Hernandez blanks Nationals

field and went 2-for-5 with a

run scored. Fernando Marti-

nez rewarded the Mets for

By David Lennon

WASHINGTON — Getting swept in

Pitts-**METS** burgh **NATIONALS** was tough to stom-

ach, literally, but a series loss to the Nationals would have been damaging in more ways than just the loss column.

And the Mets, already beaten up physically, did not want to start this week with self-esteem issues — not with the Phillies and Yankees waiting on deck.

So they leaned on Ryan Church, just back from the disabled list, and Livan Hernandez, who took the ball on Sunday despite dealing with flulike symptoms. Church helped fuel a five-run first inning with a double off the rightfield wall and Hernandez made that lead stand up with seven scoreless innings as the Mets cruised to a 7-0 victory before a crowd of 31,841 at Nationals Park.

"This was huge, especially with the road trip that we had," Church said. "To end it on a positive note, to feel good about ourselves, and to get everybody healthy again for the big stretch coming up. We came out and got on them

Church started in right-

Yanks rally for victory

Continued from B1

"You can't come to a game angry or with too much venom. Then you are not in control of what you are doing," Rivera said. "I have to control myself before I can go out and pitch. Yesterday is over. What can I do?

With the Yankees trailing 3-1 with one out in the eighth, Johnny Damon lined a single off Grant Balfour (2-1), and Mark Teixeira followed with a single to put runners at the corners. Alex Rodriguez walked to load the bases.

J.P. Howell relieved and walked Robinson Cano, making it 3-2.

Jorge Posada then hit a bouncer to third that Willy Aybar, subbing for Longoria (hamstring), couldn't handle. Teixeira scored the tying run, Posada was given an RBI and Aybar was charged with an

"They're like us, they do play all nine," said Howell, who walked two while getting just two outs. "They're ready to take advantage because you're going to get a break and they're ready to pounce when they get one."

Matsui then chopped a soft grounder to second and

Glavine said Friday he believes

he was released for financial rea-

sons and to clear a roster spot for

major league debut Sunday against

Wren, team chairman Terry

believe the 43-year-old left-hander

"It was purely and only on the

would make a successful return

from surgery on his elbow and

merits of what gave us the best

chance to win, no financial interest

whatsoever involved," McGuirk said.

FoxSports.com reported Sat-

Glavine would have received a

\$1 million bonus if he had been acti-

vated from the disabled list for Sun-

it was totally a performance-related

issue, which I'm totally fine with, but

GIANTS — Fresh off his 300th

I would have appreciated the hon-

victory, San Francisco's **Randy**

Johnson will start on three days'

rest at Florida today against the

Marlins. The 45-year-old left-

hander allowed two hits in six

innings Thursday to beat Washing-

ton for his milestone win. Johnson

threw only 78 pitches in becoming

"I don't believe for a minute that

day's start, as he expected.

esty," Glavine said Friday.

urday that Glavine's agent, Gregg

Clifton, is exploring filing a griev-

shoulder.

McGuirk and president John

Schuerholz said Glavine was

released because they did not

Tommy Hanson, who made his

release on Wednesday.

the Milwaukee Brewers

keeping him even after Church returned with a double that drove in the first run. David Wright went 2-for-3 with a run-scoring single and Carlos Beltran had an RBI double as the Mets finished their rain-shortened trip through Pittsburgh and D.C. at 2-4. They open a three-game series against the Phillies on Monday night at Citi Field,

where the Mets are 17-9 this "This road trip didn't go like we had wanted it to, like we had planned," Wright said. "Unfortunately, that's baseball. But how we finished

the trip, we can take some positives from that and hopefully use it as a springboard going back to a place we've played well at." Hernandez (5-1) is pitching the way he promised he would back in spring training, when he won the fifth starter's job in a matter of

weeks and dismissed critics

who said his health would be

a problem. Despite feeling

sick, Hernandez allowed four

hits and trimmed his ERA to

The Mets are 7-4 in his 11 starts and Hernandez has **METS WATCH**

UP NEXT —Tuesday vs. Philadelphia, 7:10 (SNY); J.A. Happ (4-0, 2.48) vs. **Johan** Santana (7-3,

2.00).

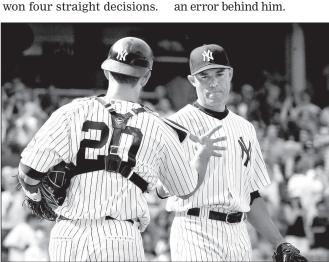


- STAFF REPORTS

In his last four starts, he is 2-0 with a 1.57 ERA. Jerry Manuel has learned to expect this type of performance from him, but he was a little surprised when Hernandez was ready to give up the ball after 116 pitches.

'Obviously, we need good pitching, and that was outstanding pitching," Manuel said. "He had a shutout going and he came in and said, 'I'm done.' That's not normal for Livan, He can throw 160, 170 pitches and not flinch, so you know he's battling some different things.'

One thing he didn't have to battle was his own team, which had shown some selfdestructive tendencies on 3.33 this trip. But here's a statistic that should irritate Johan Santana: The Mets have not committed an error with Hernandez on the mound during his 67^{1}_{8} innings this season the longest stretch for any pitcher in the majors without an error behind him.



Yankees catcher Jorge Posada, left, congratulates closer Mariano

Rivera after the final out in their 4-3 victory over the Rays.

beat the throw to first, preventing an inning-ending double play and giving New York a 4-3 lead.

'When I hit the ball it was hit pretty weakly. I had a feeling it wouldn't be a double play," said Matsui, who has struggled with leg injuries this season but insisted he was close to 100 percent.

Swisher's 11th homer in the third made it 28 games in a row with a homer to open the ballpark, extending a record — Hiram Bithorn Stadium in Puerto Rico opened with long balls in 22 straight. There were 160 homers last season at the old Yankee Stadium.

Upton had an RBI double

YANKEE WATCH

BRUNEY THROWS — Setup man Brian Bruney had a bullpen session. Out with

a strained right elbow, Bruney has pitched only once for New York since April 21. He said the

30-pitch session was a "huge positive step. **UP NEXT** — Today vs. Tampa,

7:10 (YES); Andy Sonnanstine (4-5, 7.07) vs. Andy Pettitte (5-2. 4.33). ASSOCIATED PRESS

in the third and Gabe Gross hit a two-run single in the sixth to give Tampa Bay a 3-1

explaining the decision to trade cen-

The Pirates, who traditionally

have one of the majors' lowest pay-

rolls, are averaging a major league-

low 16,588 in attendance. The low

that the surprise McLouth deal last

McLouth, the Pirates' Ione All-

turnout is prompting speculation

week was made to save money.

Star last season, was traded for

three prospects, only one of whom

extension during the offseason.

Pirates signed McLouth to a contact

"I understand why some peo-

ple, at first glance, may believe this

move was financially motivated,"

Huntington wrote in a letter dated

Web site. "In fact, our owner, Bob

of our fans when we sought his

Nutting, was as surprised as some

approval for this trade. I am grateful

that he has faith in me, our baseball

operations staff and the processes

we have in place to approve a move

like this, despite the risk of public

organization as a whole.

backlash on him personally and the

Saturday and posted on the team's

ter fielder Nate McLouth to the

Atlanta Braves wasn't financially

Neal Hun-

motivated.

tington wrote

an open letter

to the team's fans

BASEBALL NOTEBOOK

GLAVINE UPSET — Braves the 24th to reach the 300-win mark. **MARINERS** — Seattle recalled general manager Frank Wren said catcher **Jamie Burke** from Class Sunday he had no comment on a report Tom Glavine may file a griev-AAA Tacoma and designated reliever ance against the team following his **Denny Stark** for assignment.

The Mariners also announced left-hander Ryan Rowland-Smith will make at least one more rehab start for Tacoma before returning to the team. Rowland-Smith had been scheduled to start for Seattle on Thursday at Baltimore.

NATIONALS — General manager Mike Rizzo played it coy Sunday, refusing to confirm Washington will select right-hander Stephen Strasburg with the first selection in Tuesday's first-year draft.

"I don't want to talk about any individual player right now," Rizzo said before the Nationals' game against the New York Mets. "The (draft) board has been set up, but when Tuesday comes we'll certainly have time to talk

about who we're taking. Rizzo may be keeping quiet but the Nationals are expected to take Strasburg, who was 13-1 with a 1.32 ERA and 195 strikeouts in 109 innings for San Diego State, No. 1 overall.

The hard-thrower is their consolation prize for a 102-loss 2008 season. Washington also has the No. 10 pick, compensation for not signing right-hander Aaron Crow, its first-

round selection in 2008. **BRAVES** — Atlanta placed first baseman Casey Kotchman on the 15-day disabled list to clear a roster spot for right-handed pitcher Tommy

Hanson's major league debut. The move was announced on Sunday, when Hanson was to take the mound against the Milwaukee

Brewers **PIRATES** — General manager

Crawford If	4	0	0	0	0	2	.323
W.Aybar 3b	4	1	1	0	0	1	.250
C.Pena 1b	3	1	1	0	0	1	.223
Zobrist 2b	4	0	0	0	0	3	.296
Joyce rf	3	0	0	0	1	0	.207
Gross dh	4	0	1	2	0	1	.255
Navarro c	3	0	1	0	0	1	.206
a-Longoria ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.320
Brignac ss	3	1	1	0	0	0	.222
Totals	33	3	6	3	1	9	
New York	AB	R	Н	ВІ	BB	S0	Avg.
Jeter ss	4	0	0	0	0	0	.307
Damon If	4	1	2	0	0	1	.300
Toiyoira 1h	1	1	1	Λ	Λ	Λ	286

.265 31

.255 .300 .306 .249 .133 .250

A.Rodriguez Cano 2b

1-Berroa pr-dh 0

osada c

Swisher rf

New York

-grounded out for Navarro in the 9th ran for H.Matsui in the 8th. —W.Aybar (3), Posada (3). LOB—Tampa Bay 5, New York 8 2B—B Unton (11) Damon (14) HB— Swisher (11), off Garza. RBIs—B.Upton (15), Gross 2 (16), Cano (34), Posada (27), H.Matsui (23), Swisher (33). SB—Gross (3). CS—Brignac (2). Runners left in scoring position—Tampa Bay 5 (Gross, W.Aybar, B.Upton, Navarro 2) New York 6

(H.Matsui, Teixeira 3, Me.Cabrera 2).

Tampa Bay	ΙP	Н	R	ER	BB	S0	NP	ER/
Garza	5	4	1	1	2	2	96	3.5
J.Nelson H, 5	2	0	0	0	0	1	19	5.5
Balfour L, 2-1	H, 8	$^{1}/_{3}$	2	3	2	1	0	1
6.31								
Howell BS, 5-7	2/3	0	0	0	2	1	15	2.1
New York	ΙP	Н	R	ER	BB	S0	NP	ER/
Chamberlain	6	5	3	3	1	4	100	3.79
Aceves W, 4-1	2	1	0	0	0	4	33	2.7
Ma Rivera S 1	3-14	11	Λ	Ω	Ω	Ω	1	1

Umpires—Home, Scott Barry First, Ted Barrett Second, Tim McClelland Third, Adrian Johnson. T—3:13. A—46,465 (52,325).

METS 7, NATIONALS 0

New York	AB	R	Н	BI	BB	S0	Avg.
Cora 2b	4	2	1	0	1	1	.297
F.Martinez If	5	2	1	1	0	0	.200
Beltran cf	5	0	1	1	0	0	.342
D.Wright 3b	3	1	2	1	2	0	.345
Dan.Murphy	1b 4	1	2	1	1	0	.247
Church rf	5	1	2	0	0	0	.277
Schneider c	3	0	1	1	0	0	.219
W.Valdez ss	4	0	0	0	0	2	.200
Li.Hernandez	p 3	0	1	0	0	0	.130
c-Reed ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.311
Feliciano p	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Parnell p	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Fr.Rodriguez	p 0	0	0	0	0	0	
Totals	37	7	11	5	4	3	
Washington	AB	R	Н	ВІ	BB	S0	Avg.
C Curmon on		^	4	^	0	- 4	200

Totals	37	7	11	5	4	3	
Washington	AB	R	Н	ВІ	ВВ	S0	Avg.
C.Guzman ss	4	0	1	0	0	1	.326
N.Johnson 1b	4	0	0	0	0	2	.325
Zimmerman 3l	b 3	0	1	0	1	0	.320
Dunn If	3	0	2	0	1	0	.264
Dukes cf	4	0	0	0	0	0	.269
Kearns rf	3	0	0	0	1	2	.214
J.Bard c	1	0	0	0	3	0	.211
A.Hernandez 2	b 4	0	0	0	0	1	.262
Stammen p	1	0	0	0	0	0	.167
a-Alb.Gonzalez	ph1	0	1	0	0	0	.295
Colome p	0	0	0	0	0	0	
b-W.Harris ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.256
Tavarez p	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000
MacDougal p	0	0	0	0	0	0	
d-Belliard ph	1	0	0	0	0	0	.173
Totals	30	0	5	0	6	6	

..500 000 101—7 11 0 ...000 000 000—0 5 1 **New York** a-singled for Stammen in the 5th. b-flied out for Colome in the 7th. c-flied out for Li.Hernandez in the 8th.

d-fouled out for MacDougal in the 9th.

E—MacDougal (1). LOB—New York 8, Washington 9. 2B—F.Martinez (4), Beltran (18), D.Wright (16), Church (8), Schneider (3). RBIs—F.Martinez (5), Beltran (33), D.Wright (34), Dan.Murphy (19), Schneider (5). SB—Cora (4), D.Wright (14). SF—Schneider. Runners left in scoring position—New York 4 (Dan. Murphy, Li.Hernandez, Church 2) Washington 4 (A.Hernandez 2, Kearns, Dukes).

DP—New York 2 (Dan.Murphy, W.Valdez, Dan. Murphy), (W.Valdez, Cora, Dan.Murphy) Washington 1 (N.Johnson, C.Guzman, MacDougal)

New York	IP H	R	ER	BB	S0	NP	ERA
Hrnandez W, 5	5-174	0	0	4	4	114	3.88
Feliciano	$^{2}/_{3}$ 1	0	0	1	1	21	2.35
Parnell	1/3 0	0	0	0	0	4	1.96
Fr.Rodriguez	1 0	0	0	1	1	16	0.68
Washington	IP H	R	ER	BB	S0	NP	ERA
Stammen L, 0	-256	5	5	2	2	86	6.45
Colome	2 3	1	1	1	1	36	7.71
Tavarez	1 1	0	0	0	0	7	5.06
MacDougal	1 1	1	0	1	0	11	6.75
Umpires—H	łome, D	erry	yl Cou	ısins	First,	D.J. Re	eyburn
Second, Jim J	loyce Th	ird,	Brian	n Run	ige. T	-2:4	8. A—
31,841 (41,88	38).						

RANGERS 6, RED SOX 3 AB R H BI BB

Kirisier ZD	Э	U	- 1	U	U	- 1	.21
M.Young 3b	5	2	2	1	0	1	.336
Blalock dh	4	0	0	0	0	3	.253
N.Cruz rf	4	3	3	1	0	1	.292
Dav.Murphy If	4	1	3	2	0	0	.25
Byrd cf	4	0	1	0	0	1	.29
C.Davis 1b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.202
Teagarden c	4	0	0	0	0	2	.220
Vizquel ss	4	0	2	1	0	0	.34
Totals	38	6	12	5	0	10	
Boston	AB	R	Н	BI	BB	S0	Avg
Pedroia 2b	3	0	0	0	1	0	.318
Ellsbury cf	3	0	0	1	0	0	.30
Baldelli rf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.25

Totals	38	6	12	5	0	10	
Boston	AB	R	Н	ВІ	ВВ	S0	Avg
Pedroia 2b	3	0	0	0	1	0	.318
Ellsbury cf	3	0	0	1	0	0	.302
Baldelli rf	1	0	0	0	0	1	.259
Youkilis 1b	3	0	1	0	1	1	.349
Bay If	2	0	0	0	2	1	.277
Lowell 3b	4	0	0	0	0	1	.296
D.Ortiz dh	4	0	1	0	0	2	.197
Varitek c	2	1	0	0	1	1	.247
Kotsay rf-cf	3	2	2	1	0	0	.286
N.Green ss	3	0	0	0	0	0	.271
Totals	28	3	4	2	5	7	

Texas	112 010 100—6 12 1
Boston	002 100 000—3 4 0
E-Kinsler (5). LOE	3—Texas 5, Boston 3. 2B—Kin-
sler (13), N.Cruz (12)), Dav.Murphy (6), Youkilis (15).
3B-N.Cruz (1). HR	-M.Young (8), off Matsuzaka
N.Cruz (17), off Okajir	na Kotsay (1), off Padilla. RBIs—
M.Young (22), N.Cruz	(42), Dav.Murphy 2 (12), Vizquel
(7), Ellsbury (16), Kots	say (1). CS—Bay (1), D.Ortiz (2).
Runners left in scori	ng position—Texas 2 (Kinsler, C.
Davis) Boston 2 (Low	ell 2).

DP-Texas 1 (Kinsler, Vizquel, C.Davis)

is considered to be close to reaching	DP—Texas T (Kinsier, Vizquei, C.Davis).							
the majors. The trade enraged not	Texas	IP H			BB		NP	ER
only fans but the Pirates' players,	Padilla W, 4-3	7 4	3	2	4	4	99	5.2
	0'Day H, 5	1 0	0	0	0	2	11	1.0
with first baseman Adam LaRoche	C.Wilson S, 5	-6 1 0	0	0	1	1	12	3.3
saying he didn't know of any player	Boston	IP H	R	ER	BB	S0	NP	ER
, ,	Mtszaka L, 1-	-4 5 ² / ₃ 1	05	5	0	8	102	7.3
who wasn't unhappy.	Masterson	² / ₃ 1	0	0	0	0	10	4.1
Since last season, the Pirates	Okajima	2/3 1	1	1	0	1	11	2.5
,	R.Ramirez	1 0	0	0	0	1	9	1.3
have dealt their three most pro-	Papelbon	1 0	0	0	0	0	8	2.1
ductive offensive players in Jason	Inherited ru	unners-	1008	ed-	-Mas	tersor	1-0.	WP-
1 7	Matsuzaka.							
Bay, Xavier Nady and McLouth. The	Umnires—	-Home	Tim	Tim	mons	First	Roh	Dral

Umpires—Home, Tim Timmons First, Rob Drake Second, Jeff Kellogg Third, Ron Kulpa. T—2:49. A—37,537 (37,373).

BASEBALL CALENDAR

June 9-10 — Amateur draft, Secaucus, N.J. July 14 — All-Star game, St. Louis.
July 26 — Hall of Fame inductions, Cooperstown

July 31 — Last day to trade a player without securing waivers. **Aug. 15** — Last day to sign selections from 2009

ateur draft who have not exhausted college eligi-Sept. 1 — Active rosters expand to 40 players November — Free agent filing period, first 15 days after World Series ends.

Nov. 9-11 — General managers meetings, Chicago.

Dec. 1 — Last day for teams to offer salary arbitration to their former players who became free agents.

Dec. 7 — Last day for free agents offered salary arbitration to accept the offers.

Dec. 7-10 — Winter meetings, Indianapolis.

Dec. 12 — Last day for teams to offer 2009 con-- ASSOCIATED PRESS tracts to unsigned players.

UCONN HALL OF FAME BIOS

Rashamel Jones

Jones was a four-year player and three-year co-captain for coach Jim Calhoun between 1995-

1999. Jones was part of a senior class that finished their careers with a 111-24 record and captured the 1999 NCAA Championship over Duke in St. Petersburg, Fla. Jones played in 132 career games (second most alltime) for the Huskies and averaged 6.5 points and 2.7 rebounds. In 1998, Jones was named to the Big East all-tournament team after he scored 17 points and grabbed nine rebounds, replacing an injured Kevin Freeman in the championship game over Syracuse. It was one of three Big East

UConn Fairfield County Day

WHEN — Wednesday WHERE — UConn Stamford Campus, 6-8:30 pm ABOUT — Reception cost-\$25 for general public, \$20 for UConn alumni. ... Free parking at UConn campus garage

titles Jones won during his time at UConn. Played professionally in Europe for two seasons before a knee injury ended his playing career. Currently working for Hooperstown, a sports complex in Mount Vernon, N.Y., where he coaches a local AAU team and runs various programs and clinics. He attended Trinity Catholic High School in Stamford, where he was the state Player of the Year in 1994-95, averaging 27 points, 10 rebounds, five steals and three assists for the Crusaders. He was a three-time all-State selection and finished his high school career with 2,301 points. He earned his bachelor's degree in Socology from UConn in 2005.

Rita Williams

Played point guard for three seasons for head coach Geno Auriemma between 1995-98. Scored 699 points for a 6.9 average. Finished with 286 assists and 248 steals. The Huskies went 101-8 with two trips to the Elite Eight and one Final Four appearance in Williams' career. The steals mark is sixth best overall in the UConn record book. Her best season came as a senior in 1997-98 where she shot 41 percent from the field, 35 percent from 3-point range and averaged 10.2 points a game en route to being named to the all-Big East second team. Was named as the Most Outstanding Player in the 1998 Big East tournament. She had 108 steals (third best, all time) in '97-'98 and 107 steals (fourth best, all-time) in '96-'97. She also had 149 assists as a senior and 113 assists as a junior. Attended Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk. Was drfated in 1998 by the WNBA's Washington Mystics. Played six seasons for Washington (98-99), Indiana (2000-02), Houston (2002) and Seattle (2003). Played in the 2001 WNBA All-Star game. Scored 1,185 points, had 405 assists and 278 steals. Currently is a Risk Management Consultant for FCC in the New York City area.

Joe Markus

Played football for the Huskies between 1979-82 for coach Walt Nadzak and was known as one of the most versatile offensive players in UConn football history. Markus was a return specialist in 1981, returning 34 punts (tied for second, all time) for 302 yards (an 8.9-yard average) and 30 kickoffs (tied for fourth) for 637 yards, a 21.2-yard average. In 1982, he returned punts for a total of 315 yards and his 12.9-yard return average in 1979 is third best all-time in the UConn football record book. In 1980, Markus was named to the All-Yankee Conference team as a receiver. Against Maine on Oct. 20, 1979, Markus posted 145 yards in punt returns in a 19-7 UConn win, a single-game record. He also played running back, where he posted a 138-yard game against Rhode Island on Nov. 17, 1979 and a 124-yard game against Northeastern on Sept. 19, 1981. He has spent the last 25 years working for the Connelly Insurance Agency in Fairfield

Tom Penders

Is still the only athlete that was named captain for two athletic teams at UConn, baseball and basketball as a senior. A graduate of Stratford High, Penders played center field for the Huskies as well as playing point quard for the basketball team. He is one of a select few that played in both the NCAA basketball tournament and the NCAA College World Series. Penders, who played between 1964-67, helped the Huskies capture two Yankee Conference basketball titles and was named to UConn's All-Century team in 2001. In his three seasons, Penders averaged 8.6 points as a point guard. Also in 2001, Penders received the Red O'Neill Award for Lifetime Achievement, the highest honor issued by the university's Department of Athletics. Drafted by the Cleveland Indians in 1968, Penders played for Class A Rock Hill and batted .302, making the Western Carolina League all-stare team. He was promoted to Class AA Waterbury (Conn.) but retired after the season to begin coaching basketball. Currently is the head men's basketball coach at Houston. Also coached at Tufts, Columbia. Fordham, Rhode Island and Texas. He was elected into the New England Basketball Hall of Fame in 2006. Locally, he played fast-pitch softball for the Raybestos Cardinals, winning ASA national titles in 1969, 1970, 1972, 1976 and 1983. He was a first-team All-American center fielder in 1975 and 1976 and played for Team USA in the 1983 World University Games.

— CHRIS ELSBERRY

Rangers rough up Sox

By Howard Ulman ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — Nelson Cruz and the Texas Rangers

found their RANGERS offense one **RED SOX** day after Jon Lester took it away.

Cruz led a 12-hit attack with a double, triple and homer, helping the Rangers beat the Boston Red Sox 6-3 on Sunday and bounce back from Lester's 6½ innings of perfect pitching. "I'm very glad with how

the guys recovered," Texas manager Ron Washington said. "You learn from the day before and you go out there and it's a different challenge every day."

Michael Young got the Rangers off to a fast start with a solo homer off Daisuke Matsuzaka in the first inning. Young also had Texas' first hit Saturday night, but that double didn't come until the seventh inning of Boston's 8-1 win as Lester tossed a two-hitter.

"Michael got us on the board early and from that point we just waited (Matsuzaka) out." Washington said. "When he did have to make pitches and he made them over the plate, we put them in play."

The Rangers won a series against the Red Sox for the first time since a three-game sweep in August 1997. They were 0-12-3 in their last 15 series with Boston and 1-9 in their last 10 games at Fenway Park before Sunday's

Cruz, playing at Fenway for the first time, went 0 for 8 with two strikeouts in the first two games, then had three straight extra-base hits after striking out in his first at-bat in the series finale.

"It was tough the first couple of games," said Cruz, whose 17th homer of the season went far over the Green Monster. "Mikey (Young) and Ian (Kinsler) told me it was the same thing for them." Cruz doubled and scored

in the third, tripled and scored in the fifth and hit a solo shot in the seventh off Hideki Okajima that ended Boston's bullpen scoreless streak at 12 innings.

Cruz's double ended an 0for-11 slump. He is tied with Tampa Bay's Carlos Pena and Yankees slugger Mark Teixeira for the AL lead in homers.

Vicente Padilla (4-3) allowed two earned runs and four hits in seven innings for Texas, lowering his ERA to 5.22.

"We all sit around and say we don't know how he has a 5 ERA," Boston's Kevin Youkilis said. "He can dominate a game.'

C.J. Wilson pitched the ninth for his fifth save in six chances.

Matsuzaka (1-4) gave up 10 hits and five runs in 5\(^2\) innings for Boston. He struck out eight and didn't walk a batter.

0608NW01B003_8142.indd 3 6/7/2009 10:19:32 PM