a 7.23 ERA in four career starts at Fenway.

Porcello had an easy time with the Yankees, retiring 15 of the 16 batters he faced. The only Yankee who reached was Stanton, who was nicked on the elbow by a fastball with two outs in the fourth inning.

The rain delay started after the fifth inning. The crowd watched the Bruins playoff game as rain fell then let out a loud cheer when Porcello emerged from the dugout and jogged to the mound.

Porcello stayed loose on an exercise bike and did some throwing. Cora was close to going to the bullpen but stayed with his starter.

“We felt comfortable,” he said. “I don’t know if we were thinking complete game. But one more inning, two more innings, that was fine.”

Porcello retired the side in the sixth on 14 pitches, striking out Brett Gardner to end the inning. The cheers grew louder as those fans who stayed were glad they did.

Judge lined a 2-and-1 slider to center field for his double. When Stanton reached on an infield single, Porcello had a jam to deal with.

He retired Didi Gregorius on a fly ball to right field and Sanchez via a called third strike. Aaron Hicks then struck out swinging and Porcello pumped his fist as he left the mound.

Since joining the Red Sox in 2015, Porcello has a 2.51 ERA in 10 starts against the Yankees.

### **This Red Sox-Yankees series sure does bode well for the rest of the season**

Dan Shaughnessy

A lot of goofy stuff happened while the Yankees were in town Tuesday through Thursday at Fenway Park. It bodes well for the 16 games the two clubs will play vs. one another between now and October.

We saw a 14-1 Sox rout on Tuesday. We saw the Yanks win, 10-7, on Wednesday in a game that will forever be remembered for Joe “Fight Club” Kelly dotting Tyler Austin in retaliation for a hard slide on Brock Holt. Thursday we saw Rick Porcello throw six innings of no-hit ball as the Sox beat the Yankees, 6-3, on a rain-soaked night.

Porcello threw 59 pitches and had the no-hitter going when April rains doused Fenway and sent fans into the belly of the ballpark to check out the Bruins’ playoff opener vs. the Maple Leafs at 8:52 p.m. Thursday. It looked like Porcello would be done for the night with a five-inning, pocket no-no when the L. L. Bean (“Keeping the Sox dry since 1912”) tarp covered the infield.

“I was in the dugout watching it [Bruins],” admitted Sox manager Alex Cora. “That was a nice goal I saw. It looked like a bunt. It’s fun. Cool to see.”

After a 45-minute rain delay, Boston’s lean righty came back out to pitch the sixth and retired New York’s 8-9-1 hitters in order, fanning Brett Gardner to send the game, and the no-hitter into the seventh. New York’s only base runner of the first six innings came when a Porcello pitch grazed off the elbow pad of 59-homer man Giancarlo Stanton. It was not intentional — same as Sonny Gray’s 94 m.p.h. pitch that zapped Hanley Ramirez’s right wrist in the first (Hanley left the game, but X-rays were negative and the pitch had not a sniff of nefarious intent).

It was left to Bunyan-esque Yankee slugger Aaron Judge to break up Porcello’s no-hitter with a booming double over Jackie Bradley’s head leading off the top of the seventh. The long shot sucked some of the drama out of the night, but the soaked, thinning Fenway throng did not seem to mind because it looked like the Sox were about to take two of three from the vaunted Yanks.

Porcello gave up a second hit, but fanned Aaron Hicks to get out of the mini-jam and delivered a 6-0 lead to the bullpen.

Everything was just swell until rookie Marcus Walden was roughed up for three runs in the ninth and the Sox were forced to bring Craig Kimbrel in for an easy 1-2-3 save.

“It was a good series,” said Cora. “We won two out of three. After everything that happened, that’s good.”

Fallout from Wednesday’s memorable event dominated the local sports news cycle right up until Thursday’s first pitch.

Color me surprised by the amount of blowback we got here at the Globe for coverage and headlines that some readers suggested were pro-violence (“Brawl is just what Red Sox/Yankee rivalry needed”). I got a lot of “what about the children?” comments, and my new favorite e-mailer sent a thoughtful missive under the subject line “You should be ashamed of yourself” with a complaint that somehow aligned the Fenway fracas with the notion of a potential American missile strike launch against Syria. My deep-thinking reader wondered, “could it be that American voters, having been raised on the rituals of baseball, can no longer tell the different between theatre and reality?”

Yeesh. How did we get here from a 97 m.p.h. fastball Kelly aimed at the broad back of Tyler Austin?

“This is something that is normal in baseball,” insisted Cora, a 42-year-old grizzled hardball lifer.

Back on planet earth, there were multiple post-fight story lines, many highlighting the new camaraderie of the 2018 Red Sox, along with questions regarding why David Price came out of the game after only one inning.

The Price question, of course is unfair, but real. Sox fans have been gunning for this guy since he signed here for \$217 million. His reputation as a big-game failure is well documented and Price did little to help himself with his bad behavior during his injury-riddled 2017 season. It looked like Price was about to get back into the good graces of the fandom right up until he surrendered four runs in a 60-pitch first inning, then disappeared only to tell us after the game that he was cold and able to throw baseballs against a wall by the late innings.

Cora was careful to remind us, “He didn’t ask to come out of the game.” According to the Cora, Price’s sudden departure was the manager’s call all the way. As soon as Price talked about a “sensation” in his fingertips, he was pulled for precautionary reasons.

“You could see he was uncomfortable,” said the manager. “You could tell by the location of his pitches.”

MLB doled out the standard suspensions and fines an hour before the rubber game of the series.

Cora and Yankee manager Aaron Boone both said they believed a cease-fire was in order.

“I hope it’s something that’s behind us,” said Boone.

“We’re trying to win the series,” added Cora.

Home plate umpire Chris Guccione did not issue any warnings before Porcello threw the first pitch at 7:12 p.m.

Hanley got hit in the first inning. It looked painful. The heater drilled into Ramirez’s right wrist. It was the kind of pitch that broke rookie Jim Rice’s bone in September of 1975 and took Jim Ed out of the World Series vs. the Reds.

But the clean X-rays mean that Hanley will be back soon.

And so will the first place, 10-2, Red Sox. They play the Orioles at Fenway on Friday night.

### **When his pitcher is being charged, what’s a catcher to do?**

Peter Abraham

When Tyler Austin charged the mound on Wednesday night, Red Sox catcher Christian Vazquez made a grab at his jersey but couldn’t finish the tackle.

Such is the dilemma for a catcher when a hitter decides to attack your pitcher.

“You never know what to do,” said Sox catcher Sandy Leon. “It’s a tough decision because you don’t know what the other guy is thinking. You just have to react.”

Plus, with all their gear on, catchers aren’t exactly built to chase an enraged opponent.

“I’ve seen guys that get in front. There are others that grab them. But if you grab them, there are a lot of guys coming to you,” Red Sox manager Alex Cora said. “It’s a tough one.”

There is no handbook for brawls, after all.

Vazquez stood up after the pitch from Joe Kelly hit Austin and took his mask off. When Austin started toward the mound, Vazquez put his mask back on and followed.

“I was surprised,” Vazquez said. “I was trying to catch him.”

Leon is a veteran of six winter ball seasons in Venezuela. There, he said, brawls are commonplace.

“The fans love it. I think some of the players do, too,” he said. “It gets a little crazy. You’re trying to win a game and you’re thinking about the next pitch and then a fight breaks out.”

Said Cora: “When you go out there, you have no idea. [Thursday] I was thinking about it. I’m like, ‘What are you doing?’ I was in the middle of the whole thing grabbing CC Sabathia. I mean come on.”

The Yankees list Sabathia as 6 feet 6 inches and 300 pounds. Cora is six inches shorter and roughly 90 pounds lighter.

“I was sore,” said Cora, who visited massage therapist Russell Nua for some work.

For Cora, there is one guideline he follows when the benches clear.

“They go out there and they defend their teammates, their family. But you won’t want people to get hurt,” he said. “It’s the same rule: Don’t throw a punch and grab somebody.”

### **Red Sox, Yankees don’t see eye to eye on Tyler Austin’s slide**

Nick Cafardo

By the time the afternoon press conferences had been held managers Alex Cora and Aaron Boone had had enough time to dig in with their opinions on the slide that Tyler Austin made on Brock Holt, which precipitated an all-out bench-clearing event in the seventh inning Wednesday night after Red Sox reliever Joe Kelly threw at Austin.

The fight resulted in a six-game suspension for Kelly, a five-gamer for Austin, various fines from Cora, Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin, and players CC Sabathia, Dustin Pedroia, and Xander Bogaerts, who because they’re on the disabled list aren’t allowed on the field.

The drama didn’t end there as Yankees starter Sonny Gray hit Hanley Ramirez in the right wrist with a pitch in the first inning Thursday night, forcing the Sox first baseman out of the game. X-rays were negative. Gray’s pitch did not appear to be intentional.

Cora and his team saw Wednesday’s fracas one way. Boone and the Yankees see it completely different. The differences are as vast as Yankees and the Red Sox.

It all stems from Austin’s slide in the third inning. Was it a cheap shot or just a hard slide based on the situation?

One thing both teams agree on is that the new rule change governing slides — the Chase Utley rule — has changed the way players slide and the way fielders hang in. There’s no “neighborhood play” where the fielder bails out to avoid getting ripped up by the spikes of an oncoming runner.

On the slide, there was great debate by Cora and Boone on what exactly transpired. In the end, the league ruled there was no foul with the slide. The Red Sox were trying to get a double-play ruling, arguing the slide was outside the straight line of the base, but Baseball Central didn’t see it that way.

“The slide rule prohibits runners from using a “roll block” or attempting to initiate contact with the fielder by elevating and kicking his leg above the fielder’s knee, throwing his arm or his upper body or grabbing the fielder. When a violation of the slide rule occurs, the offending runner and the batter-runner will be called out.

“Accidental contact can occur in the course of a permissible slide, and a runner will not be called for interference if contact is caused by a fielder being in the runner’s legal pathway to the base.”

The rule applies to trying to break up a double play. The runner has to make contact with the ground before he slides into the bag.

Here’s Cora’s take:

“The fact that he [Austin] was trying to beat the throw? I don’t buy it. If you’re trying to beat the throw either you’re going head first to second or you go straight to the bag. There’s not a double play because you know who’s running. If you’re trying to beat the throw you’re not going sideways, you go straight to the bag. I still think he overslid the bag and the spikes were up.”

Boone didn’t buy it.

After watching the slide over and over he was asked whether he still held the same view he did the night before.

“I do. I have no issue with the slide,” Boone said. “And that’s not sitting here as a Yankee. If you go back and look at my thoughts last year on [Manny] Machado’s slide [that injured Pedroia], I think this was a case of this is not your typical fielder’s choice/double-play situation. Tyler was running down the line peeking to see if there’s going to be a play. There’s a chance you go in standing up because there’s not going to be a play there. So it’s kind of a late decision so you don’t necessarily get the perfect slide straight to the base. I would argue once you go past the base at all, you slow down every move and your cleat is going to pop up in that manner. Not because it’s intentional. I would quibble with anyone who thought there was any malicious intent there and that it was even that big of a deal. I don’t think it was a big deal at all.”

Looking at the slide, it’s obvious Austin spiked Holt. His left foot was high into Holt, who had to hang in there because the old neighborhood play is long gone. Fielders used to be able to catch the ball and then bail out of the bag to avoid a hard slide and they’d get the out. With the new rule, you have to stay on the bag to get the out. The rule was intended to protect infielders from the horrific take-out slides like Uteley made on Mets infielder Ruben Tejada in Game 2 of the NL Division Series in 2015 that broke Tejada’s leg.

That’s why Machado never paid any penalty for his slide against Pedroia, which essentially ruined Pedroia’s season last April.

The Red Sox were praised by their fan base for sticking together and bonding over the seventh-inning showdown. Kelly was hailed for sticking up for his teammates, though some in baseball wondered why the pitchers preceding Kelly didn’t act.

There were a few punches thrown, a few wrestling matches. Cora said a few of his players and coach Carlos Febles, who took an errant punch from Austin square in the jaw, felt sore. Even Cora kidded that he realized how crazy it was that he was trying to keep the 6-foot-6-inch, 300-pound Sabathia out of the fray.

Boone downplayed any thought of repercussions before Thursday’s game.

“It’s two passionate clubs and those things happen over a course of a season,” Boone said before Ramirez was forced to leave. “Unfortunately I don’t read too much into it other than two teams playing for a lot and competing for a lot. Over the course of a long season those things happen.”

The only question is, for how much longer will “those things” keep happening?

### **Hanley Ramirez leaves game after getting hit by pitch**

Peter Abraham

Red Sox first baseman Hanley Ramirez was hit on the right wrist by a fastball thrown by Yankees pitcher Sonny Gray in the first inning on Thursday night and left the game.

X-rays were negative and he has a contusion, the Sox said.

Gray threw a fastball that tailed inside and struck Ramirez. It did not look intentional and Gray appeared distraught.

But given the brawl between the teams in the seventh inning on Wednesday, it heightened tensions at Fenway Park and the crowd booted.

Ramirez was examined by an athletic trainer and returned to the dugout.

Ramirez has been one of the team’s best players this season, hitting .357 with four extra-base hits and 12 RBIs in 10 games. He also has three stolen bases.

Mitch Moreland replaced Ramirez at first base.

### **Red Sox prospect Darwinzon Hernandez makes his pitch for the fast track**

Alex Speier

Five years ago, a pitcher now viewed as one of the top Red Sox prospects feared that the end had come before the beginning.

As a 16-year-old in 2013, Darwinzon Hernandez stood ready to start his pro career. He’d captured attention in Venezuela as a hard-throwing lefthander who, at that young age, could touch 90 m.p.h. Yet as the July opening of the international amateur signing period neared, Hernandez suffered an elbow injury that allowed his risk to overshadow his promise.

“It was really scary,” Hernandez recalled through a translator this spring. “In the area where I was from, I was one of the best lefthanded pitchers around there. When I suffered the injury and started feeling some discomfort, I went from throwing 90-plus to 80, and it was uncomfortable to throw the ball.”

Yet by that summer, he’d worked his way back toward health. While he was scrambling to find a team at a time when clubs were already turning their attention from the 2013-14 international class to the 2014-15 group — with most teams having made most of their major financial commitments — Hernandez was determined to find an opportunity.

Alex Requena, a Red Sox scout in Venezuela who had followed Hernandez since he was 14, stayed in touch with the pitcher. After a workout where the lefty recalled being back up to 86-87 m.p.h., the Red Sox offered Hernandez \$7,500. He jumped.

“I’ve always been a fan of the Boston Red Sox,” said Hernandez. “The day after the San Francisco Giants offered me \$100,000. I still decided to keep my commitment with the Red Sox because I wanted to sign with them.”

Still, Hernandez felt that he was entering the organization at a distinct disadvantage. As a low-dollar signee, the Red Sox had little invested in him if he faltered. In the early years of his career — particularly a 2014

debut in the Dominican Summer League in which he sat mostly at 84-88 m.p.h., then again in the 2015 Dominican Summer League and a 2016 campaign in Lowell — Hernandez felt that his career hung in the balance with every pitch.

“I was pitching very insecure, just because you have the whole group that is on top of you and ranked higher than you. I went into it thinking I wanted to pitch well so I didn’t get tossed, get released,” said Hernandez. “That was always on my mind when I was pitching.”

Even so, Hernandez had started to open eyes with his stuff — a fastball that over his time with the Red Sox crept into the mid-90s along with a curveball and changeup — though he struggled to harness it in the strike zone, walking 5.4 batters per nine innings from 2014-16. Finally, last year in Single A Greenville, Hernandez decided that it was time to attack.

“I just wanted to take the year, be focused, and think, ‘This is my year. I want to be that same bulldog that really attacks hitters and pitches my game,’ ” said Hernandez, who went 4-5 with a 4.01 ERA with 10.1 strikeouts and a career-best 4.3 walks per nine innings. “It went really well.”

Hernandez showed stuff that qualified as electrifying at times. Working aggressively to both sides of the plate from a low three-quarters arm slot that allows him to generate considerable cut and run on his pitches, Hernandez sits in the mid-90s, generally from 92-96 m.p.h., but with the ability to touch slightly north of that. While his primary secondary pitch has been a curveball, his arm slot (somewhat reminiscent of Francisco Liriano) seems ideally suited for a slider, a pitch that he worked to incorporate (along with a cutter) late last season and has continued to develop into his primary secondary offering this year.

He now features a fastball/slider/cutter/curveball/changeup mix that has consistently given opponents fits. Hernandez has held hitters to a .222 average in his minor league career, allowing just nine homers in 250 career innings while punching out just over a batter an inning.

“I hate getting hit. I hate it when hitters hit my pitches. I don’t like any hitters to get the best of me,” said Hernandez. “At the risk of not sounding too arrogant or cocky, my fastball is very uncomfortable for hitters. You don’t know where it’s going to go — if it’s going to go inside, outside, sink.

“I read that the most effective pitch in the big leagues was a slider, so I wanted to perfect that to have another way to get guys out.”

This season, Hernandez opened the year in the rotation of High A Salem, where he pitched five shutout innings with six strikeouts and three walks in his first start. The 21-year-old has the raw stuff to be a mid-rotation starter, but his strike-throwing and command will have to improve in order for him to have the pitch efficiency to remain a starter.

Some see the potential for a dominant late-innings reliever in the mold of Jake McGee, with a pretty clear floor of someone whose fastball and breaking ball can overwhelm lefties (who hit .184/.282/.196 against him last year).

That’s a pretty broad range of possibilities, typical of a Red Sox system where so many of its top prospects are in the lower levels. But given that he has now moved beyond the insecurity and uncertainty of an undistinguished beginning of his career to emerge as one of the top prospects in the Sox system, Hernandez is approaching this season as one of considerable possibility.

“My goal actually [for this year] is to go to Double A and hopefully get a September callup, but if not, then finish the year in Double A and next year be on a fast track to be up there in the big leagues,” said Hernandez. “[But] the main thing for me has always been that I love to work. . . . I want that fifth day to be perfect.”

THREE UP



■ RHP Kutter Crawford, Single A Greenville: The 2017 16th-round pick has commanded attention with a righthanded four-pitch mix headlined by, yes, a cutter and a 91-93 m.p.h. fastball that has him off to a strong start (2.00 ERA, 13 strikeouts, 2 walks, 9 innings).

■ 3B Bobby Dalbec, High A Salem: After an injury-marred 2017 season, Dalbec — a 2016 fourth-rounder whose raw power may exceed that of anyone else in the Red Sox system — has blasted two homers with a .609 slugging mark through seven games.

■ LHP Williams Jerez, Triple A Pawtucket: The lefty reliever shows the stuff — a mid- to high-90s fastball with a splitter and occasional slider — to assert himself as a big league bullpen option. He's retired all nine batters he's faced with three strikeouts.

### THREE DOWN

■ RHP Brandon Workman, Triple A Pawtucket: Workman's stuff was down in the spring, and he's been hit hard to start the year, allowing 10 of 18 batters to reach while striking out just one.

■ OF Jeremy Barfield, Triple A Pawtucket: Coming off a 28-homer season in 2017, the 29-year-old opened the year by going 1 for 16 with 10 strikeouts.

■ C Austin Rei, Double A Portland: Rei has the defensive tools to be a big leaguer, but he has yet to hit as a pro, and he's off to an 0-for-15 start with 10 strikeouts.

### **Joe Kelly, Tyler Austin suspended for Red Sox-Yankees brawl**

Peter Abraham

Major League Baseball reacted swiftly to the brawl between the Red Sox and Yankees on Wednesday night, issuing fines and suspensions on Thursday.

Sox pitcher Joe Kelly was suspended for six games by MLB chief baseball officer Joe Torre and fined an undisclosed amount for intentionally hitting Tyler Austin in the seventh inning and then fighting.

Austin was suspended five games and fined for charging the mound and fighting.

Both players appealed their suspensions and will be available until their cases are heard.

Four players on the disabled list who went onto the field when benches cleared — Xander Bogaerts, Marco Hernandez and Dustin Pedroia of the Sox, and Yankees' pitcher CC Sabathia — also were fined.

The fight was a byproduct of Austin's aggressive slide into Red Sox shortstop Brock Holt in the third inning. When Austin came to the plate in the seventh inning, Kelly hit him in the back with a fastball. Austin then charged the mound and was punched several times by Kelly.

Kelly denied intent, a specious argument at best given the situation.

MLB also fined Sox manager Alex Cora and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin.

Cora and Nevin exchanged words after the brawl was broken up.

"After the whole thing he was screaming at our dugout," Cora said. "I don't know if he was screaming specifically at me. I took exception. I don't want to say I overreacted, but that's not me."

Nevin made a show of gesturing at the Red Sox dugout after learning he had been ejected. Cora then dismissively waved Nevin away.

“There’s something about chain of command,” Cora said. “If we’re going to let everybody be screaming in situations like that, well, it wasn’t a good situation in the beginning and it can be worse.

“I don’t manage their team, obviously. I manage my team. I don’t want any of my coaches to be screaming at [Yankees manager] Aaron Boone or any of their players and I took exception.

“Out of character for me, but I still didn’t like the fact that he was pointing at me and screaming.”

Nevin said that Cora was unprofessional for shouting at him, something that Boone said he did not agree with.

Nevin also mocked the Sox, saying there was “maybe a little backpedal, if you will,” when he was yelling.

Cora and Nevin were contemporaries as players. But there was no prior history of hard feelings, Cora said.

“No, man. I was a utility guy. He was a superstar,” Cora said.

Nevin, the first overall pick of the 1992 draft, was a career .270 hitter over 12 seasons with seven teams and appeared in one playoff game.

Score one for Cora.

Ramirez’s wrist is OK

Hanley Ramirez was hit on the right wrist by a Sonny Gray fastball in the first inning and left the game.

X-rays were negative and he has a contusion. Cora said he plans to give Ramirez a day off Friday.

Cora said the ball hit Ramirez in both wrists and was sore.

Ramirez had returned home by the time the game ended. But he did make a comment via Twitter.

“Hand should be OK,” he wrote. “Thanks for all your messages.”

Gray threw a pitch that tailed inside and struck Ramirez. It did not look intentional and Gray appeared distraught.

But given the brawl, it heightened tensions at Fenway Park and the crowd booed.

Ramirez was examined by an athletic trainer and returned to the dugout.

Ramirez has been one of the team’s best players this season, hitting .357 with four extra-base hits and 12 RBIs through the first 10 games. He also has three stolen bases.

Mitch Moreland replaced Ramirez at first base and went 2 for 3 with an RBI in a 6-3 victory.

Price starts Tuesday

David Price, who left Wednesday’s game after one inning with numbness in his left hand, played catch without any discomfort. He has been scheduled to start Tuesday in Anaheim.

The forecast was a factor in that decision, Cora said. Heavy rain is expected on Monday and the Sox would not want to start Price then see the game delayed or postponed.

“I told him I was fine for Monday or I could come back on Saturday or Sunday [or] go sit in the ’pen if needed,” Price said. “I’ll go out there whenever he wants but he thought Tuesday would be better weather-wise.”

Price allowed four runs on three hits and a two walks on Wednesday, throwing only 16 of 35 pitches for strikes. He said his hand had bothered him before in raw weather and had “thawed out.”

Price did not require an MRI.

“All the tests, everything that our training staff had to do for us to feel comfortable with the situation, has been good,” Cora said.

Price said he knew he was fine by the time he went to bed Wednesday.

“It’s something I’ve always had, even when I was a little kid,” he said. “My hands and my feet are two things that are always cold. Whenever it’s cold outside, it kind of intensifies that.”

Hector Velazquez is scheduled to start Saturday. Brian Johnson will go on Monday.

Walden returns

The Red Sox placed lefthanded reliever Bobby Poyner on the 10-day disabled list with a left hamstring strain. Righthander Marcus Walden was recalled from Triple A Pawtucket. He had been optioned on Saturday.

Poyner appeared in six of the first 11 games and allowed two runs over seven innings with eight strikeouts and one walk.

Walden pitched a scoreless eighth inning then allowed three runs in the ninth without getting an out.

Paying tribute

On the five-year anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombings, the Sox will pay tribute to the victims before Friday’s game.

The ceremony will include survivors along with family members of Krystle Campbell, Sean Collier, Lingzi Lu, and Martin Richard. Boston police officer Dennis Simmonds, who sustained wounds that led to his death in 2014, also will be recognized.

On Monday, the Sox will wear uniform jerseys with “Boston” across the front. As part of One Boston Day, the team will donate 50/50 raffle proceeds to 11 Marathon-related charities.

On Friday, Brock and Lakyn Holt will deliver pizza and ice cream to patients at The Jimmy Fund clinic.

Dustin Pedroia and Rick Porcello will visit the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital with the World Series trophies on hand.

Jackie and Erin Bradley will hand out Sox gear and lunch Boston Public Schools officials at the Bolling Building in Roxbury.

On Sunday, members of the front office will participate in the Martin Richard Foundation’s day of service by assisting in neighborhood clean-up efforts in Dorchester.

Warming trend?

It was 53 degrees at first pitch, the warmest game of the homestand by 10 degrees. But it was raining . . . The Yankees activated outfielder Aaron Hicks from the disabled list and he was in the lineup as the designated hitter. Outfielder Shane Robinson was designated for assignment.

## **\* *The Boston Herald***

**Rick Porcello dominant as Red Sox take early series with Yankees**

Jason Mastrodonato

Three starts into this 2018 season, Rick Porcello looks like he's back.

In a grey and wet game last night against the New York Yankees, Porcello's sinker frustrated and his slider was biting. He took a no-hitter into a rain delay after five innings, then surrendered two hits but no runs through seven in the Red Sox' 6-3 win to clinch the series.

"I just feel like me," Porcello said afterward. "I feel like I can go out there and attack guys and go at them with whatever I got."

After losing 11-of-19 to the Yankees last year, the Sox have begun this season taking two of the first three from their rivals as they improved to 10-2 overall.

Chris Sale was nasty in Game 1 of the series. David Price couldn't get warm and the bullpen was beat up in Game 2. Porcello overpowered in Game 3.

The 2016 Cy Young Award winner was feeling his slider from the get-go and the Yankees hardly could touch it. Porcello kept his sinker en vogue throughout the game, but added a whopping 32 sliders, his second-highest slider total since 2011.

"They have a lot of good fastball hitters," Porcello said. "That was the right pitch to throw. Just try to make them nasty. They hit them in the zone real good. We try to expand them, get them to chase a bunch. That was a good pitch for us tonight."

Six sliders induced outs. Five were swung at and missed. And only one was a mistake — a belt-high slider to Aaron Judge in the seventh inning that snapped his no-hitter and dropped into the center-field triangle for a double.

Porcello was nearly perfect through five. His only blemish was a hit batsman when he plunked Giancarlo Stanton on an inside fastball in the fourth inning.

The rain started coming down hard in the fourth but the Red Sox already had jumped out to a 6-0 lead off Yankees starter Sonny Gray.

The first four Sox batters reached safely to put a run on the board to start the second inning. Mookie Betts hit a long fly to score a second. Andrew Benintendi reached on an error to score a third. And Mitch Moreland, in off the bench after Hanley Ramirez left with a bruised hand, poked an RBI single into the outfield for a fourth.

A gaffe by Stanton led to another run in the third inning. Eduardo Nunez doubled to start the frame but when Jackie Bradley Jr. lifted a shallow fly to left field soon after, Stanton overran the ball and let it fall. It bounced over his head and over the side wall for a ground-rule double and RBI. Bradley later scored to wrap up the Red Sox' offense in this one.

Porcello was through five innings on just 60 pitches when there was a 45-minute rain delay. He came back out in the sixth and struck out two, but finally allowed a pair of hits in the seventh.

He finished with 99 pitches and his first scoreless outing since July 19, 2016, against the San Francisco Giants.

It was a good thing his no-hitter wasn't still intact after seven, because manager Alex Cora said he was thinking of taking Porcello out of the game regardless.

"We were too far away from that," Porcello said. "Our bullpen was thin. I'm just trying to get outs."

Through three starts this year, Porcello has allowed just four runs on 14 hits in 19 2/3 innings, striking out 17 to just one walk.

He looks like a much different pitcher than the one that led the league in hits allowed (236) and home runs allowed (38) while posting a 4.65 ERA last season.

“I remember Carlos Beltran, he talked about him last year and he said the stuff was still there, but his changeup wasn’t there,” Cora said. “Carlos faced him a few times I guess in the AL East. When he talks, guys listen, and that was the feedback. He felt velocity was there, movement was there but that pitch was made him a different pitcher compared to the previous year.

“I think the changeup is the difference-maker compared to previous years.”

The Yankees had little going until Marcus Walden, called up from Triple-A Pawtucket earlier in the day, gave up a three-run double to Gary Sanchez in the ninth inning.

Craig Kimbrel entered with Sanchez on second and retired the next three in order to push Porcello’s record to 3-0.

“Most importantly, I’m contributing to the team in a positive way,” Porcello said. “That’s the biggest thing. I’m three starts in, we’re 12 games in, a lot of baseball to be played. But I want to continue to build of this start.”

### **Joe Kelly earns six-game suspension, will appeal**

Jason Mastrodonato

Joe Kelly was suspended six games and Tyler Austin got five for their actions that led to Wednesday’s brawl between the Red Sox and Yankees.

Both players are appealing their suspensions.

Kelly was suspended and fined for “intentionally hitting Austin with a pitch and fighting,” MLB’s statement read. Austin was suspended and fined for “charging the mound and fighting.”

Kelly unconvincingly said it was accidental that a 98-mph pitch hit Austin in the back four innings after Austin’s spikes-up slide at second base.

“It’s a pitch that got away on a cold night,” Kelly said. “Not like I had perfect command. It’s not like I have Greg Maddux command. We’ll see what happens. I don’t think I should be suspended. It wasn’t a blowout game. We were still in that ballgame. We had a big rally the inning before.”

Sox manager Alex Cora and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin were also fined for their actions in the brawl. Nevin was seen yelling toward the Red Sox dugout and Cora motioned that Nevin should get back in his box.

“He was screaming at our dugout,” Cora said. “I don’t know if he was screaming specifically at me. And I took exception. I don’t want to say I overreacted but that’s not me. I think for 10 games, or whatever I’ve managed, you guys see me very calm over there. But there is a chain of command and if we’re going to be letting everybody be screaming in situations like that, well it wasn’t a good situation in the beginning and it can be worse.”

Yankees manager Aaron Boone said he did not support Nevin’s actions.

CC Sabathia, Dustin Pedroia, Xander Bogaerts and Marco Hernandez were also fined for entering the field of play while on the disabled list.

### **Red Sox notebook: David Price says hand is fine after leaving his start Wednesday**

Jason Mastrodonato

One night after he left his start after the first inning due to numbness in his throwing hand, David Price was back on the field playing long toss.

It looked easy. It felt easy.

Price knew it was going to be.

“I knew that this morning whenever I woke up,” Price said. “I knew it (Wednesday) night before I went to sleep. There was never any thought in my mind that last year’s (elbow strain injury) reoccurred or anything like that. My hand was just literally numb and I couldn’t feel it.

“Everything was good today. Everything felt good.”

Price, who said he’s experienced a similar sensation in the past and it hasn’t been a long-lasting problem, now is scheduled to start Tuesday on the road against the Los Angeles Angels.

“I told (manager Alex Cora) that I was fine for Monday or I could come back on Saturday or Sunday, go sit in the ‘pen if needed,” Price said. “I told him I’d go out there any one. He thought Tuesday would be better weather-wise. Monday looks really bad right now, so Tuesday is what he went with.”

Wednesday’s exit was more a matter of Price not being able to warm up when the temperature for first pitch was 42 degrees.

“I talked to the doctors (Wednesday) night,” Price said. “They talked about a couple different things that we could try. It’s something I’ve always had, even whenever I was a little kid. My hands and my feet are two things that are always cold. Whenever it’s cold outside, it intensifies that.”

There are no plans for Price to have an MRI.

Cora also made it clear that Price didn’t take himself out of Wednesday’s game, but the team made the decision.

“You could see it was uncomfortable,” Cora said. “We talk about the weather and him not feeling the ball, you could see with the location of the pitches, he was off so I don’t know. The good thing is that he played catch today and he feels good.”

Hector Velazquez will start Saturday’s game against the Baltimore Orioles and Brian Johnson will start Monday for the annual Patriots Day game.

Six games for Kelly

Joe Kelly was suspended six games and Tyler Austin was suspended five games for their actions that led to the brawl on Wednesday night.

Both players are appealing their suspensions.

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Cora and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin also were fined for their actions in the brawl. Nevin was seen yelling toward the Red Sox dugout and Cora motioned that Nevin should get back in his box.

"He was screaming at our dugout," Cora said. "I don't know if he was screaming specifically at me. And I took exception. I don't want to say I overreacted but that's not me. I think for 10 games, or whatever I've managed, you guys see me very calm over there. But there is a chain of command and if we're going to be letting everybody be screaming in situations like that, well it wasn't a good situation in the beginning and it can be worse."

Yankees manager Aaron Boone said he did not support Nevin's actions.

CC Sabathia, Dustin Pedroia, Xander Bogaerts and Marco Hernandez also were fined for entering the field of play while on the disabled list.

Another hit to Hanley

It didn't take long for another hit-by-pitch.

Yankees starter Sonny Gray hit Ramirez with one out in the first inning last night. Andrew Benintendi was on first base after a one-out single and Gray's first pitch to Ramirez went up-and-in.

Ramirez tried swinging at the pitch, which appeared to strike him first in the left wrist and then ricocheted to his right hand.

He jumped around for a minute to shake off the pain, but it wasn't enough to keep him in the game. After a brief visit from the trainer, he walked down the dugout steps and into the tunnel. Mitch Moreland replaced him and took over at first base.

It did not appear to be an intentional hit-by-pitch.

X-rays taken on Ramirez' right wrist were negative, the Red Sox announced. The injury was classified as a bruise.

"Day to day," Cora said. "He was pretty sore actually, it hit him on the left one, then it hit him on the right one, so I'll talk to him tonight, most likely tomorrow we'll give him the off day and play Mitch and then make a decision. I have to see where he's at. The training staff, they feel probably one day will help him out."

Ramirez has been having a career year through 10 games, hitting .357 with a .952 OPS and two homers, 12 RBIs and three stolen bases.

Walden recalled

After the Red Sox used all their relievers but Craig Kimbrel in Wednesday's game, they needed to add a fresh arm yesterday.

Lefty Bobby Poyner was placed on the 10-day disabled list with a left hamstring strain and Marcus Walden was recalled from Triple-A Pawtucket. Walden allowed three runs last night.

Poyner had pitched well through seven innings with a 2.57 ERA, but has dealt with the hamstring issue since spring training.

The Sox don't expect him to miss more than the 10-day minimum.

### **Alex Cora and Aaron Boone know a good Red Sox-Yankees brawl is also good for the game**

Michael Silverman

Sometimes the aftermath of a baseball fight provides as much intrigue and drama as the scrum itself.

Yesterday was one of those times in the bulging scrapbook of scrappy Yankees-Red Sox relations.

Two rookie managers in Alex Cora of the Red Sox and Aaron Boone of the Yankees proved they understood exactly how, without fanning the flames, of not shutting off the flame of one more Red Sox-Yankees brawl.

Another way to put it is, the team's former managers, John Farrell and Joe Girardi, would have filled up reporters' notepads with as much genuine reflection as Cora and Boone provided.

The new skippers understand that as long as nobody gets hurt — and nobody got seriously hurt in Wednesday's fight besides a few sore muscles, Carlos Febles' face and a few scratches on Joe Kelly's upper half — bad blood between the Red Sox and Yankees is good business for the game of baseball and that most definitely includes the media that chronicles the sport.

The combatants, circumstances and details always change with each renewal of hostilities, but Cora and Boone generally avoided any "I'm not here to talk about the past" spin.

Memories were still fresh, emotions running strong and nobody trying to hold much back.

The biggest issues were the intent of Tyler Austin's hard slide into Brock Holt and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin's complaint that Cora made "unprofessional" gestures to him from the dugout.

Let's go to the tape:

"OK, so the fact that he's trying to beat the throw, I don't buy it," said Cora, explaining himself in his increasingly appealing disarming, direct and understated manner. "If you're trying to beat the throw, either you go headfirst into second or you go straight to the bag. There's not a double play, because you know who's running. That he didn't see Brock, maybe. But he saw the play. And that's not a normal play. First of all, let's give credit to (third baseman Rafael) Devers for having the presence of mind to go to second. Not too many third basemen make that play. So he goes there, and he's looking at Devers the whole time. If you're trying to beat a throw, you don't go sideways to the bag. You go straight to the bag. I still think he overslid the bag and the spikes were up."

OK, zero ambiguity.

Then in a scene ripped from the movie "Rashomon," Boone described what he saw.

"I have no issue with the slide, and that's not just, I know, sitting here as a Yankee," said Boone. "If you go back and look at me on the (Manny) Machado slide (into Dustin Pedroia last year), I had a similar take. I think this was a case of — it's not your typical fielder's choice double play situation — Tyler's running down the line, peeking to see if there's going to be a play. There's a chance that's a situation you go in standing up, so it's kind of a late decision so you don't get necessarily a perfect slide straight into the base.



“I would argue once you go past the base at all, you can slow down your every move, your cleat is going to pop up in that matter, not because of intent. I would just quibble with anyone who thinks there was any malicious intent there or that it was even that big of a deal. I don’t think it was a big deal at all.”

• NEVIN’S BEEF: The third base coach was ejected after he popped off too colorfully for the taste of the umpires about Cora’s dismissive “get back in your box and quit yapping” gesture.

Aside from wishing he had refrained from responding to Nevin’s screaming and pointing into the Red Sox dugout, Cora flipped the “unprofessional” charge from Nevin right back at him.

“If we’re going to be letting everybody be screaming in situations like that, well, it wasn’t a good situation in the beginning and it can be worse,” said Cora, who along with Nevin was fined. “I don’t manage their team. I manage my team. I don’t want any of my coaches screaming at Aaron Boone or any of their players and I took exception. I made a signal, I know everybody saw it. Out of character for me, but I still didn’t like the fact that he was pointing at me and screaming.”

After some prodding, Boone admitted he did not have his coach’s back on this matter.

“I don’t want to rehash it,” said Boone. “I’ll give you my opinion on the Austin play, but that’s for (Nevin) to answer. We’re moving on.”

But was it unprofessional?

“I don’t necessarily see it that way from Phil’s standpoint,” Boone said.

It takes some guts for a manager to admit that. Maybe Boone and Nevin will have to talk this one out, and there’s little doubt Boone’s savvy enough to know how to finesse an amicable resolution.

### **Hanley Ramirez exits Red Sox game after hit by pitch**

Jason Mastrodonato

It didn’t take long for another hit-by-pitch.

One night after the Red Sox and Yankees got into a brawl because Joe Kelly plunked Tyler Austin four innings after Austin’s spikes-up slide at second base, Hanley Ramirez took a fastball on the hands.

Yankees starter Sonny Gray hit Ramirez with one out in the first inning. Andrew Benintendi was on first base after a one-out single and Gray’s first pitch to Ramirez went up-and-in.

Ramirez tried swinging at the pitch, which appeared to strike him first in the left wrist and then ricocheted to his right hand.

He jumped around for a minute to shake off the pain, but it wasn’t enough to keep him in the game. After a brief visit from the trainer, he walked down the dugout steps and into the tunnel. Mitch Moreland replaced him and took over at first base.

It did not appear to be an intentional hit-by-pitch, but home plate umpire Chris Guccione motioned toward the dugouts and it looked like he warned both sides.

X-rays taken on Ramirez’s right wrist were negative, the Red Sox announced. The injury was classified as a bruise.

The 34-year-old Ramirez has been having a career year through 10 games, hitting .357 with a .952 OPS and two homers, 12 RBIs and three stolen bases.

## **\* *The Providence Journal***

### **Boston's Kelly suspended for 6 games, Yanks' Austin 5 for brawl**

Bill Koch

BOSTON -- Major League Baseball has handed out the discipline following Wednesday night's fracas between the Red Sox and Yankees.

Boston relief pitcher Joe Kelly was suspended for six games and New York infielder/outfielder Tyler Austin was suspended for five games for their central roles in a bench-clearing brawl that broke out in the top of the seventh inning. Both players will appeal.

Austin charged the mound after being hit in the back by a Kelly fastball, part of a wild night at Fenway Park that saw the Yankees square the three-game series thanks to a 10-7 victory. Red Sox manager Alex Cora and players Dustin Pedroia, Xander Bogaerts and Marco Hernandez were each fined an undisclosed amount, along with Yankees pitcher C.C. Sabathia and third base coach Phil Nevin.

"We just keep playing," Cora said prior to Thursday's series finale. "Our goal today is to win the series. It's not to go out there and wait for somebody to hit us or whatever."

Austin's slide over the bag on a force play in the third inning set the chain of events in motion, as he caught Boston shortstop Brock Holt on the lower right leg with his spikes. The two men exchanged a few terse words and the benches emptied for the first time, with players and coaching staffs from both teams lingering in the center of the diamond.

"The fact that (Austin is) trying to beat the throw, I don't buy it," Cora said. "If you're trying to beat the throw either you go head first to second or you go straight to the bag. There's not a double play, because you know (Tyler Wade, who bunted to third base) is running."

"That (Austin) didn't see Brock? Maybe. But he saw the play. And that's not a normal play."

The more venomous showdown took place in the seventh, as Kelly's 2-1 pitch was a 98 mph bullet that caught Austin squarely. Austin slammed his bat on the ground with his right hand and headed straight for Kelly, with Red Sox catcher Christian Vazquez left in his wake. Kelly landed a couple right hands at the bottom of the pile and Austin nailed Boston third base coach Carlos Febles with a right hand to the temple.

"You've got to take care of your team," Cora said. "Nobody is going to stay there in the dugout and let somebody go out there and punch your pitcher. Everybody's going to go out."

Kelly and Austin were immediately ejected and Nevin was tossed a few minutes later after umpires discussed the incident further. Nevin was incensed, heading toward the Boston dugout after Cora waved him away dismissively from a distance.

"After the whole thing, he was screaming at our dugout," Cora said. "I don't know if he was screaming specifically at me. I took exception. I don't want to say I overreacted -- that's not me. For 10 games or whatever I've managed, you guys have seen me very calm over there."

"There's something like a chain of command. If we're going to let everybody be screaming in situations like that -- well, it wasn't a good situation to begin with, and it can be worse. I don't manage their team obviously. I manage my team."

"I don't want any of my coaches to be screaming at (Yankees manager) Aaron Boone or any of their players. And I took exception. I made a signal -- I know everybody saw it. Out of character for me, but I didn't like the fact that he was pointing at me and screaming at me."

Unlike in Cora's days as a utility infielder, Holt was forced to hold the bag well after making the catch on the throw from Rafael Devers. Video review has all but eliminated the neighborhood play, the generous region around the bag favored by middle infielders and loosely legislated by umpires prior to the 2014 replay expansion to include force plays, fan interference and more. Securing the first out of the inning set Holt up for contact and the sparked the subsequent events.

"Back in the day, you stretch, and when that ball was getting to your glove you get out of the way," Cora said. "He's going to be out. Now, you have to stay on it. So it's a tough one. It's a tough one for everybody."

### **Ramirez (right wrist) exits early; Price (left hand) to start Tuesday**

Bill Koch

BOSTON --- For the second straight night, the Red Sox had one of their standouts leave a game before the start of the second inning.

This time it was first baseman Hanley Ramirez, who was struck on the base of the right hand by a fastball from Yankees pitcher Sonny Gray. Ramirez dropped his bat, hopped toward the third base dugout and winced in pain, tended to by Boston medical staff before heading to the home clubhouse. Mitch Moreland entered the game as a pinch runner and continued at first base.

Boston announced Ramirez left the game with a right wrist contusion and that X-rays were negative. He checked his swing on a 94 mph pitch from Gray that rode high and tight, with the ball striking Ramirez in the area where his palm meets his wrist. It's a similar spot to where Xander Bogaerts was hit in a July 6 game at Tampa Bay last season, and the shortstop saw his year sidetracked from there while playing through pain.

"Day to day," Red Sox manager Alex Cora said. "He was pretty sore. It hit him in the left (wrist) and then hit him in the right one."

The atmosphere at the ballpark was already heightened after Wednesday's events, as the benches cleared twice in New York's 10-7 win. The second time came after Joe Kelly hit Tyler Austin in the back with a fastball in the top of the seventh, and punches were exchanged by members of both teams. Cora said prior to Thursday's contest he didn't expect any retaliation by the Yankees, and Andrew Benintendi was at first base with one out when Ramirez was hit.

Ramirez has been a hot hitter in the early going, totaling a .952 OPS and a team-high 12 runs batted in through 11 games. His 15 hits entering Thursday trailed only Mookie Betts, and Ramirez had driven in at least one run in six of his last seven games. Moreland will start in his place on Friday as the Red Sox open a four-game series with the Orioles.

Starting pitcher David Price exited Wednesday's loss after struggling through the first, throwing just 16 strikes among his 35 pitches. Price was removed for what the team called precautionary reasons after experiencing a "sensation" in his left hand. He played catch on flat ground Thursday and is scheduled to make his next start Tuesday when Boston opens a nine-game road trip at the Los Angeles Angels.

"I told (Cora) I was fine for Monday or I could come back on Saturday or Sunday or go sit in the bullpen if needed," Price said. "I told him I would go out there whenever he wants. We thought Tuesday would be better weather-wise -- Monday looks really bad right now."

Price will sit at the back end of a rotation that includes Eduardo Rodriguez on Friday, Hector Velazquez on Saturday, Chris Sale on Sunday and Brian Johnson on Monday. Rick Porcello will enjoy an extra day of rest before making his next start on Wednesday against the Angels.

## **\* *MassLive.com***

### **Alex Cora's Red Sox deliver statement (and punch) to New York Yankees, rest of American League**

Christopher Smith

BOSTON -- The Red Sox are the two-time reigning AL East champions (2016-17), but the Yankees blew past them last fall.

Or at least it appeared that way.

New York won its one-game Wild Card playoff vs. Minnesota, disposed of the 2016 AL champion Indians in the ALDS and took the eventual 2017 World Series champion Astros to decisive Game 7 of the ALCS.

Boston, meanwhile, lost in the ALDS for a second straight year. Two AL East titles resulted in a 1-6 postseason record.

The mighty Yankees acquired NL MVP Giancarlo Stanton at the winter meetings. The narrative became easy to write: The young Yankees just left the Red Sox in the dust.

But Boston delivered a loud statement this week: Not so fast writing the Yankees-Are-World Beaters narrative.

The Red Sox, under new manager Alex Cora, showed they are more than capable of taking the division for a third straight year. And the way they talk, they also seem ready to win during the postseason (and yes, 150 regular season games still remain).

Boston posted a 6-3 victory over the Yankees here yesterday to win the series 2-1. Boston improved to 10-2 while the Yankees dropped to 6-7.

New York will play much better baseball than they have in their first 13 games. They have too much talent.

But watch out New York and watch out American League. The Red Sox are confident and they're playing with a certain edge that they lacked last year.

Have you noticed Cora talking about the postseason already? He has said multiple times he's taking care of his starting pitchers now so they'll be healthy and pitching their best in October.

Which manager or coach ever mentions or hints about the playoffs during the regular season? Coaches/managers are programmed to use the "one-game-at-a-time" cliché.

Cora's different. He speaks his mind. He's confident. He's not afraid to admit when he makes a mistake. He admitted he should have used a defensive replacement for J.D. Martinez in the ninth inning this past Sunday. His personality is rubbing off on his players.

This team is really good and fun to watch.

Did you see that mammoth 436-foot grand slam Martinez bashed to straightaway center field Wednesday?

Martinez started slow but he's beginning to crush line drives. Even some of his recent outs have been smashed.

With him at cleanup and a motivated Hanley Ramirez hitting in front of him, this offense is as dangerous as the Yankees lineup. The Red Sox won't hit as many homers but they boast as deep of a lineup as New York does.

How about Joe Kelly and Red Sox players taking care of business Wednesday after Tyler Austin spiked Brock Holt on a late slide?

Kelly beamed Austin, then yelled to the Yankees DH "let's go" after he slammed down his bat.

Austin charged the mound. Kelly stood his ground and punched the Yankees DH.

No messing around by Red Sox players this year, a complete 180 from last year when Manny Machado spiked Dustin Pedroia. The Red Sox failed to retaliate until two days later, then Matt Barnes botched it when he threw near Machado's head.

It's only 12 games, but this team gives a different feel than the past two years even though much of the roster remains the same from 2017.

This series was important to Boston, which needed to make a statement. New York had Boston's number last year. The Yanks posted an 11-8 record with a positive-23 run differential vs. the Sox in '17.

The Red Sox welcome the Orioles to town for four games starting today. These Sox aren't messing around. They mean business.

### **Red Sox righty Rick Porcello on hot start to 2018: 'I can (attack hitters) with everything I got'**

Mark Chiarelli

BOSTON - Rick Porcello didn't shy away.

The no-hitter he carried into the seventh inning of Thursday's 6-3 win over the Yankees disappeared, courtesy of an Aaron Judge laser beam double to centerfield. Giancarlo Stanton followed with a single. For the first time all night, after two trips through the order, a 45-minute rain delay and mostly sloppy baseball on their end, the Yankees could at least dream of a rally.

Porcello promptly shut it down.

And it's the way he responded - and, frankly, the way he maneuvered the Yankees lineup all night - that excited both the right-hander and his catcher, Sandy Leon.

Sure, Porcello will draw comparisons to his Cy Young campaign two years ago. They're warranted. He's pitched to a sparkling 1.83 ERA through three starts and walked just one batter.

Porcello wouldn't go that far. But his answer, when asked to draw a line to his performance two years ago, spoke volumes.

"I just feel like me," Porcello said. "I feel like I can go out there and attack guys and come at them with everything I got."

Porcello induced a fly-out from Didi Gregorius on a first-pitch changeup for the first out in the seventh inning. He then mixed his slider and sinker against Gary Sanchez, mostly working down and away, then froze him with a two-seamer on the outer paint for out number two.

And then he mixed it all together against Aaron Hicks.

Porcello threw four consecutive off-speed pitches to open the at-bat, even throwing a changeup on a 2-1 count, getting Hicks to foul it off. Hicks then fought off consecutive fastballs - first a two-seamer, then a rare four-seamer at 92 mph. Pitch seven, a changeup, missed low, running the county full.

Then Porcello came back with another one, getting Hicks to whiff on another changeup. Inning over. Back to the dugout - and a standing ovation - Porcello went.

"Almost every pitch is working," Leon said. "Last year it wasn't. Sometimes you'd have two pitches. But this year everything is working. I can call almost every pitch in any count and you knew he's going to execute. For me I can call a better game for him and he can make every pitch too."

Last year certainly has the makings of an aberration for Porcello. He threw roughly as many four-seamers as he did two-seamers in 2017 - a significant departure from his sinker-heavy strategy in years past. Hitters across baseball are emphasizing launch angle, actively trying to lift more pitches. Pitchers who lived at the bottom of the strike zone were asked to adapt to a bevy of capable low-ball hitters. Porcello was no different, pitching up in the zone more frequently with his four-seam fastball.

But his customary control suffered and he struggled mightily minimizing homers.

Prior to Thursday's start, though, Porcello had returned to his two-seamer through two starts, throwing it 44 percent of the time according to Brooks Baseball. Only 15 percent of his pitches were fastballs. He nearly ditched the curveball, instead relying on a changeup and slider to supplement the hard stuff. He hasn't walked a batter in his last 16 2/3 innings.

Thursday, especially, he relied on the changeup and slider.

"I think fastball-changeup were his pitches today," Leon said.

"They have a lot of good fastball hitters," Porcello said. "(The slider) was the right pitch to throw. I just tried to make them nasty. They hit them in the zone real good. We tried to expand them and get them to chase a bunch. It was a good pitch tonight."

And he was effective from the start.

He induced three straight groundball outs to start the game. The Yankees didn't get a baserunner until the fourth, when a stray two-seamer hit Giancarlo Stanton.

He still had a no-hitter going after five, when the game was halted for 45 minutes due to rain.

Porcello sought shelter indoors, working both the exercise bike and playing catch. Sandy Leon made sure not to say anything to him. Porcello anticipated returning to the mound in the sixth the whole time.

And when he did return, re-taking the mound in the sixth, it was more of the same - an efficient, straightforward 14-pitch inning that included a pair of strikeouts.

Postgame, Porcello acknowledged he's only three starts in. The sample size is probably still too small to draw any grand conclusions.

But Porcello feels like himself. He looks like himself.

And for a Red Sox rotation off to a strong start, it's a welcome development.

"He was unbelievable today," Leon said. "He kept making pitches, he was truly amazing."

**Hanley Ramirez (wrist) day-to-day; Eduardo Nunez OK after having 'hard time getting loose'**

Christopher Smith

BOSTON -- Hanley Ramirez exited the Red Sox's game against the Yankees in the first inning here at Fenway Park today with a right wrist contusion. X-rays were negative.

He's day-to-day and likely won't be in the Red Sox's lineup vs. the Orioles on Friday. Mitch Moreland likely start at first base.

Sonny Gray drilled him on the hand with a 93.6 mph fastball.

"He was pretty sore," manager Alex Cora said. "It actually hit him in the left one and then hit him in the right one. I'll talk to him tonight. Most likely tomorrow we'll give him the off day, play Mitch and then make a decision."

Nunez 'fine'

Cora and the trainer went to check on Eduardo Nunez after his infield single.

Nunez -- who returned this year from a knee injury he suffered last September -- didn't return to the game after the rain delay.

Tzu-Wei Lin entered to play shortstop and Brock Holt moved from shortstop to second base.

"He had a hard time getting loose today," Cora said about Nunez. "And that's something we expected before we got here with the weather. So I decided that with the conditions and obviously his situation, just take him out. ... But he's fine."

Lin is expected in the Red Sox starting lineup Friday.

### **Rick Porcello carries no-hitter into 7th inning, Boston Red Sox hang on to beat New York Yankees**

Mark Chiarelli

BOSTON - A return-to-glory theme prevailed throughout much of this season's first encounter between the Red Sox and Yankees, so it's fitting Rick Porcello seems to have a bounce-back in mind for himself.

Porcello, looking an awfully lot like he did two years ago during a Cy Young campaign, carried a no-hitter into the seventh inning of Thursday's 6-3 win over the Yankees. And even after he lost it, surrendering a scorched double to Aaron Judge to open the inning, he ended the inning with a fervor, striking out Gary Sanchez and Aaron Hicks in consecutive at-bats.

Porcello departed off a soggy Fenway Park mound, striding toward the Red Sox home dugout to a standing ovation from those who remained in their seats.

Giddiness was abound.

It briefly turned to apprehension in the ninth. Marcus Walden, pitching in his second inning of relief, loaded the bases with no outs, then Sanchez smacked a three-run double. Boston then turned to Craig Kimbrel, who saved his fourth game of the season.

The first series between the two rivals this season delivered plenty of what makes the matchup so anticipated. All leads were seemingly in peril. Young stars (Mookie Betts, Aaron Judge) dazzled. Red Sox fans zeroed in on Giancarlo Stanton, delighting in his shortcomings over the three-game series. New villains (Tyler Austin) were unearthed. Boston's bats thumped in game one, then New York returned the favor Wednesday.

And of course, the two teams fought.

New York bats were mostly punch-less Thursday, though, through seven innings. Not even a 45-minute rain delay could disturb Porcello. He cruised through the first five innings, his only blemish coming in the

fourth inning when he hit Giancarlo Stanton with a pitch. The game was delayed shortly after it became official in the fifth, a curious decision no doubt considering Porcello's pursuit of greatness.

But he returned in the sixth and delivered an efficient 14-pitch inning, including strikeouts of both Ronald Torreyes and Brett Gardner. In all, he threw seven scoreless innings, walking no one while striking out six.

The Red Sox improve to 10-2 after taking two-of-three from New York. Their only reason for concern Thursday centered around the status of slugger Hanley Ramirez.

For the second consecutive day, a key Red Sox veteran exited in the first inning. Ramirez took a tailing Sonny Gray fastball off the right wrist, staggering backward in pain. Put the pitchforks down, Sox fans -- the pitch did not appear to be intentional.

Ramirez spent several minutes on the field with training staff before returning to the dugout. He was replaced by Mitch Moreland, who singled in his first two at-bats.

X-rays were negative on Ramirez's wrist. The team is calling it a contusion.

Otherwise, things went well for the Red Sox, who were content to sit back and let Thursday's game come to them. The Yankees gifted Boston extra bases (and outs) in the early-innings. Sonny Gray threw three wild pitches. An errant throw home from Yankees second baseman Tyler Wade, who opted for a daring attempt at tossing out the lead-runner, Sandy Leon, skipped by Gary Sanchez in the second inning, leading to Boston's third run.

The second inning was mostly a disaster for Gray. Four straight Red Sox batters reached to open the inning. Mookie Betts missed a grand slam by feet, instead delivering a sacrifice fly, and then the Yankees started throwing the ball around.

An inning later, Giancarlo Stanton over-ran a lazy Jackie Bradley Jr. fly ball to left by several feet, instead watching it fall behind him for an RBI double in the third inning.

Bradley Jr. and Eduardo Nunez both scored a pair of runs. Gray pitched into the fourth inning but didn't record an out.

Nunez's status was, momentarily, in jeopardy too after he limped into first base in the second inning while down the line to beat out an infield single. Nunez, it seems, continues to deal with an ongoing irritable knee, but he stayed in the game until the sixth inning, when he was lifted in favor of Tzu-Wei Lin after the rain delay.

Thursday's game was devoid of any fisticuff-related drama - an area of intrigue after Wednesday night's melee. Red Sox catcher said Wednesday night he predicted the Yankees would retaliate after Joe Kelly drilled Tyler Austin, but, by Thursday afternoon, both managers said they believed the beef to be over.

Kelly (six games) and Tyler Austin (five games) were suspended Thursday afternoon. Both are appealing.

**Red Sox-Yankees brawl: What does MLB rulebook say about Tyler Austin's slide into Brock Holt?**

Christopher Smith

BOSTON -- Was Tyler Austin's slide that began an eventful night at Fenway Park on Wednesday legal or illegal?

The Red Sox wanted to challenge but it was a non-reviewable play and so the call on the field was upheld. It wasn't slide interference.



"I hate to say it but there's a gray area in this play," manager Alex Cora said. "Gray continent because it's that big of a gray area."

The rule in MLB's official rulebook discusses only double play attempts. Holt and Cora admitted the Red Sox had no chance of turning the double play. So some gray area does exist.

"As we know, that's a tough one because now there's no neighborhood play," Cora said. "You've got video. And probably back in the day, you'll stretch and when that ball is getting to your glove, you just get out of the way. It was going to be (an) out. Now you have to stay on it (the bag). So it's a tough one."

Cora added Austin would have slid on a straight line if he actually was trying to beat Rafael Devers' throw from third base to Holt at second.

"The fact that he's trying to beat the throw, I don't buy," Cora said. "If you're trying to beat the throw, you either go head-first to second or straight to the bag. There's not a double play. You know who is running. And that he didn't see Brock? Maybe. But he saw the play. And that's not a normal play."

Cora added, "If you're trying to beat a throw, you don't go sideways to the bag. You go straight to the bag. So I still think he overslid the bag and the spikes were up."

Austin slid late and appeared to extend his cleat toward the left side of the bag.

Below is what the rulebook states about sliding into bases on double play attempts.

"j) Sliding to Bases on Double Play Attempts

"If a runner does not engage in a bona fide slide, and initiates (or attempts to make) contact with the fielder for the purpose of breaking up a double play, he should be called for interference under this Rule 6.01. A "bona fide slide" for purposes of Rule 6.01 occurs when the runner:

"(1) begins his slide (i.e., makes contact with the ground) before reaching the base;

"(2) is able and attempts to reach the base with his hand or foot;

"(3) is able and attempts to remain on the base (except home plate) after completion of the slide; and

"(4) slides within reach of the base without changing his pathway for the purpose of initiating contact with a fielder.

"A runner who engages in a "bona fide slide" shall not be called for interference under this Rule 6.01, even in cases where the runner makes contact with the fielder as a consequence of a permissible slide. In addition, interference shall not be called where a runner's contact with the fielder was caused by the fielder being positioned in (or moving into) the runner's legal pathway to the base.

"Notwithstanding the above, a slide shall not be a "bona fide slide" if a runner engages in a "roll block," or intentionally initiates (or attempts to initiate) contact with the fielder by elevating and kicking his leg above the fielder's knee or throwing his arm or his upper body.

"If the umpire determines that the runner violated this Rule 6.01(j), the umpire shall declare both the runner and batter-runner out. Note, however, that if the runner has already been put out then the runner on whom the defense was attempting to make a play shall be declared out."

**David Price injury: Red Sox LHP to start Tuesday vs. Angels; Brian Johnson will start Monday**

Christopher Smith

BOSTON -- Manager Alex Cora has decided to move David Price's start back one day to Tuesday in Anaheim.

Price left yesterday's game against the Yankees after just one inning because he felt numbness in his left hand. He didn't have any feeling in his fingertips.

But he felt fine after playing long toss in the outfield at Fenway Park today (Thursday).

"I'll go out there whenever he wants," Price said. "But he thought Tuesday would be better weather-wise and Monday looks really bad right now."

Rain is expected Monday when the Red Sox play their annual Patriots' Day game at 11:05 a.m. at Fenway Park. Boston then travels to the West Coast and will play the first of three games in Anaheim on Tuesday.

Price was confident he'd be OK after Wednesday's game.

"I knew it last night before I went to sleep. There was never any thought in my mind that last year kind of reoccured or any of that. My hand was just pretty numb and I couldn't feel it."

Red Sox pitching schedule:

Friday: Eduardo Rodriguez

Saturday: Hector Velazquez

Sunday: Chris Sale

Monday: Brian Johnson

Tuesday: David Price

## ***\* The Worcester Telegram & Gazette***

### **Red Sox 6, Yankees 3: Porcello takes no-hitter into seventh inning**

Bill Ballou

BOSTON -- The Red Sox lost a no-hitter, then a no-runner, but hung on to beat the Yankees, 6-3, in an otherwise benign and unremarkable game Thursday night.

Rick Porcello took the no-hitter into the seventh inning before giving up a leadoff double to Aaron Judge. Reliever Marcus Walden, in the minors for 11 years and now we know why, took a team shutout into the ninth before giving up a three-run double to Gary Sanchez.

Craig Kimbrel wound up getting an unlikely save, Hanley Ramirez was hit by a pitch early and accidentally, and that's what transpired on yet another night of Greenland, not greenhouse, weather.

The victory improved Boston's record to 10-2 and along with it Alex Cora's managerial record to 10-2. He is just the fourth Red Sox manager in history to win 10 of his first 12 games. Joe Morgan holds the team record with a 12-0 start in 1988, Lou Boudreau was 10-2 in 1952 and Ed Barrow was 10-2 in 1918.

Morgan, a mid-season change, led the '88 Sox to the AL East championship and Barrow's team eventually won the World Series in a season cut short by World War I. Boudreau did not fare so well. After that hot start, the '52 Red Sox wound up finishing 76-78.

Porcello gave up two hits in seven innings to improve his record to 3-0. His outing was punctuated by a 45-minute rain delay — at least it wasn't snow — that began between the fifth and sixth innings with Boston already ahead by 6-0.

He is 3-0 with a 1.83 earned run average in three starts. This compares favorably with the way Porcello began his Cy Young Award season in 2016. He was 5-0 in April of that year and was 3-0, 1.83 in his first three starts. His last scoreless outing was also in 2016 when he worked 6 1/3 shutout innings versus the Giants on July 19.

The difference in this bounce-back year for Porcello seems to be one pitch, according to Cora, who said, “Carlos Beltran said last year that his stuff was still there, but his change up wasn’t there. The change up is the difference maker from last year.”

Porcello threw 99 pitches and Cora was comfortable with bringing him back for the sixth after the rain delay because he had kept loose during that time, the training staff thought he would be fine and Porcello had worked efficiently.

If the delay had lasted much longer, though, Porcello would have been done for the night.

“It was getting close,” Cora said. “One more period of the Bruins, probably.”

Which is what the manager did during the rain delay — sit in the dugout and watch the Bruins game on the video board.

The Red Sox got to Yankees starter, and loser, Sonny Gray quite early and had a 6-0 lead after three innings.

Boston stranded two runners in the first inning then scored four times in the second as nine men came to the plate. Only three of them had hits, all singles. Eduardo Nunez had an infield hit, Sandy Leon grounded one into right field for an RBI and Mitch Moreland rapped a shot into left field.

Gray walked Jackie Bradley Jr. and Brock Holt and Mookie Betts hit a bases-loaded sacrifice fly.

The Sox added a pair of runs in the second as Nunez led off the inning with a wall double and Bradley drove him in with a fly ball to left that Giancarlo Stanton misjudged. The ball bounced into the seats for a ground rule double. Bradley eventually made his way across the plate via a wild pitch and fielder’s choice ground ball by Betts.

When Moreland singled to right leading off the fourth, Aaron Boone had seen enough of Gray and summoned Domingo German from the bullpen. He and the New York bullpen blanked the Red Sox the rest of the way.

The same could not be said for the Boston pen, but Porcello had provided it with enough of a cushion.

### **Red Sox Journal: Walden summoned from PawSox to replace injured Poyner**

Bill Ballou

BOSTON — Rookie southpaw Bobby Poyner has a hamstring issue and is on the 10-day disabled list. Rookie right-hander Marcus Walden was recalled from Pawtucket to take Poyner’s spot on the roster. Poyner had reported some hamstring problems in Florida, manager Alex Cora said.

The lefty worked two innings in relief of Price Wednesday night and the Red Sox are strapped for pitching because the bullpen worked eight innings in that game. Poyner’s injury was, of course, purely coincidental with the need for relief help.

Rotation projection

The Orioles are up next as the homestand continues. Baltimore arrives in town for a game at 7:10 on Friday night and departs after the morning game on Patriots Day.

Because of David Price's shortened start, the Red Sox projected rotation for the series is not entirely set. Friday's pitching matchup is Eduardo Rodriguez vs. Chris Tillman, whose earned run averages add up to 16.04 so far in 2018.

The Orioles are Rodriguez' original organization. He has made 10 career starts versus Baltimore and is 3-5 with a 4.67 ERA.

Rare rookie matchup

The Red Sox and Yankees have been playing each other for 115 years, but this season marks merely the third time that both teams are employing rookie managers — Cora for Boston, Aaron Boone for New York.

Before this, it also happened in 1992 when Butch Hobson made his debut for the Red Sox and Buck Showalter for the Yankees. They also opposed each other on opening day that season. The only other time was 1930 with Heinie Wagner managing Boston, Bob Shawkey managing New York.

Oddly, 1930 was the only season in which either was a big-league manager.

He's a bomber

Gary Sanchez headed into last night with 12 career home runs off Red Sox pitching, the most by any Yankees opponent. He had 120 at-bats against Boston, so was averaging one HR every 10 ab-bats. Some comparables from other opposing hitters who historically feasted on Sox pitching are Babe Ruth, one every 14.3; Mickey Mantle, one every 17.5; and Harmon Killebrew, one every 15.

Sanchez' has hit seven homers in Fenway Park and is already close to being on the list of top ten active players with most homers here. That list is led by Edwin Encarnacion with 17, although Jose Bautista has 26 and could return to baseball at some time this season.

Diamond dust

Andrew Benintendi returned to the starting in left field after a night off while Brock Holt was back as Boston's starting shortstop for the third straight night. Sandy Leon got his third start of the year at catcher. ... The teams do not meet again until May 8 when they have a brief two-game series at Yankee Stadium. ... Going into Thursday's game, Boston was 7 for 14 (.500) with 19 RBI with the bases loaded. That includes three homers and a double. Last year, the Sox hit .288 with the bases full and had 12 extra base hits, all doubles. The 2016 team batted just .218 with the bases full.

***\*Redsox.com***

**Porcello dominates Yanks, flirts with no-hitter**

Ian Browne

BOSTON -- With a performance reminiscent of many from his American League Cy Young Award season of two years ago, Rick Porcello had the fans at Fenway Park roaring in the late stages of Thursday's gem, which resulted in a 6-3 victory for the 10-2 Red Sox in the rubber match of a three-game series against the Yankees.

"Excellent," said Red Sox manager Alex Cora. "Changing speeds. Pitching in the bottom of the zone. Using his changeup. Elevating. Using both sides of the plate -- that was excellent."

The sinkerballer took a no-hitter into the seventh, but Aaron Judge ended the bid by leading off that frame with a rocket double (115.7-mph exit velocity) to center. Not to worry though, Porcello got right back on track from there.

After giving up an infield single to Giancarlo Stanton, Porcello struck out Gary Sanchez looking and Aaron Hicks swinging to cap a night that included two hits allowed, no walks and six strikeouts over seven innings. Porcello (3-0, 1.83 ERA) threw 99 pitches, 69 of them for strikes.

"He was attacking us," Sanchez said through an interpreter. "He was getting ahead early and I think that made the difference. He had a great night tonight."

"Changeup felt real good. Everything felt real good," said Porcello. "Sandy [Leon] called a hell of a game. Can't say enough about the pitch mix that he was putting down back there. We were on the same page. I was just trying to hit the glove."

The Yankees didn't muster anything offensively until the ninth, when Sanchez smashed a three-run double against Marcus Walden to slice the deficit to three runs. Cora then went to closer Craig Kimbrel, who got the final three outs to pin down his fourth save.

The only thing that could stop Porcello was rain, which delayed play for 45 minutes prior to the sixth. But that didn't faze him either. Porcello breezed through a 1-2-3 sixth with two strikeouts once play resumed.

Sensing something special could be happening, the Fenway faithful erupted when Porcello struck out Brett Gardner to end the sixth.

"I was staying loose on the bike, playing catch and doing anything I could to make sure I wasn't going to stiffen up or anything," Porcello said. "Tried to stay loose and go back out there."

Porcello was able to pitch with a lead for most of the night after the Red Sox put a four-spot on Yankees righty Sonny Gray in the bottom of the second.

By the third, it was 6-0, and the ineffective Gray was lifted just one batter into the fourth.

The only moment of concern in this one for the Red Sox was when Hanley Ramirez was smoked on the right wrist by a pitch from Gray in the bottom of the first and had to leave the game. X-rays were negative and Ramirez is day-to-day with a contusion.

The two rivals will renew acquaintances on May 8, when the Sox head to the Bronx for a three-game series.

#### SOUND SMART

This is the fourth time in Red Sox history the club has started 10-2, matching the teams from 1904, '18 and '52.

#### YOU GOTTA SEE THIS

Jackie Bradley Jr. lofted what looked like a harmless and soft flyball down the left-field line that might go foul in the bottom of the third inning. Left fielder Giancarlo Stanton sure thought so, as he ran toward the side wall and gave up on the play. But the ball then drifted back and bounced into fair territory and then took a big bounce into the stands for a ground-rule double. Stanton's unfamiliarity with Fenway seemed to play a part in the misplay, but the Red Sox gladly took it as an RBI double that pushed their lead to 5-0.

#### HE SAID IT

"I was in the dugout watching it. I was sitting in the dugout the whole time. It was on the big screen. That was a nice goal, the one that looked like a bunt. That was cool. It's fun here. I remember playing here and all of a sudden, people go nuts. You hear a big roar and you're playing defense, you're like, 'What's going on?' Then they show they scored. So it was cool to see." -- Cora, on watching the Boston Bruins' playoff victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs on the Jumbotron during the rain delay

## UP NEXT

After struggling with his consistency in his first start back from the disabled list, Eduardo Rodriguez will try to find his groove when he opens a four-game series on Friday night at Fenway against the Orioles. Rodriguez gave up five hits and three runs over 3 2/3 innings last time out against the Rays, but he did strike out seven. First pitch is slated for 7:10 p.m. ET.

### **Hanley has bruised wrist, avoids serious injury**

Ian Browne

BOSTON -- Red Sox slugger Hanley Ramirez avoided significant injury after being drilled on the right wrist on a pitch by Yankees right-hander Sonny Gray in the first inning of Thursday's 6-3 win.

X-rays taken moments later came back negative and Ramirez merely has a contusion, allowing the Red Sox to breathe a sigh of relief.

Manager Alex Cora said he will likely give Ramirez the day off on Friday night against the Orioles, but he could return as early as Saturday.

The pitch actually hit Ramirez's left hand first and then deflected to his right wrist. Initially in a lot of pain, Ramirez immediately exited the game and was replaced by pinch-runner Mitch Moreland.

Moreland wound up having a good game off the bench, going 2-for-3 and making some nice plays on defense.

The right-handed-hitting Ramirez has been rejuvenated this season and is hitting .357 with two homers and 12 RBIs.

Ramirez was plunked one day after the drama of Wednesday, when Red Sox right-hander Joe Kelly drilled Tyler Austin in the back with a pitch and a benches-clearing fracas ensued. Suspensions and fines were handed out before Thursday's game as a result.

Nobody thought Gray was trying to hit Ramirez.

"I think everybody handled it the right way," said Cora. "No warnings. Just watch the game and go from there. We were fine. Like I said before, the main goal today was to win the series, and we did."

### **MLB suspends Kelly, Austin after melee**

Ian Browne

BOSTON -- Major League Baseball wasted no time issuing discipline from Wednesday's Red Sox-Yankees melee, handing a six-game suspension to Boston righty Joe Kelly and a five-game suspension to New York infielder Tyler Austin.

Both players have appealed their suspensions, meaning they are available for Thursday's rubber match of the three-game rivalry series at Fenway Park.

Kelly drilled Austin in the back in the top of the seventh inning of Wednesday's eventual 10-7 Yankees win. It seemed to be retaliation for Austin sliding in with his right foot high and spiking shortstop Brock Holt in the third inning.

Once Austin was hit by the pitch, he slammed his bat down and Kelly gestured for him to meet up at the mound. Both players got several punches in as the benches and bullpens emptied.

Kelly and Austin also received undisclosed fines.

Several others received fines, including Red Sox manager Alex Cora and Yankees third-base coach Phil Nevin.

Yankees lefty CC Sabathia, Red Sox shortstop Xander Bogaerts, second baseman Dustin Pedroia and infielder Marco Hernandez all received fines for entering the playing field while being on the disabled list.

"I think hopefully it's something that's behind us," said Yankees manager Aaron Boone. "We're here to play and try to get out of here hopefully with another win. I would think it's absolutely behind us."

### **Price gets extra day to rest, will start Tuesday**

Ian Browne

BOSTON -- Red Sox lefty David Price will get an additional day of rest before making his next start on Tuesday in Anaheim, when the Red Sox open a nine-game road trip against the Angels.

The decision was made Thursday by manager Alex Cora a day after Price was forced out of start against the Yankees after one inning with a numbing sensation in his left fingertips.

[View Full Game Coverage](#)

Price played catch before the Red Sox's 6-3 win over the Yankees and felt fine and told Cora he would have been fine to pitch as scheduled in Monday's annual Patriots' Day game in Boston that starts at 11:05 a.m. ET.

But with gloomy and cold weather expected Monday, Cora opted to give Price an extra day and let him pitch in more friendly conditions.

"I just decided, for my sake, just push him back and make sure everything is fine," said Cora. "He is fine, but I'd rather give him one more day and he'll pitch Tuesday in [Anaheim]."

Though Price was limited to 11 starts last season due to left elbow woes, he never thought Wednesday was anything more than a hiccup related to cold weather in early April.

"I knew that this morning whenever I woke up. I knew it last night before I went to sleep," said Price. "There was never any thought in my mind that last year reoccurred or anything like that. My hand was just literally numb and I couldn't feel it."

Now that Price's situation is sorted out, Cora was also able to plot out the rotation for the rest of the weekend.

Righty Hector Velazquez will start Saturday against the Orioles. Lefty Brian Johnson will get the nod on Patriots' Day. As had already been scheduled, Eduardo Rodriguez gets the start on Friday against Baltimore and ace Chris Sale is going on Sunday.

Poyner to DL

The Red Sox placed lefty reliever Bobby Poyner on the 10-day disabled list prior to Thursday's game with a left hamstring strain and recalled right-hander Marcus Walden from Triple-A Pawtucket.

Poyner has been impressive during his first Major League stint, posting a 2.57 ERA in six appearances.

At this point, the expectation is that he might only miss the 10 days.

"With him, in Spring Training, I went out once [to the mound]," said Cora. "I think it was late in Spring Training, and he said he was fine. In Tampa, [Fla.], he mentioned he felt it, but he was OK. Yesterday, you saw what happened [when he was stretching out his leg]. And then he's been battling it and he gave us two innings. He battled for us and we decided to put him on the DL."

Cora explains beef with Nevin

One of the subplots to Wednesday's melee was a somewhat heated exchange between Cora and Yankees third-base coach Phil Nevin.

Cora gave Nevin a dismissive wave and told him to get back to the third-base coach's box.

"Well, after the whole thing, he was screaming at our dugout," said Cora. "I don't know if he was screaming specifically at me, and I took exception. I don't want to say I overreacted, but that's not me. I think for 10 games, or whatever I've managed, you guys see me very calm over there. But there's some chain of command, and if we're going to be letting everybody be screaming in situations like that, well it wasn't a good situation in the beginning and it can be worse.

"I don't manage their team. I manage my team. I don't want any of my coaches screaming at Aaron Boone or any of their players and I took exception. I made a signal. I know everybody saw it. Out of character for me, but I still didn't like the fact that he was pointing at me and screaming."

***\*ESPNBoston.com***

### **Rick Porcello's start giving Red Sox something to shout about**

Scott Lauber

BOSTON -- It was a rare display of emotion from an unemotional man.

On his 99th and final pitch, on a damp and chilly Thursday night, Rick Porcello rocked back and uncorked a changeup. And after Aaron Hicks swung through it, ending the top of the seventh inning and leaving two New York Yankees teammates on base, Porcello let out a shout as he walked away from the mound.

Excuse him. Porcello had been waiting a long time for this, and we aren't referring to the 45-minute rain delay between the fifth and sixth innings.

The Boston Red Sox right-hander won the American League Cy Young Award in 2016, lost both his sinker and his mojo last year and tried everything this past winter to get it back. He re-read "The Mental ABC's of Pitching," the tome of late longtime sports psychologist Harvey Dorfman. He chatted up Derek Lowe at a Red Sox offseason event in January and invited the former sinkerballer and Fort Myers, Florida, resident to come observe him in spring training and offer feedback. Porcello even rigged up a string in those spring bullpen sessions to better identify where his pitches were entering the strike zone.

Three starts into the season, it all seems to have worked. He gave up four runs over 12 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings in back-to-back wins against the Tampa Bay Rays, and then, on Thursday night, carried a no-hitter through six innings against the vaunted Yankees. Aaron Judge broke it up with a leadoff double in the seventh, but Porcello gave up only two hits and struck out six in seven walk-free innings of a 6-3 Red Sox victory in the rubber game of the first series of the season against their rivals from New York.

Rick Porcello is 3-0 with a 1.83 ERA after a dominant seven innings Thursday against the Yankees. Adam Glanzman/Getty Images

So, if Porcello felt like shouting as he left the game, well, let's just say he was entitled.



“It feels good,” said Porcello, who has a 1.83 ERA through three starts. “Most importantly, I’m contributing to the team in a positive way. That’s the biggest thing. I’m three starts in, we’re 12 games in, a lot of baseball to be played, but definitely want to continue to build off this start.”

And make no mistake, the Red Sox are counting on it.

The Sox are off to a 10-2 start, matching the 1904, 1918 and 1952 teams for the best 12-game start in franchise history. They also got positive news Thursday when ace lefty David Price played catch in the outfield and felt no ill effects after leaving his start after a four-run first inning Wednesday night with numbness in his left hand.

Price is scheduled to start Tuesday night in Anaheim, California, giving him an extra day of rest and a chance to pitch in warmer weather than Boston’s persistent 40-degree chill.

“I knew [Thursday] morning whenever I woke up, I knew it [Wednesday] night before I went to sleep. There was never any thought in my mind that [an elbow injury from] last year reoccurred or anything like that,” Price said. “My hand was just literally numb, and I couldn’t feel it.”

Price said he has dealt with cold hands and feet since childhood, and “whenever it’s cold outside, it intensifies that.” But regardless of how much he downplayed it, the Red Sox have to be concerned that Price couldn’t feel his hand in an early-season start against the Yankees. And since their World Series hopes are pinned largely to a starting rotation that is headlined by aces Chris Sale and Price, the notion of Porcello getting his 2016 groove back and leaving behind his 2017 struggles could be a difference-maker.

“I just feel like me,” Porcello said. “I feel like I can go out there and attack guys and go at them with whatever I’ve got. That’s it.”

That wasn’t the case last year. Porcello’s success or failure is largely predicated on his ability to command his sinker below the strike zone. But Red Sox manager Alex Cora, who served as the Houston Astros’ bench coach last season, recalled hearing Carlos Beltran talk about Porcello’s velocity and movement remaining consistent but his changeup being less effective than in the past.

It was encouraging, then, with Judge and Giancarlo Stanton on base and two out in the seventh inning, to see Porcello turn to the changeup to get a strikeout of Hicks.

“Sometimes you’ve got a man on second, man on third, and you’ve got to call that pitch and you don’t know what to call,” catcher Sandy Leon said. “But now you can call that pitch because he’s going to execute.”

Asked about his changeup against the Yankees, Porcello said it “felt real good.” But then, Porcello added, “everything felt real good.”

Going forward, that has to make the Red Sox feel good.

***\*WEEI.com***

**Tomase: Round 1 of Red Sox-Yankees was tremendous, and we're just getting started**

John Tomase

BOOM! Went Giancarlo Stanton's first swing with the Yankees, an opposite-field home run in Toronto.

BANG! Responded Chris Sale with two strikeouts to open his own season, 1,500 miles and two countries away.

BOOM! Went Aaron Judge, Stanton and Gary Sanchez a few days later with homers in a win against Tampa.

BANG! Responded the Red Sox with a tremendous run of starting pitching that led to nine straight victories and the best start in franchise history.

BOOM went Joe Kelly's fastball between Tyler Austin's shoulder blades. BANG went Austin's fist in Kelly's direction during an old-fashioned Red Sox-Yankees melee.

Get ready for a full season of this, because if MLB's opening two weeks suggest anything, it's that the Red Sox and Yankees are on a collision course for American League East supremacy, and it's been a while since we could make that claim.

Last year marked the first time the clubs had finished within two games of each other since 2007, but it's not like they spent 2017 at each other's throats. Relatively little was expected of New York, at least until Judge started sending balls into the stratosphere. The Red Sox spent 90 days in first place and led the division every day after July 31. We didn't realize how good the Yankees were until they pushed the eventual-champion Astros to seven games in the ALCS.

This year is different. New York's shocking acquisition of NL MVP Stanton restored its Evil Empire glory. The Red Sox eventually responded by signing J.D. Martinez, the only power hitter in the game whose numbers approached those of Stanton or Judge.

And just like that, a rivalry that could best be described as "in name only" over the last decade finally courses with the 1.21 gigawatts needed to send us back to the future. Forget about the preseason narrative of the Red Sox ranking a notch below the Bombers. Right now, they're better.

"I don't think anybody in here saw us as a notch below anyone," said first baseman Mitch Moreland. "We know what we're capable of. We know we're a good team."

On Thursday, they finished claiming two out of three from New York with a dominating 6-3 victory that saw Rick Porcello take a no-hitter into the seventh. Playing without shortstop Xander Bogaerts (ankle), the Red Sox shrugged off the loss of first baseman Hanley Ramirez, who was hit on the right wrist and left the game. Even without two of their hottest hitters, the Red Sox still bled Yankees starter Sonny Gray for six runs in three innings. Meanwhile, Porcello masterfully painted corners all night.

The game highlighted the contrasting styles that were on display all series. The Yankees live and die with the long ball. More than 42 percent of New York's 66 runs entering Thursday's game had come via its 16 homers. Sanchez highlighted Wednesday's 10-7 victory with a pair of bombs. Otherwise, the Yankees were limited to a lone solo homer by Judge in their two losses.

The Red Sox boast better starters and -- for the moment, anyway -- a more diverse offense. They began the night ranked in the top five in the American League in runs, doubles, triples, steals, average, on base, slugging, and OPS. They were also third in ERA and first in fewest errors.

"There's a lot of games still," said infielder Eduardo Nunez. "But we know what kind of team we have. We know we have a solid team. We can pitch. We can play defense. We can hit. We play the fundamentals. We can do the little things. To beat us, you have to do all that, too."

That said, no one is pretending New York won't eventually treat its opponents to an extended run of clobbering time. The heart of its order is just too good. The Yankees will figure things out. Sanchez and Stanton, for two, began to come alive in this series.

That would be great news for the Red Sox, not to mention Major League Baseball. The season is infinitely more compelling with a worthy foil, and nothing against the pugilistic Orioles, but last year's bean-brawl wars didn't energize fans so much as exhaust them with all of the "it's not me, it's them," equivocations.

Wednesday's battle felt much more black-and-white, and players on both sides seemed legitimately respectful of the way their counterparts had rallied to defend "their family" as Red Sox manager Alex Cora said. On some level, the Yankees knew Austin's spikes-up slide into Brock Holt had crossed a line, just as the Red Sox recognized that 98 mph around the shoulder probably represented a slightly excessive response.

Both teams left the ring feeling unified, and the Red Sox delivered the better response on Thursday by controlling the Yankees from start-to-finish. There will be more counterpunching as the season progresses.

Hard to believe, but 15 years have passed since the summer of 2003 gave way to Aaron Boone, the Bloody Sock, reversing the curse, and Mariano Rivera tipping his cap. That last gesture conveyed genuine class, but it also marked a collective exhalation. Red Sox-Yankees just couldn't mean as much with the Red Sox possessing a ring. Titles in 2007 and 2013, sandwiched around the Yankees winning it all in 2009, inevitably sucked life from the rivalry.

It wouldn't stay dormant forever, however, and that brings us to today. Even with New York a game under .500, no one's kidding themselves. The Yankees aren't going anywhere. But neither are the Red Sox.

This is baseball the way it's supposed to be.

### **Red Sox 6, Yankees 3: Dominant Rick Porcello making 2017 a very distant memory**

John Tomase

A night after a wild melee marked the official return of the Red Sox-Yankees rivalry, Rick Porcello raised his arms and demanded silence.

The right-hander was masterful in a 6-3 victory, taking a no-hitter into the seventh and improving to 3-0 with a 1.83 ERA. In the process, he continued establishing that his struggles of 2017 are a thing of the past, which can only mean good things for a Red Sox team built around an exceptional starting rotation.

Porcello limited New York to two hits, none until Aaron Judge led off the seventh with a double to deep center. An infield hit by Giancarlo Stanton gave Porcello his only challenge of the night, and he responded by striking out Gary Sanchez and Aaron Hicks to escape the threat. He pumped his fist while leaving the mound, his work done.

The offense, meanwhile, lost Hanley Ramirez, who was hit by a pitch in his first at-bat and did not return. One night after Joe Kelly's fastball to Tyler Austin's shoulder blade had kicked off a brawl, both teams were on high alert, but no one viewed Sonny Gray's pitch as intentional; Ramirez was trying to swing at it when it hit him.

He left the game and replacement Mitch Moreland responded by going 2-for-3 and making a handful of excellent defensive plays. The Red Sox scored all the runs they'd need with a four-run second highlighted by the first four batters reaching base. Sandy Leon (single), Mookie Betts (sacrifice fly), Andrew Benintendi (fielder's choice), and Moreland (single) each drove in runs.

From there, the game belonged to Porcello. Painting corners and featuring an excellent slider that he threw more than 30 times, the right-hander won his third straight start to open the season. He also suggested that his even-odd dichotomy will continue. In 2014, he broke out with 15 wins and a 3.43 ERA. A year later, he lost 15 games with an ERA near five. In 2016, he won the Cy Young Award. Last year he nearly lost 20 games and led the American League in home runs allowed.

Now he's rolling again, and so are the 10-2 Red Sox.

The Red Sox were forced to burn closer Craig Kimbrel in the ninth after reliever Marcus Walden walked two and allowed three runs in what was supposed to be mop-up duty protecting a 6-0 lead.

### **Craig Kimbrel clarifies how he views closing role**

Rob Bradford

Starting with his introductory press conference, Alex Cora has insinuated Craig Kimbrel's usage might be a bit different this season, introducing the idea of bringing in the reliever earlier than the ninth inning to face a key part of the batting order at a key part of the game. The plan would then be to not overextend Kimbrel, allowing another reliever to close things out.

But because of an abbreviated spring training due to a family emergency, Kimbrel and Cora never got a chance to finalize a plan heading into the season.

Now, speaking on the Bradfo Sho podcast, Kimbrel explained that while he isn't averse to pitching prior to the ninth inning -- which he did five times last season -- he isn't banking on not coming back out to get the final three outs in save situations.

"If I'm coming in the game, I'm coming in trying to finish the game," he said. "So if I do come in the eighth inning I have full expectations to go back out there for the ninth and close it out."

When presented with a scenario where he might be needed to face a middle of the order to eliminate a possible threat as early as the seventh inning, Kimbrel quickly responded by offering, "I don't think I'll be pitching in the seventh inning."

Cora recently said that he was hoping to get together with Kimbrel to present the closer some data supporting the idea that there is value to not adhering to the traditional closer's role. But to this point, the pair's discussion has been limited to early on in spring training.

"Our conversation was pretty basic and straightforward," Kimbrel said. "We talked about situations. It's nothing I haven't been accustomed to, coming in and getting out of a situation. Or we have a game that's close and it's a big game, coming in and getting guys out of the situation in the eighth inning. The conversations we've had haven't been too different than what I've always known."

"You want to be on the same page as the guy making the decisions of how the game is going to roll. I think as long as the whole team is on the same page everything works better and flows better."

Thus far, Kimbrel has pitched in five games, all ninth-inning appearances. At some point, however, another inning besides the ninth is undoubtedly going to be introduced.

"I think a lot of it comes down to analytics, looking where the lineups swing around and who is coming up in the eighth and if it's more important to get through the eighth inning to get to that ninth inning," Kimbrel said. "I think analytics are great but you still can't measure what it takes to get the last three outs of the game."

"My view of it is that it's very important in the eighth inning if the middle of the lineup is coming up. But if the bottom of the lineup is coming up in the ninth inning and those guys get on, well before you know it the middle of the order is back up with runners on in a lot tighter ballgame than maybe it was in the eighth inning."

### **Hanley Ramirez leaves after being hit in left wrist**

Rob Bradford

There was another hit batsman in the Red Sox' series against the Yankees, except this one didn't seem like it was intentionally executed.

With one out and a runner on first base in the first inning, New York starter Sonny Gray hit Hanley Ramirez in the left wrist with a tailing 94 mph fastball.

Ramirez was in obvious pain immediately after the pitch, only looking out toward Gray for a moment before being attended to by the Red Sox' medical staff. After it initially looked like the first baseman might stay in the game, he ultimately went back into the clubhouse with Mitch Moreland coming on to pinch-run and play first base.

X-rays taken on Ramirez's wrist were negative.

The incident led to both benches being warned.

### **Joe Kelly suspended 6 games, Tyler Austin 5 for sparking Red Sox-Yankees brawl**

John Tomase

Red Sox pitcher Joe Kelly was suspending for six games and Yankees DH Tyler Austin received five games for their roles in Wednesday's Red Sox-Yankees melee at Fenway Park.

The two primary combatants were also fined an undisclosed amount. They weren't the only ones punished. Red Sox manager Alex Cora, Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin, Red Sox players Xander Bogaerts, Marco Hernandez and Dustin Pedroia, and Yankees pitcher CC Sabathia were also disciplined. All four players are currently on the disabled list.

The seeds of the bench-clearing brawl were laid when Austin spiked shortstop Brock Holt in the calf on a forceout. Holt took exception and the benches emptied, though no punches were thrown.

Things came to a head in the seventh, however, when Kelly threw one pitch inside and then drilled Austin with a 98 mph fastball in the back. Austin slammed his bat into home plate before charging the mound. Kelly, who had just given him the, "Let's go," signal, landed a punch before both benches swarmed the field.

Cora was caught on camera gesturing dismissively at Nevin, who had just been ejected. Cora was unapologetic on Thursday, while Nevin called the gesture unprofessional.

## ***\*NBC Sports Boston***

### **David Price's circulation, numb hand not matters of weakness**

Evan Drellich

BOSTON — Drop the David-Price-didn't-want-to-pitch act. Don't play dumb about the importance of being able to feel a baseball in your throwing hand. Stop pretending that all Price needed was a pair of those dollar-store hand warmers that burn a hole in your mittens.

You're right: If a baseball player loses a tooth, they're probably not staying in the game. So if you want to go down the road of how tough baseball players are compared to, say, hockey players, have at it. But you're not touching on the real issue.

Release point, finger-pressure and hand placement on the ball are all essential to pitching. So, when you hear David Price had numbness in his pitching hand on Wednesday when he lasted just one inning, how

can you leap to a conclusion that he was just being soft, or weak, or that he didn't want to face the Yankees?

You want someone to throw a baseball they can't properly grasp? OK, you saw the results for one inning and four runs. They were hitting Price hard because he had no grip.

Price said Thursday night he has a circulation issue, and it's not new.

"I talked to the doctors last night," Price said. "They talked about a couple different things that we could try. It's something I've always had, even whenever I was a little kid. My hands and my feet are two things that are always cold. Whenever it's cold outside, it intensifies that."

You have probably heard about blisters affecting pitchers, including Price in the past. Some guys seem to be more prone to blisters than others. You get why those are disruptive, right? You can visualize a raw, torn piece of skin on someone's hand, and how that would be not only painful, but make it impossible to do what you hope with a baseball.

An absence of feeling in the hand can be an impediment to pitching, too.

Price's next scheduled start will be in much warmer weather, with an extra day of rest. He's been pushed back from Monday on Patriots Day at home, when the weather is supposed to be bad, to Tuesday in Anaheim.

In the long view, it is crucial that the Sox find a way to address Price's circulation, if at all possible. The games he'll be judged on most will be in October. It can be a bit chilly here, you know.

They have months to make sure Price can get through a playoff start, which will, of course, be handled differently.

Even if you hate that Price wasn't asked to get shellacked by the Yanks for another four innings Wednesday, remember that he and the Sox had reason to worry something else was amiss, too. Numbness could be caused by a nerve issue, or a variety of ailments.

"I knew it was nothing dealing with anything that went on last year," Price said Thursday, referring to his elbow troubles. "I knew it was solely circumstances, and we'll come out of this one feeling the way I thought I was going to feel."

Regardless of that kind of confidence, a pitcher who can't feel his hand should raise an alarm for a manager, for a training staff, and should prompt a quick exit.

Cora was asked before Thursday's game if a nerve issue could be at play, and he wasn't sure. Price revealed the circulation matter after the game.

Price didn't get an MRI, Cora said. That's fine, so long as the Sox and Price have a firm, well, grip on the situation. They very likely know more than they're letting on publicly, as is often the case with health matters. And if they don't know everything they can yet, they absolutely need to dig in. No stone should be unturned with Price's health.

But when it comes to Wednesday, remember, there's no reason Price would want to bow out of a game after all the crap he went through — and indeed, occasionally brought on himself — in his time in Boston.

The Red Sox are 10-2 after a 6-3 rubber-match win over the Yankees on Thursday. The rotation has a 2.01 ERA on the season. Price has contradicted himself in the past. He's made mistakes in leadership. But he's never appeared someone who doesn't want to be on the mound.

Get a grip.

## **Hanley Ramirez hit by pitch, hurt in 1st inning night after brawl**

Evan Drellich

BOSTON — The pitch didn't appear to carry intent, but it may have been more damaging than the one Joe Kelly threw at Tyler Austin.

The first pitch Sonny Gray threw to Hanley Ramirez in the top of the first inning on Thursday night at Fenway Park was up and in, but not egregiously so, and it caught Ramirez in what appeared to be the right wrist area. Batting third, there was one out and a runner on first base.

Ramirez was hunched over in pain and after trying to walk it off for a bit, was pulled. There did not appear to be any warnings issued.

Before the game, Kelly was given a six-game suspension and Austin a five-game suspension for their part in Wednesday's brawl. The benches did not clear when Ramirez was hit on Thursday, a level-headed reaction from both sides.

The Red Sox later announced that x-rays were negative, and the injury is a wrist contusion.

## **Phil Nevin has no good reason to be complaining**

Evan Drellich

BOSTON — The only surprising part of Thursday's fallout from the Yankees-Red Sox brawl a night earlier was Phil Nevin's logic, or lack thereof.

The Yankees' third base coach was ejected Wednesday, and was barking at the Sox after the dust settled in the seventh inning. From the first-base dugout, Sox manager Alex Cora gestured to Nevin to turn back around, to take a walk.

On Thursday, Nevin called Cora "unprofessional." Was Cora supposed to just stand there, unmoved, as Nevin spouted off?

"After the whole thing, he was screaming at our dugout, I don't know if he was screaming specifically at me," Cora said Thursday. "And I took exception. I don't want to say I overreacted, but, that's not me. I think for 10 games, or whatever I've managed, you guys see me very calm over there. But there is a chain of command, and if we're going to be letting everybody [scream] in situations like that, well, it wasn't a good situation in the beginning, and it can be worse.

"I don't manage their team. I manage my team. I don't want any of my coaches screaming at Aaron Boone or any of their players, and I took exception. I made a signal, I know everybody saw it. Out of character for me, but I still didn't like the fact that he was pointing at me and screaming."

Cora's a manager, Nevin's merely a coach. The former will be held to a higher standard. But both have a responsibility to professionalism. Cora acknowledged he could have handled the moment better. But standing there and telling someone who's barking at you to turn back around doesn't seem ridiculous, given the moment.

Aaron Boone, the Yankees manager, has a pre-existing relationship with Cora. Boone didn't exactly throw his weight behind Nevin.

"You know what, I don't really have anything to say about it," Boone said Thursday. "It's yesterday, I don't want to rehash it, I'll talk about the play, I'll give you my opinion on the Austin play, but that's for him to answer. We're moving on."

Asked if he saw what Cora did as unprofessional, Boone said he did not “necessarily see it that way from Phil’s standpoint.”

Per retrosheet.org, Nevin was ejected 12 times in his playing career. Among the listed reasons from various incidents: threw bat, threw glove and hat, touched umpire and threw equipment. The only listed ejection for Cora’s major league career came while he was a bench coach last year in Houston.

Nevin responded on Thursday to Cora’s chain-of-command line.

“I saw something directed at me when I was going back to third,” he said, via MLB.com’s Bryan Hoch. “But if you want to talk about chain of command and then tell somebody to get back into their box, everybody saw that, that’s pretty unprofessional.”

The bottom line? There’s only one third-base coach who has good reason to complain about professionalism: the one who got clocked in the head during the brawl, the Red Sox’ Carlos Febles.

## **\* NESN.com**

### **Red Sox Notes: Alex Cora, Hanley Ramirez Give Update On Slugger’s Injury**

Logan Mullen

The Boston Red Sox ended their three-game set with the New York Yankees on a high note, but there was some worry early in the game.

First baseman Hanley Ramirez left in the first inning after taking a Sonny Gray fastball to his wrist. He jumped around in pain for a few moments before eventually heading down the tunnel, marking the end of his night.

Later in the game, the Red Sox announced Ramirez suffered a wrist contusion, and that the X-rays were negative.

After the 6-3 win, Red Sox manager Alex Cora gave an update on the current status of Ramirez.

“Day-to-day. He was pretty sore,” Cora said, as seen on NESN’s postgame coverage. “I actually think it hit him on the left (wrist) then hit him on the right one. I’ll talk to him tonight, most likely tomorrow we’ll give him the off day, play Mitch (Moreland) and then make a decision. But I’ve got to see where he’s at. The training staff, they feel probably one day will help him out.”

Ramirez himself weighed in on Twitter following the game, and he too gave a promising update.

The loss of Ramirez, even for just one game, obviously is a big blow to Boston’s offense, which lost its other hottest hitter in Xander Bogaerts on Sunday. Ramirez has been an integral part of the lineup as the No.3 batter, hitting .357 so far this season with a pair of doubles and home runs and 12 RBI to go with his .952 OPS.

But all things considered, Cora nor Ramirez sounded overly alarmed by what took place. And in all likelihood, a clearer picture of Ramirez’s health likely will come into focus Friday.

Here are some other notes from Red Sox-Yankees:

— Starting pitcher Rick Porcello was lights out Thursday night, mowing down Yankees hitters as he took a no-hitter into the seventh inning. He was efficient with his pitches, not just in terms of his pitch count of 99, but also with his command. His sinker had a nice bite, while his changeup was mixed in well to fool hitters.



When asked what has been working for Porcello after a down 2017 season, Cora recalled his time as bench coach of the Houston Astros, and how Carlos Beltran analyzed the sinkerballer.

“I remember Carlos Beltran, he talked about him last year and he felt his stuff was still there, but his changeup wasn’t there,” Cora said. “Carlos faced him a few times I guess in the A.L. East, so when he talks guys listen and that was the feedback. He felt the velocity was there, the movement was there, but that pitch made him a different pitcher compared to the previous year. ... I think the changeup is the difference-maker compared to last year.”

— After exiting Wednesday’s game in the first inning, David Price is set to make his next start after a successful day of catch Thursday. The southpaw will start Tuesday in Los Angeles against the Angels, a day later than he otherwise would have pitched. In terms of bumping the start a day later, Cora noted that it was his decision because the Sox had the resources to let Price wait an extra day.

“I decided, for my sake, let’s just push it back and make sure that everything is fine. He is fine, but I’d rather give him one more day and he’ll pitch Tuesday.”

Added Price: “I told him I was fine for Monday or I could come back on Saturday or Sunday and go sit in the (bullpen) if needed. I told him I’d go out there whenever he wants, but he thought Tuesday would be better weather-wise, Monday looks really bad right now, so Tuesday is what he wanted.

“I knew (I was fine) this morning when I woke up, I knew it last night before I went to sleep,” Price continued. “There was never any thought in my mind that last year kind of reoccured or any of that. Hand was just completely numb and couldn’t feel it.”

Hector Velazquez will start Saturday, and Brian Johnson will go Monday.

### **Red Sox Wrap: Rick Porcello Dazzles As Boston Beats Yankees 6-3 In Rubber Match**

Logan Mullen

The Boston Red Sox put an exclamation point at the end of their contentious three-game set against the New York Yankees.

In the rubber match of a wild trio of games, Boston fought off a late rally to beat New York 6-3 in a rain-delayed game at Fenway Park on Thursday.

Boston plated four runs in the second inning and a pair more in the third to create plenty of breathing room for starter Rick Porcello, who went six innings before allowing a hit.

There was some concern in the contest for Boston, however, as Hanley Ramirez left the game in the first inning after getting hit by a pitch on the right wrist. The X-rays were negative and he was diagnosed with a wrist contusion.

A roughly 47-minute rain delay put the game on hold after the fifth inning, but was finished without issue on the other end of the stoppage.

With the win, the Red Sox climb to 10-2, while the Yankees fall to 6-7.

Here’s how it all went down:

#### **GAME IN A WORD**

Convincing.

In every facet of the game, the Red Sox were superior. Porcello was untouchable, while the bats continued to remain hot. By the end of the second inning, it was clear the Sox were not going to let the Yankees leave town as winners of the series, despite their ninth-inning surge.

#### ON THE BUMP

— Porcello was stellar in his third start of the season, stifling a Yankees lineup that recorded 10 runs just a night before.

The righty took a perfect game into the fourth inning, which ended when he hit Giancarlo Stanton with a pitch. When the game halted after the fifth due to a rain delay, it was uncertain if Porcello would come back out to try and keep his no-no going. He did, and continued to roll — pitching a 1-2-3 sixth inning — until Aaron Judge broke up the no-hitter with a leadoff double in the seventh.

Judge's double created some seventh-inning trouble for Porcello, as Stanton followed up the next at-bat with a single to put runners on first and second with no outs. He worked his way out of it exceptionally, however, getting Didi Gregorius to fly out before striking out Gary Sanchez and Aaron Hicks to end the inning.

Overall, he capped off his solid night with seven scoreless innings, allowing just two hits with six strikeouts and one hit batter.

— Marcus Walden, who was called up from Triple-A Pawtucket earlier in the day, pitched a scoreless eighth but found himself in quite a bit of trouble in the ninth.

The reliever walked Judge to open the inning, and the right fielder moved to third on the next play when Rafael Devers misplayed a grounder then botched the rushed throw, also allowing Stanton to reach. After walking Gregorius to load the bases, Sanchez cleared them with a double, cutting the Sox's lead to 6-3 while spelling the end of Walden's night.

— Craig Kimbrel came in and retired the next three hitters, including two strikeouts, stranding Sanchez to end the game.

#### IN THE BATTER'S BOX

— Boston's offense went off on starter Sonny Gray in the second inning, tagging him for four runs. After Eduardo Nunez and Jackie Bradley Jr. both reached base, Sandy Leon drove his teammate in with a single to right to make it 1-0.

Brock Holt walked the next at-bat to load the bases, then all the runners moved after Mookie Betts hit a sacrifice fly to center field, plating Bradley Jr. and extending the lead to 2-0.

The next hitter, Andrew Benintendi, knocked in a third run on a fielder's choice. He grounded a ball to Yankees second baseman Tyler Wade, whose throw to try and catch Leon at the plate snuck past Sanchez.

Following Benintendi, Mitch Moreland drove in the fourth run with a single to left field.

— The next frame the Red Sox tagged Gray for a pair more. Nunez and Bradley Jr. led off the third with doubles, with Bradley Jr.'s two-bagger scoring Nunez. The center fielder moved to third the next at-bat on a wild pitch, and later was driven in on a force out from Betts to make it 6-0.

— Benintendi, Moreland and Nunez all recorded two hits, while Bradley Jr. and Leon had one hit apiece.

— Betts went hitless, but drove in a two runs on a sacrifice fly and force out. J.D. Martinez, Devers and Holt also did not tally a hit, along with Tzu-Wei Lin in his lone at-bat.

UP NEXT

The Red Sox will remain at Fenway Park for the first contest of a four-game set against the Baltimore Orioles. Eduardo Rodriguez is scheduled to take the mound for Boston and will be opposed by Chris Tillman. First pitch from Fenway Park is set for 7:10 p.m. ET.

## \* ***Bostonsportsjournal.com***

### **Rick Porcello rediscovers that sinking feeling again**

Sean McAdam

Rick Porcello spent much of spring training attempting a pitching reboot.

He used a specially-designed target to ensure that his pitches were sufficiently down in the strike zone. He worked on back mounds with former Red Sox starter Derek Lowe, hoping to recapture his sinker with some subtle mechanical adjustments. And while he was reluctant to talk about it much, he spent some time reading some sports psychology books to sharpen his focus and mental approach.

What Porcello wanted, chiefly, was to again become the pitcher he had been in 2016, when he won the American League Cy Young Award, and less like the pitcher who last year led the league in hits allowed and homers. Too often last season, Porcello tended to blend his two fastballs together — the two-seamer rode up in the zone and the four-seamer wasn't elevated enough.

The result? Too many, inviting center-cut fastballs. Worse, he often couldn't rely on his changeup to provide hitters with a different look.

That was then. And now, three starts into 2018, it's as if he rediscovered out to stay out of the middle of the plate.

"I feel," proclaimed Porcello, "like me."

Just ask the Yankees, who managed all of two hits over seven innings, only one of which left the infield, in a 6-3 Red Sox victory. Porcello limited the Yankees to one baserunner — he grazed Giancarlo Stanton with two outs in the fourth — over the first six innings, a stretch that included a 48-minute rain delay.

His pitch count at an economical 60, Alex Cora didn't think twice about sending him back to the mound when play resumed.

In the seventh, when Aaron Judge launched a rope over the head of center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr.'s head for the first hit against him, Porcello barely noticed that his no-hit bid had been spoiled.

"We were too far away from that," said Porcello, smiling at the notion. "Our bullpen was thin; I was just trying to get outs."

Which Porcello did, seemingly with ease. It was three up, three down in each inning but the fourth through the first six. There were lots of ground balls — evidence that his two-seam fastball was operating at peak efficiency. There was the odd strikeout — five mixed in through the first six frames — and, tellingly no walks.

And this was no easy lineup he was matched against. But with a quick tempo and strong command, Porcello was undaunted.

"Everything was working," gushed catcher Sandy Leon. "He was getting ahead in the count, getting early outs. He kept making pitches. He's keeping the ball down. Almost every pitch is working; last year,

(sometimes) he'd have two pitches. Now, you can call almost every pitch on any count and he's going to execute (whatever I put down). Rick has been good. He likes to compete, he likes to fight every time he's on the mound."

Working the bottom of the zone with his sinker and up in the zone with his four-seamer, Porcello tried to give the Yankees different looks, liberally mixing in his changeup and slider

"They have a lot of good fastball hitters," said Porcello, "and they hit them in the zone real good. So we tried to expand and get them to chase a bunch. (The slider) was a good pitch for us tonight."

"He was excellent," concluded Cora.

In three starts, Porcello has pitched into at least the sixth each time and sports a 3-0 mark with a 1.83 ERA. It's early, far too soon to declare his makeover a certified success, but the early returns have been encouraging.

If you're searching for omens, the last time Porcello ripped off a bunch of victories to start a season, that, too, was 2016, when he began 5-0.

He may not be looking to specifically replicate that season, but the Red Sox would surely welcome it.

### **BSJ Game Report: Red Sox 6, Yankees 3 – Porcello dominates**

Sean McAdam

#### HEADLINES

Red Sox take first series from their rivals: Boston won the first and last games of the first series of the season between the Sox and New York Yankees, taking the rubber game after splitting the first two. That leaves the Red Sox 4.5 games in front of the Yanks in the American League East. The two teams don't meet again until a three-game set in New York in the first week of May.

Porcello's no-no bid ends in the seventh: Rick Porcello no-hit the Yanks through the first six innings and didn't allow a baserunner until he grazed Giancarlo Stanton with a pitch with two out in the fourth. Not even a 48-minute rain delay seemed to throw him off his game, as he came back to retire the Yanks in order in the sixth. But leading off the seventh, Aaron Judge hit a rope to the triangle in center for a double and that was that. Porcello then allowed an infield hit before getting the final three hitters of the inning in order. He was lifted after the seventh, having allowed two hits with no walks and six strikeouts.

Ramirez exits early: Hanley Ramirez was struck on the right wrist by an inside pitch in the first inning by starter Sonny Gray and after conferring with the training staff, came out of the game. He was replaced at first base by Mitch Moreland. The umpiring crew was on high alert after Wednesday's bench-clearing mess, but they deemed this beaming unintentional. The Red Sox later announced that Ramirez underwent x-rays, which came back negative. Cora said post-game the training staff recommended another day out of the lineup as a precaution. In his place, Moreland contributed two singles in three at-bats.

#### TURNING POINT

The Sox were leading 4-0 after two innings when Eduardo Nunez opened the home half of the third with a double. Jackie Bradley Jr. followed with a ball down the line in left that Giancarlo Stanton chased after and appeared to think was headed for the seats. But with wind and rain, the ball blew back into fair territory and about 10 feet over Stanton's head. The Sox had a run in, and the start of another multi-run inning and never looked back.

#### TWO UP

Andrew Benintendi: Benintendi, was out of the lineup Wednesday, returned for the final game of the series and continued to show evidence that's he coming around after a slow start. He was 2-for-3 with two walks Tuesday and had two more hits Thursday — a single in the first and another in the sixth.

Eduardo Nunez: Nunez had been 0-for-7 in the series before Thursday before legging out an infield chopper in the second and drilling a double to left to lead off the third. He came around to score both times. But with his troublesome knee acting up some and the grass wet from the steady rain, he was wisely lifted from the game after the delay.

#### ONE DOWN

Rafael Devers: Devers had played errorless ball through the first 11 games, but that ended in a flourish in the ninth when he misplayed a ball hit by Stanton, then compounded things by throwing a ball in the dirt that allowed Aaron Judge to advance from second to third. One play, two errors. And things weren't any better at the plate, either, with a 0-for-4 night.

#### INJURY UPDATE

David Price, who was lifted after just one inning Wednesday night after complaining about a numb sensation, will pitch in Anaheim Tuesday, the opener of the team's nine-game road trip. Warmer weather on the West Coast should benefit him.

"It was nothing that (had anything) to do with anything that went on last year," said Price, who had two DL stints with elbow and forearm issues. "I woke up this morning feeling the way I figured I was going to feel. Everything was good. I told (Cora) that I would go out whenever he wants, but he thought Tuesday would be better, weather-wise. There was never any thought that last year had re-occurred or any of that. My hand was just completely numb and I couldn't feel it. It's something I've always had."

#### STATISTICALLY SPEAKING

The Red Sox have won each of their four series played.  
The Sox have had an inning of four runs or more in each of the last five games.  
Boston has managed 45 runs in their last five games, an average of nine per contest.  
QUOTE OF NOTE

"I just feel like me." Rick Porcello, asked if he feels like he did in 2016, when he won the Cy Young Award.

#### UP NEXT

With the Yankees series complete, the Red Sox begin a four-game, wraparound series with Baltimore Friday. Eduardo Rodriguez (0-0, 7.36) faces Chris Tillman (0-2, 8.68) in the opener.

#### **Joe Kelly suspended six games, Tyler Austin five in aftermath of Sox-Yanks brawl**

Sean McAdam

Taking swift action, Major League Baseball suspended Red Sox reliever Joe Kelly for six games and Yankees infielder/outfielder Tyler Austin for five games for their role in the bench-clearing brawl that took place in the seventh inning of Wednesday's game.

Both players have appealed their suspensions and will continue to be eligible to play until their hearings are heard and a decision on those appeals have been made. Both players were also fined, as were Red Sox manager Alex Cora and Yankee third base coach Phil Nevin.

Four others — CC Sabathia, Marco Hernandez, Dustin Pedroia and Xander Bogaerts — were also fined for leaving the dugout while being on the DL.

BSJ Analysis:

The release noted that Kelly was suspended for "intentionally hitting Austin with a pitch and fighting," while Austin was nabbed for "charging the mound and fighting."

Ordinarily, under these circumstances, pitchers are given stiffer penalties because they don't participate in every game the way position players can or do.

The Red Sox may take issue with the disparity between the two, however, since it was Austin's questionable slide into shortstop Brock Holt in the third inning which touched off the dispute. But because the umpires didn't rule Austin automatically out for an illegal slide and the nature of that falls into a somewhat gray area, MLB didn't impose additional penalties on him.

In all likelihood, the Sox will try to game the system — as teams do — and perhaps have Kelly appear in two straight games, then convince him to drop the appeal, since he would probably need two or three days recovery time following such a workload.

Both teams will be able to replace the players on their respective rosters if-and-when the suspensions are upheld. Often, MLB takes a game or so off the original penalty, but cynics have contended that such an adjustment is built into the original penalties.

### **Final: Red Sox 6, Yankees 3 — Porcello a strong seven innings**

Sean McAdam

Round one to the Red Sox.

Rick Porcello checked the Yankees on two hits over seven shutout innings and the Sox gave him all the support he would need in the second inning as the Sox defeated the Yanks 6-3 to take the first series of the year between the rivals.

Porcello didn't allow a baserunner until the fourth when he plunked Giancarlo Stanton and even, for a time, survived a 48-minute rain delay. But Aaron Judge laced a double to center to lead off the seventh ending his bid.

The Sox had a four-run second with only three hits —all singles, thanks to two walks, two wild pitches by starter Sonny Gray and a sacrifice fly. They tacked on two more in the third after Eduardo Nunez and Jackie Bradley Jr. delivered back-to-back doubles to lead off the inning.

A bases-clearing double by Gary Sanchez off Marcus Walden in the ninth made things mildly interesting before Craig Kimbrel came in to get the final three outs for his fourth save.

WHO: Red Sox vs. New York Yankees

WHEN: 7:10 p.m.

WHERE: Fenway Park

WHAT'S UP: The two teams have split the first two games of the series, with the rubber game set for Thursday night. The Red Sox saw their nine-game winning streak ended with a thud Wednesday in a 10-7 loss to the Yankees. It was the first Red Sox loss since March 29, the season opener. The Yankees, meanwhile, snapped a two-game skid with the win. It should be interesting to see if there's any carryover from Wednesday's bench-clearing brawl. This will be the last meeting between the teams until a three-game set in New York on May 8-10.

STARTING PITCHERS: RHP Rick Porcello (2-0, 2.84) vs. RHP Sonny Gray (1-0, 3.60)

TV/RADIO: NESN/WEEI 93.7 FM

## IN-GAME OBSERVATIONS:

10:08: Porcello was laboring there at the end, needing 25 pitches to get through the seventh before finishing with a flourish and fanning Aaron Hicks on a 3-and-2 changeup. The 25 pitches were easily the most he needed to get through an inning. Prior to the seventh, he had thrown only one inning in which he needed more than 15 — an 18-pitch second. At 99 pitches, that will be it.

9:58: The first hit off Rick Porcello was not cheap — Aaron Judge squared up a 2-and-1 slider and hit a rocket over the lead of Bradley in center, landing in the triangle. With Porcello approaching 90 pitches and the no-hitter gone, this will be his final inning.

9:43: A 48-minute delay didn't seem to take Porcello off his game. He retires the Yankees in order with a groundball and two strikeouts on 14 pitches, maintaining his no-hit bid through six innings.

8:49: No hits off Rick Porcello through five innings, but two things are working against him: the steady rainfall and pitch count. Porcello is at 60 pitches five — an average of 12 per frame, hardly a high number — but that would put him on a pace for 108, a number he would be unlikely to get to in his third start of the season. And, as I type, the tarp is being rolled onto the field, meaning a delay of a while. Tough call for Alex Cora eventually

8:33: The starting pitching in this series has left a lot to be desired. Of the six starters, only Chris Sale (one run over six innings Tuesday), and so far tonight, Rick Porcello (one walk, no hits in four innings) have pitched well.

8:18: Like J.D. Martinez, it would appear that Giancarlo Stanton's best position is the batter's box. Even allowing for the fact that he hasn't had a lot of exposure to left field at Fenway, he grossly overran a relatively routine flyball near the line, with Jackie Bradley awarded a run-scoring double.

8:00: Red Sox have had big innings in all three games. They scored nine in the six Tuesday, five in the seventh Wednesday and four in the second tonight.

7:44: I know they're already shorthanded in the infield, but it sure looks like the Red Sox would be smart to give Eduardo Nunez some rest. He just doesn't look right. Not moving well, unsure of himself defensively. He just ran hard to beat out a chopper and needed time to recover and determine he could stay in the game.

7:25: Eleven pitches into the bottom of the first, we have a hit batter. A fastball in to Hanley Ramirez clipped him on the right hand. Didn't seem to be any intent there, but with everyone on high alert, home umpire Chris Guccione was standing in front of the plate, watching both dugouts. Ramirez left the game and has been replaced by Mitch Moreland at first.

7:17 Three groundouts by the Yankees against Rick Porcello, and interestingly, two of the groundouts came on pitches other than his sinker: Gardner grounded to first on a slider and Judge rolled over on a changeup.

## LINEUPS

### RED SOX

Betts RF  
Benintendi LF  
Ramirez 1B  
Martinez DH  
Devers 3B  
Nunez 2B  
Bradley CF  
Leon C

Holt SS

YANKEES

Gardner CF  
Judge RF  
Stanton LF  
Gregorius SS  
Sanchez C  
Hicks DH  
Walker 1B  
Wade 2B  
Torreyes 3b

NEWS AND NOTES:

David Price long-tossed in the outfield pre-game. “He feels good,” said Alex Cora. “There’s a chance he’ll start on Monday (his next scheduled start). The most important thing is to keep him healthy. He feels fine. All the tests with the training staff, he was good.” Cora said he— with input from the coaching staff— made the call to pull Price Wednesday after the first inning. “He didn’t ask to come out,” said Cora. “You could see he was uncomfortable and you call tell his location was off. But he played catch today and he feels good.”

The rotation is in some flux for the next few days. Hector Valazquez is set to pitch Saturday against Baltimore, unless he’s needed Thursday night. If he does pitch Thursday, then Brian Johnson will start Saturday. And if Price can’t go Monday, whoever doesn’t pitch Saturday between Johnson and Velazquez will pitch Monday.

Cora said Bobby Poyner (DL-hamstring pull) battled some hamstring issues in spring training and in the first series in Tampa. “He’s been battling it,” said Cora. “We decided to put him on the DL.”

Cora was seen on video going at it verbally with Yankee third base coach Phil Nevin during Thursday’s brawl. Cora was shown waving goodbye to Nevin, who had been ejected. He also drew up an imaginary box with his hands, apparently instructing Nevin to stay in the third base coach’s box. “After the whole thing, he was screaming at our dugout,” said Cora. “I don’t know if he was screaming specifically at me. I took exception. I don’t want to say I overreacted, but that’s not me. For however long I’ve managed, you guys see me (being) very calm over there. But if we’re going to let everybody be screaming in situations like that...it wasn’t a good situation to be in and it could (have been made) worse. I don’t manage their team, obviously, I manage my team, and I don’t want my coaches screaming at Aaron Boone or any of their players. I took exception. I made a signal. I know everybody saw it. Out of character for me, but I still don’t like the fact that he was pointing at me, screaming at me.”

## ***\*The Athletic***

**McCaffrey: He missed out on no-hitter, but Rick Porcello is really delivering for Red Sox**

Jen McCaffrey

With a blowout in game one and a brawl in game two, all this series needed was a no-hitter, and Rick Porcello nearly delivered one.

But a 48-minute rain delay between the fifth and sixth innings cut into a dazzling performance from the right-hander on Thursday. Though he returned after the delay with another brilliant inning, he lost the no-hit bid to the first batter of the seventh.

What could have been had the rain held off will never be known, but the one certainty is that Porcello was spectacular on a damp night in a big series and is one step closer to putting a dreadful 2017 behind him.



Manager Alex Cora summed up his starter's performance in one word.

"Excellent," Cora said after the 6-3 win. "Changing speeds. Pitching in the bottom of the zone. Using his changeup. Elevating. Using both sides of the plate, that was excellent."

Porcello threw his first 76 pitches without allowing a hit or walk to the Yankees.

A pitch that grazed the jersey of Giancarlo Stanton in the fourth inning was the lone blemish that kept him from perfection through five.

Porcello dazzled with pinpoint precision (aside from the hit batter), as a light mist at first pitch turned into a steadier rain by the fifth inning.

He posted a quick six-pitch inning and the Red Sox went down in order in the bottom of the fifth before the Fenway Park grounds crew appeared on the field and began to unravel the tarp.

The 48-minute delay ensued.

Pitching coach Dana LeVangie knew he needed to keep Porcello warm and so he had the starter ride a stationary bike first followed by a simulated inning throwing near the indoor batting cages.

With the bullpen taxed from the previous night when David Price exited after just one inning, Porcello's main goal was to go as deep as possible. Cora and LeVangie had to keep Porcello's health in mind, too, with the slippery conditions.

"I think we probably evaluated a lot of different people," LeVangie said. "Myself and the training staff, his pitch count was really good. We also felt like if there's one or two of our guys that will be able to do it, he's one of them just because where he's at with his preparation."

By the time, Porcello returned to the mound at 9:40 p.m., he'd been out of the game for 53 minutes, yet it hardly looked it.

He induced a weak grounder to first against the initial batter he faced, Tyler Wade, then struck out Ronald Torreyes looking on an 89 mph sinker and Brett Gardner swinging on an 82 mph changeup.

"[The] changeup felt real good, everything felt real good," Porcello said. "Sandy [Leon] called a hell of a game. Can't say enough about the pitch mix that he was putting down back there. We were on the same page. I was just trying to hit the glove."

The 29-year-old stood in the dugout watching the bottom of the sixth inning, shifting back and forth from foot to foot, a combination of staying warm and loose and perhaps some nerves, even though he knew he had a long way to go to think about a no-hitter.

"No we were too far away from that," Porcello said. "Our bullpen was thin. I'm just trying to get outs."

When he took the mound for the seventh, he got to a 2-1 count on Aaron Judge before the Yankees slugger crushed an 85 mph slider, Porcello's 77th pitch of the night, to deep center over Jackie Bradley Jr.'s head for a double to end the no-hit bid.

Stanton reached on an infield single in the next at-bat before Porcello got Didi Gregorius to fly out, Gary Sanchez to strike out looking and Aaron Hicks to strike out swinging.

By that point he was up to 99 pitches and with the no-hit bid gone Cora turned to reliever Marcus Walden for eighth.

Porcello finished with 99 pitches, 69 for strikes and registered 10 swings-and-misses. He struck out six. Never before had he pitched so deep into a game without allowing a hit and the last time he had pitched seven scoreless innings with two or fewer hits was in 2011.

“It’s not just the sinker, that’s a really important pitch itself, but also having three to four pitches with the deception into the bottom of the zone, which he’s doing really well at,” LeVangie said. “So they can’t time up one speed. He’s always controlling the bat speed and ultimately that was the biggest goal that we were trying to get across to him.”

Porcello and Leon expertly mixed pitches with five of the 10 swings and misses on his slider. That allowed the other pitches more depth and deception.

“The cutter is on both sides of the plate, the sinker is on both sides of the plate, you make the plate bigger, wider,” LeVangie said. “Changeup is on both sides of the plate. You’re always controlling the bat speed and they can never feel comfortable with speeds coming in at the bottom of the zone and he’s doing it really well.”

With a 3-0 start and a 1.83 ERA, Porcello already appears to be in a rhythm akin to his 2016 Cy Young winning season. If he keeps it up, nights like Thursday might become more frequent.

### **David Price, a day after 1-inning outing, learns he'll make next start Tuesday**

Chad Jennings

For the next few days, the Red Sox basically have a six-man rotation.

David Price played catch Thursday afternoon and felt no lingering effects from the hand numbness that plagued his Wednesday night start against the Yankees. He told manager Alex Cora that he could pitch this weekend, could take his normal turn on Monday, could even be available out of the bullpen.

Cora told him to start Tuesday.

The decision isn’t necessarily health-related or weather-related.

“Actually, it’s more about me related,” Cora said. “I just decided, for my sake, just push him back and make sure everything is fine. He is fine. But I’d rather give him one more day.”

So, the upcoming Red Sox rotation looks like this:

Friday: Eduardo Rodriguez

Saturday: Hector Velazquez

Sunday: Chris Sale

Monday: Brian Johnson

Tuesday: Price

Wednesday: Rick Porcello

Price lasted only one inning on Wednesday because of persistent numbness in his pitching hand, but he insisted then – and said again on Thursday – that he was never worried about a recurring elbow issue or any sort of nerve problem.

“I knew that this morning whenever I woke up,” he said. “I knew it last night before I went to sleep. There was never any thought in my mind that last year reoccurred or anything like that. My hand was just literally numb and I couldn’t feel it. ... It’s something I’ve always had, even whenever I was a little kid. My hands and my feet are two things that are always cold. Whenever it’s cold outside, it intensifies that.”

Pushing his next start to Tuesday means he’ll pitch in Anaheim instead of Boston.

\* Hanley Ramirez likely will not be in the Red Sox lineup Friday after being hit by a pitch in the left hand (Cora said the pitch actually hit the left hand, then made contact with the right hand as well). X-rays came back negative.

“I have to see where he’s at,” Cora said. “The training staff, they feel probably one day will help him out.”

\* Eduardo Nunez played Thursday and had two hits including a double, but he was pulled after the rain delay because of lingering leg issues. The Red Sox are carrying only one true backup middle infielder – Blake Swihart has taken some ground balls at second base, but he’s never played there – so keeping Nunez healthy and playable is a priority.

“I think he was having a hard time getting loose today,” Cora said. “That’s something we expected before we got here with the weather. So, I decided, with the conditions and his situation, just take him out.”

\* Joe Kelly was suspended six games for his role in Wednesday’s brawl. Yankees first baseman Tyler Austin – who charged the mound after Kelly hit him with a fastball – was suspended five games. Cora and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin were also fined, as were four players currently on the disabled list who left the dugout during the fight: Dustin Pedroia, Xander Bogaerts, Marco Hernandez and Yankees starter CC Sabathia.

\* Before Thursday’s game, the Red Sox placed reliever Bobby Poyner on the disabled list with a left hamstring strain. They recalled Bobby Walden to take his place. Walden threw 25 pitches in the game, making him a candidate to return to Triple-A for a fresh arm on Friday.

## ***\*The New York Times***

### **Yankees Hitters Prayed for Rain, but Rick Porcello Just Pitched Through It**

Billy Witz

BOSTON — A persistent rain might have rescued the Yankees from the ignominy of being no-hit by Rick Porcello, but it could not spare them from the rest of their miseries on Thursday night.

The Yankees got a brief, erratic outing from pitcher Sonny Gray, bungled several plays in the field and were helpless at the plate as they dropped the finale of their first series of the year with the rival Red Sox, 6-3.

It was an eventful series for a pair of teams with World Series aspirations. The Red Sox meted out a 14-1 thrashing in the opener, the Yankees rebounded with a 10-6 brawl-filled victory, and then Porcello threatened to fire the first no-hitter against the Yankees since 2003.

The lanky right-hander, working around a 45-minute rain delay after the fifth inning, held the Yankees without a hit into the seventh inning before Aaron Judge ended it with a double over the head of center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr.

Giancarlo Stanton followed with an infield single, but Porcello quashed any hopes that the Yankees would bash their way back into the game. He retired Didi Gregorius on a soft fly ball and then struck out Gary Sanchez and Aaron Hicks.

Porcello, who grew up in Morristown, N.J., continued his mastery of the Yankees at Fenway Park: He has a 1.29 earned run average in seven such career starts. He allowed just the two hits, hit a batter, struck out six and had no walks.

While Porcello was sharp, Gray struggled to command his pitches.

He hit Hanley Ramirez in the first inning — Ramirez left with a bruised hand, though X-rays were negative — and walked two in the second. He left trailing by 6-0 without having retired a batter in the fourth — the second time in three starts Gray has failed to get an out in the fifth inning.

But Gray had plenty of accomplices.

Stanton overran a ball down the left field line, turning an innocuous pop fly into a ground-rule double. Tyler Wade bounced a throw home past catcher Gary Sanchez. And Sanchez greedily tried to throw out Bradley advancing to third after Sandy Leon swung over a breaking ball in the dirt. Not only was Bradley safe, but so was Leon at first.

The error by Wade was the 13th by the Yankees in 13 games this season. The 13 errors are the most in the American League and second most in baseball.

“It’s something that needs to be a little better,” Manager Aaron Boone said.

The way Porcello was carving up the Yankees, the only thing that seemed capable of slowing him was the increasingly steady drizzle. At the end of the fifth, the game was put on hold with Porcello having thrown just 60 pitches. Many managers, especially in damp, cold conditions early in the season, are hesitant to send a starting pitcher back out after a rain delay as a precaution against injury.

But Porcello showed no ill effects — breezing through the sixth by getting Wade on a grounder, striking out Ronald Torreyes and Brett Gardner.

“You hope that when he comes back out he’s not as sharp,” first baseman Neil Walker said. “But he was pretty good after the rain delay — he was mixing his pitches and hitting his spots all night.”

The Yankees did push across three runs in the ninth inning after two walks and an error loaded the bases and Sanchez unloaded them with a three-run double off reliever Marcus Walden. But Red Sox closer Craig Kimbrel was summoned and quickly restored order, retiring Hicks on a groundout and striking out Walker and Wade to end the game.

## ***\*The New York Daily News***

### **Yankees' 9th-inning rally comes too little, too late in 6-3 loss to Red Sox**

Mike Mazzeo

BOSTON — The Yankees must not have had any fight left in them.

A day after brawling with Boston, the Bombers looked lifeless and sloppy in a 6-3 rubber-game loss to the Red Sox on Thursday night at Fenway Park.

Rick Porcello no-hit the Yankees for the first six innings before Aaron Judge broke it up with a booming double to center leading off the seventh. Judge also extended his hitting streak to 10 games — the second longest of his career. The game featured a 45-minute rain delay.

Sonny Gray was awful, Tyler Wade couldn't hit or field, and Giancarlo Stanton overran a routine fly ball that he appeared to have lost in the rain.

Gray struggled to find the strike zone and put hitters away. He allowed six runs on seven hits, walked two and uncorked three wild pitches. In his first three starts, Gray has only managed to total 13 innings.

Wade went 0-for-3 at the plate, dropping his average to .100. He also committed a throwing error.

Hanley Ramirez was forced to leave the game after being hit by a first-inning pitch from Gray. X-rays were negative but Ramirez suffered a right wrist contusion. It appeared that both benches were warned at the time, following Wednesday's melee.

The Yanks scored three runs in the ninth last night when Gary Sanchez hit a bases-loaded double to right center, forcing the Red Sox to bring in closer Craig Kimbrel to get the final three outs.

#### PLAY OF THE GAME

A missed fly ball by Giancarlo Stanton in the third that became an RBI ground-rule double by Jackie Bradley Jr., putting the Red Sox up 5-0.

#### TURNING POINT

The second inning, as the Red Sox batted around and plated four runs to take a 4-0 lead. It came on three singles, two walks and an error.

#### STAR OF THE GAME

Rick Porcello, formerly of Seton Hall Prep, who went seven shutout innings, allowing only two hits, none before the seventh.

#### STAT OF THE GAME

13The Yankees lead the American League with 13 errors.

#### UNSUNG HERO

Eduardo Nunez went 2-for-3 with two runs scored.

#### M.I.A.

Basically the entire team, which mustered just four hits on the night.

#### UP NEXT

Yankees vs. Tigers

Friday, 7:10 p.m., at Comerica Park, YES; Jordan Montgomery (0-0, 4.82) vs. Mike Fiers (1-0, 0.00)

## ***\*The New York Post***

### **Yanks show little fight this time, fall to Red Sox at soggy Fenway**

George A. King III

BOSTON — Aaron Boone sighed lightly before answering each of the first two postgame questions following a disheartening loss to the Red Sox on Thursday night.

Perhaps the manager was stalling to gather his thoughts. Or the reality of watching his club stumble through the first eight innings before showing late life in the ninth had Boone searching for answers.

Either way it was difficult for Boone, or anybody else connected to the Yankees from the Steinbrenner family on down, to watch this 6-3 loss at a soggy Fenway Park in front of 36,341.

“We didn’t play good behind him,” Boone said of starter Sonny Gray, who got hammered for six runs and seven hits in three-plus innings.

Boone wasn’t fibbing, but it was more than who was behind Gray, because the Yankees made fielding miscues and were no-hit by Rick Porcello for seven innings.

Second baseman Tyler Wade's throwing error to the plate fueled a four-run second inning. Left fielder Giancarlo Stanton botched Jackie Bradley, Jr.'s fly ball near the left-field foul line and seats by overrunning it and having it land in fair territory behind him for an RBI ground-rule double in the third, when the Red Sox stretched the lead to 6-0.

"I had it as three or four rows in the seats. I was about ready to jump over the fence. Just kicked back on me. Wind, rain whatever. It doesn't matter if it's a factor. What matters is it gave them more runs and it docked Sonny's ERA, also," said Stanton, who is getting used to the move from right to left field. "It doesn't help the squad either way, no matter what happened."

When the tarp was put on the field before the top of the sixth the Yankees had zero hits and one base runner — Stanton was hit with two outs in the fourth. Porcello retired the Yankees in order in the sixth but lost the no-hit bid in the seventh when Aaron Judge doubled to center leading off and Stanton reached on an infield single. Porcello rebounded to retire Didi Gregorius on a fly to right and strike out Gary Sanchez and Aaron Hicks.

"We were too far away from that. I was just trying to get outs," Porcello said of thinking about the no-hitter. Instead the Seton Hall Prep product and New Jersey native improved to 3-0 and lowered the ERA to 1.83.

Thanks to solid relief work by Domingo German, Tommy Kahnle and Adam Warren, the Red Sox didn't pad their lead and when Judge walked, Stanton reached on an error and Gregorius walked against Marcus Walden to start the ninth, the Yankees had the bases juiced with no outs.

Sanchez drove Walden's first pitch into the center-field triangle for a three-run double and closer Craig Kimbrel surfaced from the pen. Three batters later the game was over.

The victory pushed the 10-2 Red Sox 4 ½ games ahead of the 6-7 Yankees in the AL East. It wasn't until July 7 the Yankees were that far out of the top spot last season.

After getting smoked 14-1 on Tuesday night and winning 10-7 during Wednesday night's brawl-filled game, taking two of three from their blood rivals would have sent the Yankees to Detroit feeling good.

"This would have been nice but you know we will turn the page," said Boone, whose club might suffer multiple paper cuts doing that with the way it played Thursday evening.

## ***\*The Bergen Record***

### **Rick Porcello flirts with no-hitter, Red Sox beat Yankees at Fenway**

Pete Caldera

BOSTON – A night after an old-fashioned, Fenway Park brawl against their historic rivals, the Yankees' fight was strictly uphill.

That's how Boston starter Rick Porcello made it feel, taking a no-hitter into Thursday night's seventh inning and carrying the Red Sox toward a 6-3 victory before 36,341 rain-soaked fans.

"He got us to come out of our zone, our plan," Giancarlo Stanton said.

With Porcello gone, the Yankees mounted a ninth-inning comeback.

Via interperter, "I thought we had a chance to tie the game," said Gary Sanchez whose three-run double to center moved the tying run on deck, requiring closer Craig Kimbrel to record the final three outs.

As sharp as Porcello was during his seven scoreless innings, Yankees starter Sonny Gray was just the opposite – yielding six runs in three innings, and drilling Hanley Ramirez in the wrist.

Ramirez exited the game, but X-rays were negative.

And there was no carryover from Wednesday's bench-clearers, when Tyler Austin's third-inning hard slide on Red Sox infielder Brock Holt led to retaliation, in the form of a Joe Kelly fastball to Austin's left elbow.

Austin received a five-game suspension by MLB for charging the mound, while Kelly drew a six-game ban. Both players appealed, but neither appeared in Thursday's series finale.

The first-place Red Sox (10-2) took two of three from the Yankees (6-7), who will host Boston next May 8-10.

"We'll turn the page," said Yanks manager Aaron Boone. "We have to."

Rick Porcello's night

A steady rain fell during most of the game, finally causing a 45-minute delay prior to the start of the sixth inning, with Boston leading 6-0.

Yet, Porcello (3-0) went back out and zipped through the sixth – with two of his six strikeouts – before surrendering a long, leadoff double to center by Aaron Judge in the seventh.

The right-handed former Seton Hall Prep star gave up just two hits, including Giancarlo Stanton infield single, and did not walk a batter in winning his third straight start of 2018.

Same narrative

Not surprisingly, both clubs stuck to their opinions from Wednesday night; the Yanks feeling Austin's slide didn't warrant retaliation and Boston believing Austin was originally and aggressively at fault.

"I have no qualms with anything that happened on our side," said Yanks' GM Brian Cashman. "It's not something that we caused, not something that we created. We got kind of just dragged into it."

Two more plunked

Both club's No. 3 hitters were hit by pitches on Thursday, but there were no ejections and no one moved off either bench.

But Ramirez clearly got the worst of it, taking a not-too-terribly-inside fastball off his left wrist.

Ramirez circled around in pain, and for a moment appeared as if his route might take him toward the mound. He eventually walked toward first base, but soon headed into the Red Sox dugout with an athletic trainer in tow.

Porcello had retired the first 11 Yankees he'd faced when he nicked Stanton in the elbow pad with two out in the fourth. Stanton merely jogged to first base, and Porcello resumed dominating the Yanks' lineup.

A Gray day

Gray was wobbly from the start, only making it through three innings and abandoned by his defense at times.

In Boston's four-run second inning, Gray (1-1) surrendered only three singles – starting with an infield hit. But he walked two batters and unleashed two of his three wild pitches.

And with the infield in, second baseman Tyler Wade made a wild throw home after fielding a grounder, allowing a run to score ahead of a Mitch Moreland RBI single.

Gray had trouble controlling his breaking pitch, ran into bad counts and was shaking off Sanchez more than usual, though the right-hander didn't see it as being on opposite pages with his catcher.

"(I was) scuffling and struggling to find the zone, it just didn't go our way," Gray said. "I just didn't execute very well."

Boone agreed, saying it was "more a case of it not being (Gray's) night."

Even more Gray

Matters didn't improve as Eduardo Nunez doubled off the Green Monster to start the third and Jackie Bradley Jr. followed with a fly ball, RBI double that Stanton misjudged badly.

Stanton had moved toward the corner, only to watch Bradley Jr.'s ball drop several feet to his left.

"I was about ready to jump over the fence and it just kicked back on me," Stanton said. He was dealing with wet and windy conditions, "but it doesn't matter the factor. It just gave them more runs and docked Sonny's ERA."

On a subsequent strikeout-wild pitch, Sanchez threw late to third base attempting to nail Bradley Jr. running from second, putting runners at the corners and leading to Mookie Betts' second RBI of the night and a 6-0 lead.

In three sharp innings of relief of Gray, Domingo German held Boston to just one hit.

Pete Caldera and Steve Popper discuss the aftermath of Yankees and Red Sox brawl

## ***\*The Newark Star Ledger***

### **Red Sox and N.J.'s Rick Porcello drop Yankees | Rapid reaction**

Brendan Kutty

BOSTON -- The Yankees were all punched out.

A Wednesday of brawls gave way to a Thursday of Red Sox starting pitcher Rick Porcello dominating as the Yankees earned a 6-3 loss.

With rain hammering Fenway Park and causing a 45-minute rain delay between the fifth and sixth innings, the Yankees swung what acted like water-logged bats through eight.

Elite closer Craig Kimbrel stopped the Yankees' charge in the ninth.

Porcello, a Seton Hall Prep grad, took a no-hitter into the seventh inning. Aaron Judge broke it up with a double over center fielder Jackie Bradley Jr.'s head. Porcello, from Chester, lost the perfect game when he hit Giancarlo Stanton with a pitch in the fourth inning.

What it means

The Yankees (6-7) will head to Detroit for a three-game weekend set looking up in the American League East at the first-place Red Sox (10-2).

They'll do it after getting destroyed by the Red Sox on Tuesday and winning after fighting with them on the field Wednesday.



Though Porcello cruised through the Yankees' vaunted lineup, his counterpart, Sonny Gray, was terrible -- though he didn't get much help from the defense.

Porcello went seven innings, striking out six and surrendering a pair of hits. He stayed in after the rain delay.

Aaron Judge (1-for-3, walk), Giancarlo Stanton (1-for-3) and Gary Sanchez (1-for-4, double, 3 RBI) combined to go 3-for-10. Didi Gregorius was hitless in three at-bats with a walk. Brett Gardner didn't get a hit in four tries.

Gray lasted just three innings, surrendering six runs on seven hits and two walks with three strikeouts. He's hasn't made it past the fourth inning in two of his three starts this season.

Going into the game, Gray had a rough history in Boston, going 0-2 with a 6.25 ERA in three starts.

Gray had a hard time with a Boston lineup that lost No. 3 hitter and first baseman Hanley Ramirez in the first inning. Gray hit Ramirez on the right wrist. Ramirez left the game and Boston officials said he suffered a bruise. X-rays didn't show structural damage.

Turning point

A four-run second inning busted it open for Boston, which followed that with a two-run third.

The ugliest moment came in the third. After Eduardo Nunez led off with a double, left fielder Giancarlo Stanton badly misplayed Jackie Bradley Jr.'s routine fly ball into a ground rule double, scoring Nunez.

As heavy rain fell, Stanton searched for the ball and over ran it, ending up next to the foul wall. It bounced about 10 feet into fair territory and then over the same wall. It was the worst moment so far in the left field crash course for Stanton, who played right field for eight years in Miami and was forced into full-time work at the position due to multiple Yankees outfield injuries.

Tyler Wade also made a bad throw that led to a second-inning run. With the infield in and runners on second base and third, Andrew Benintendi hit a slow hopper to the second baseman Wade, who gathered it and fired it to catcher Gary Sanchez. Wade's throw one-hopped Sanchez and it skipped past home plate. A run scored. Wade could have gone with the sure out at first base. It wasn't clear if even a good throw would have gotten Sandy Leon out at home.

You should know ...

The Yankees had a chance to make things closer in the seventh and in the ninth.

In the last inning, they loaded the bases with no outs against Boston reliever Marcus Walden. Then Sanchez ripped a bases-clearing double, cutting the Red Sox's lead to three runs.

Walden loaded the bases when he walked Judge, third baseman Rafael Devers made a fielding error on Stanton's grounder and Gregorius walked.

Aaron Hicks then bounced into a groundout, moving Sanchez to third. Neil Walker struck out. And then Wade whiffed to end it.

After Judge's seventh-inning double, Giancarlo Stanton hit an infield single, putting runners on second and first with no outs. Porcello then sat the Yankees down in order.

Hicks (strained right intercostal) came off the disabled list, started at designated hitter and hit sixth. He finished 0-for-4 with a strikeout.

Ronald Torreyes doubled in the eighth. Domingo German gave the Yankees three scoreless innings, striking out a trio and surrendering a hit. Tommy Kahnle and Adam Warren handled the seventh and eighth innings, respectively.

NEXT

Friday: Yankees LHP Jordan Montgomery (0-0, 4.82 ERA) at Tigers RHP Mike Fiers (1-0, 0.00).

Saturday: Yankees RHP Luis Severino (2-1, 3.50) at Tigers LHP Francisco Liriano (1-1, 2.13)

## ***\*Associated Press***

### **Porcello leads Sox by Yankees**

BOSTON (AP) -- Red Sox pitcher Rick Porcello lost his bid for a no-hitter when Yankees slugger Aaron Judge led off the seventh with a double.

But the Red Sox, who led 6-0 entering the ninth inning, held on for a 6-3 victory at Fenway Park on Thursday night thanks to strong work by Craig Kimbrel.

Porcello stayed in after a 45-minute rain delay and retired the Yankees in order in the sixth.

But Judge got New York's first hit in the seventh, and Giancarlo Stanton followed with a single.

Stanton became the Yankees' first baserunner when he was hit by a pitch in the fourth.

Porcello got out of the jam in the seventh, preserving Boston's 6-0 lead. He had six strikeouts and no walks.

Meanwhile, Red Sox reliever Joe Kelly and the Yankees' Tyler Austin have been suspended for their roles in the brawl between the AL East rivals at Fenway Park.

Kelly was suspended for six games and Austin received a five-game penalty. Each player appealed their punishments, and they are eligible to play while their appeals are considered.

Major League Baseball announced the discipline on Thursday.

Kelly, Austin, Red Sox manager Alex Cora and Yankees third base coach Phil Nevin also were fined.

Four players on the disabled list also were fined for entering the field during the skirmish: Yankees pitcher CC Sabathia, and Red Sox infielders Xander Bogaerts, Dustin Pedroia, and Marco Hernandez.

In the seventh inning of New York's 10-7 win on Wednesday night, Kelly actually threw at Austin twice.

The first pitch missed, but the second one drilled him in the back. The designated hitter then charged the mound, prompting both benches to empty.