

Yankees Hitting Bumps

By Dave Lukow

The New York Yankees need help. Thanks to a pair of trades, they may have gotten some.

Closing on the start of August, the Yanks, despite being 67-37, are struggling. Trailing Boston by more than five games in the American League East, New York has gone 5-5 in its last 10 games. To make matters worse, the team's franchise player, outfielder Aaron Judge, has a chip fracture in his right wrist. The injury will keep the young slugger, who has 26 home runs and 61 RBIs, out of the lineup for an estimated three weeks. Hitting .285, Judge, an All-Star again this season, has 70 runs and 68 walks.

The Yankees are also without catcher Gary Sanchez, who contributed 14 homers and 42 RBIs before aggravating a groin injury. He's expected to be out until late August or early September. Although Sanchez is batting .188, he's scored 37 runs and has 31 walks.

The absence of the two players may have New York general manager Brian Cashman looking to add a bat or two. Recent additions to the starting rotation and bullpen, however, should provide insurance on the mound.

On July 26, the Yankees acquired starting pitcher J.A. Happ from the Toronto Blue Jays. An All-Star earlier in July, Happ was 10-6 in 20 starts for the Blue Jays. He held opposing batters to a .229 average and has 130 strikeouts in 114 innings. A 20-game winner in 2016, Happ was 102-82 with 1,294 strikeouts for his career before coming to the Bronx.

In his debut with New York, Happ earned the win in a 6-3 victory over the Royals. He allowed one run and three hits over six innings.

Prior to getting Happ, New York traded for Baltimore reliever Zach Britton, who's 1-0 with four saves this year. In 17.2 innings, he has 15 strikeouts and a 3.57 ERA. A former starter, Britton had 47 saves in 2016. He's been an All-Star twice.

With Britton, Dellin Betances and Aroldis Chapman in the bullpen, New York seems set, in terms of getting people out, late in games.