



NOTES FROM A DISTANCE

2008 AL EAST CHAMPIONS | 2008 AL CHAMPIONS | 2010 AL EAST CHAMPIONS | 2011 AL WILD CARD | 2013 AL WILD CARD | 2019 AL WILD CARD

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2020 • ISSUE 13 (FINAL EDITION) 27 Days Until Major League Baseball's Proposed Opening Day (July 23, 2020)

TAMPA BAY RAYS REGULAR SEASON HISTORY

| YEAR | RECORD | POS. | PCT. | GB/GA | PLAYOFFS | YEAR | RECORD | POS. | PCT. | GB/GA | PLAYOFFS | YEAR | RECORD | POS. | PCT. | GB/GA | PLAYOFFS |
|------|--------|------|------|-------|--------------|------|--------|------|------|-------|--------------|------|--------|------|------|-------|----------|
| 2019 | 96-66 | 2nd | .593 | 7.0 | Lost in ALDS | 2013 | 92-71 | 2nd | .564 | 5.5 | Lost in ALDS | 2007 | 66-96 | 5th | .407 | 30.0 | -- |
| 2018 | 90-72 | 3rd | .556 | 18.0 | -- | 2012 | 90-72 | 3rd | .556 | 5.0 | -- | 2006 | 61-101 | 5th | .377 | 36.0 | -- |
| 2017 | 80-82 | 3rd | .494 | 13.0 | -- | 2011 | 91-71 | 2nd | .562 | 6.0 | Lost in ALDS | 2005 | 67-94 | 5th | .416 | 28.0 | -- |
| 2016 | 68-94 | 5th | .420 | 25.0 | -- | 2010 | 96-66 | 1st | .593 | 1.0 | Lost in ALDS | 2004 | 70-91 | 4th | .435 | 30.5 | -- |
| 2015 | 80-82 | 4th | .494 | 13.0 | -- | 2009 | 84-78 | 3rd | .519 | 19.0 | -- | 2003 | 63-99 | 5th | .389 | 38.0 | -- |
| 2014 | 77-85 | 4th | .475 | 19.0 | -- | 2008 | 97-65 | 1st | .599 | 2.0 | Lost in WS | 2002 | 55-106 | 5th | .342 | 48.0 | -- |

ALMOST BACK—Earlier this week Commissioner of Baseball **Robert D. Manfred, Jr.** announced plans for a 60-game regular season, with players reporting for Summer Camp by July 1 ahead of either a July 23 or July 24 Opening Day...the Rays will send a media advisory early next week outlining media policies and guidelines, credentials, parking, health and safety rules, workspaces, interviews and more...the proposed schedule for the 2020 season will largely feature divisional play, with the remaining portion of each club's games against their opposite league's corresponding geographical division in order to mitigate travel...among the other key dates and information known about the 2020 season:

- + Player transactions, which were suspended on March 26, will resume at noon today...by Sunday at 4 p.m., teams must submit lists of 60 players to be eligible for major league games this season...last year the Rays used 57 players and 33 pitchers, both club records.
- + Of the 60 names in the club player pool, 30 will make the Opening Day active roster...the active roster will reduce to 28 after two weeks and to 26 after four weeks, and there will be no roster expansion in September...the trade deadline will be on Aug 31.
- + Both leagues (AL, NL) will use a designated hitter this season.
- + Extra-inning games in the regular season (not the postseason) will be modified in accordance with minor league rules, such that each half-inning following the 9th inning will begin with a runner on second...according to *Baseball America*, there were 347 minor league games of 11 innings (or more) from 2018-19—the two seasons with this extra-innings rule in effect—compared to 800 from 2016-17, while games of 13+ innings dropped from 133 to five.
- + The playoff format will remain as it has since the 2012 season.
- + There will be regular testing of all players, other on-field personnel and a limited number of essential staff who come in close proximity to players for the COVID-19 virus and related antibodies.

SHORTENED SEASONS—Sixty games per club would result in 900 games during the 2020 regular season, which would be the fewest since 1900—a year before the formation of the AL—when eight NL clubs totaled 569 games...the best 60-game start in Rays history came in 2010, when they were 39-21 and held the best record in the majors...the Rays were 37-23 through 60 games last season and went 39-21 over the final 60 games...their worst 60-game stretch last season was 30-30, while their best was 40-20 (which matched the best single-season 60-game run in franchise history)...spanning multiple seasons, the best 60-game stretch in franchise history is 43-17 (once spanning 2009-10, twice spanning 2018-19).

- + Courtesy of Stats LLC, the chart below shows the Rays best statistical output from the team's first 60 games of any season as well as the best over any stretch of 60 team games within a single season.

BEST 60-GAME STRETCHES, FRANCHISE HISTORY

| STAT | FROM START OF SEASON | ANY 60-GAME STRETCH ^[1] |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Batting Avg. ^[2] | Austin Meadows, 2019 .349 | Fred McGriff, 2001 .375 |
| Home Runs | José Canseco, 1999 22 | José Canseco, 1999 25 |
| RBI | Evan Longoria, 2009 55 | Carlos Peña, 2007 59 |
| Wins | David Price, 2010 9 | Three instances 9 |
| ERA ^[3] | Chris Archer, 2015 1.84 | Blake Snell, 2018 1.17 |
| Strikeouts | Chris Archer, 2015 108 | David Price, 2014 115 |

^[1] Stretch of 60 Team Games, ^[2] min. 186 PA, ^[3] min. 60 IP

PARCHED FOR BASEBALL—Major League Baseball's proposed July 23 or 24 Opening Day would easily represent the latest Opening Day in modern major league history (since 1901)...the latest teams to open were the Mariners and Indians in 1995, when both played their lid-lifter on April 27.

- + A July 23 Opening Day would also end a stretch of 266 days without a regular season or postseason major league game...according to Stats LLC, this would be the longest drought in major league history, passing the 256 days between games in 1994-95 (players' strike).

SIGNING UPDATE—The Rays have signed five of their six selections from the 2020 June Draft in advance of the Aug 1 deadline, including RH **Nick Bitsko** (24th overall) and LH **Ian Seymour** (57th overall) this week...Bitsko went a combined 4-2 with a 1.27 ERA (33-IP, 6-ER) and 68 SO over his freshman and sophomore high school seasons, while Seymour went 3-0 with a 2.21 ERA (20.1-IP, 5-ER) and 40 SO in 4 apps (all starts) during his abbreviated junior season at Virginia Tech...the club's only remaining unsigned selection is SS **Tanner Murray** (125th overall) from UC-Davis.

DOMESWEET DOME—Beginning today and continuing weekdays for at least the next 30 days, Lot 2 at Tropicana Field (entrance off 5th Ave South) will be used as a drive-up COVID-19 testing site by BayCare Health.

- + This week the Rays partnered with Venuetize, one of the leading mobile technology platform providers in sports and entertainment...the Rays continue to deliver contactless solutions for their fans, as last season they became one of the first professional sports venues in the U.S. to go cash-free...when fans return to Tropicana Field, they will be able to use the MLB Ballpark App along many interaction points that align with a more touchless experience.

THIS WEEK IN RAYS HISTORY

| JUNE 26, 2018 | JUNE 27, 1998 | JUNE 28, 2011 | JUNE 29, 2019 | JUNE 30, 2014 | JULY 1, 2015 | JULY 2, 1998 |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| José Alvarado played an interesting role in a 1-0 win over the Nationals...he entered to begin the 9th inning, then moved to first base before returning to the mound...he was the first pitcher in club history to appear defensively at another position. | Trailing 1-0 through the 7th inning, the Rays rallied for 5 runs off Phillies starter Curt Schilling and went on to win, 5-1...Paul Sorrento connected for a pinch-hit grand slam in the 8th to chase Schilling. | The Rays received a 12-50 performance from David Price and a walk-off homer from Evan Longoria to clinch a 4-3 victory over the Reds, their first-ever win against Cincinnati. | Brendan McKay made his major league debut and retired his first 16 BF in a 5-2 win over the Rangers...his outing tied for the 2nd-longest perfect game bid in a debut in the expansion era (since 1961), behind PIT Nick Kingham (6.2 IP) on April 29, 2018 vs. STL. | Kevin Kiermaier joined Jorge Cantú in 2004 as the only Rays to homer in their first plate appearance at Yankee Stadium...the Rays won, 4-3, on Logan Forsythe's 12th-inning single. | Joey Butler broke up Carlos Carrasco's perfect game with a one-out, full-count walk in the 7th inning, then broke up the no-hitter with a two-out, 0-2 single in the 9th...the Indians won, 8-1, at Tropicana Field. | Greg Maddux faced the Rays for the first time and pitched a 5-hit shutout...Keith Lockhart hit a pair of homers for the Braves in a 6-0 victory at Tropicana Field. |

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