

FADING EXPOS LOSE ANOTHER

Martinez distracted by trade rumors

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — For the San Francisco Giants, it was just another win. For Montreal Expos pitcher Dennis Martinez, it was just another flurry of trade rumors.

Martinez (10-7) was credited with the loss as the Giants beat the Expos 8-3 Tuesday. The 10-year major leaguer pitched 5 1-3 innings, gave up nine hits and seven runs in the Expos' third straight loss.

Expos manager Felipe Alou admitted it's hard to be dogged by rumors.

"This is not the first game he's pitched under the gun," Alou said of Martinez. "Every city we go to, he's supposed to stay. But he's still with us."

Martinez was impatient for his club of five years to make a decision either way.

"I cannot push them (Expos management) to do anything. They're in charge of the ball club. But maybe it's time to tell them to do something, or do nothing at all," Martinez said. "I think it's starting to affect my concentration. I want to stop thinking about it."

The Giants, meanwhile, wrapped up their fifth win in seven games. Darren Lewis hit a two-run homer, had three hits and scored four runs. Bill Swift (13-5) held the Expos hitless



Giants' first baseman Will Clark grabs at the ball while Montreal's John Vander Wal dives back to the bag.

until the fifth when he allowed singles to Moises Alou and Sean Berry. Swift pitched 6 2-3 innings, allowing seven hits and three runs.

Giants manager Dusty Baker said it was more of the same.

"(We) made some good plays on defence, turned some timely double plays — I know it's getting monotonous. But whenever Billy Swift pitches, that's what you're going to get."

Swift credited the team's performance against Martinez.

"He's a good pitcher but when we scored against him early, it gave me a boost. I could concentrate on the game some more," he said.

Lewis seemed almost left out. His second homer of the season came in the sixth inning after Andy Allanson reached on first baseman Frank Bolick's error to make it 7-0.

Lewis had only one home run in both the 1991 and 1992 seasons. Both years he shuffled between San Francisco and the Giants' Class AAA affiliate in Phoenix.

Lewis said Baker and hitting coach Bobby Bonds told him in the off-season to just relax.

"When you're a young player, that's what you need," Lewis said. You need someone who will show confidence in you."

BASEBALL

Baltimore likes lead

by Canadian Press

The Baltimore Orioles dipped their big toe into the heady waters of first place Tuesday night, found the temperature to their liking and dove right in.

Pitcher Ben McDonald (7-8) made waves with his first career one-hitter and Harold Baines made a big splash with a homer and three RBIs as Baltimore beat Kansas City 7-0 to take the lead in the AL East for first time this season.

"The important thing is no so much the standings, but how well the ball club has been playing," manager Johnny Oates said. "To me, first place on July 20 means absolutely nothing."

"What means something is winning 32 of 45 games."

Baltimore started the season 5-13 and was 21-30 on May 30. Since then, the Orioles are 32-13.

"We've turned it around the last two months," said Baltimore's Harold Reynolds. "We've played a lot better ball, but we've got a long way to go."

The Toronto Blue Jays continue to barely tread water in the AL East, sinking with the New York Yankees to a tie for second. Toronto lost 2-1 to Chicago and New York lost 9-5 to Seattle as the former AL East co-leaders fell one-half game behind the Orioles.

The Boston Red Sox and Detroit Tigers are two other swimmers in this five-team pool of contenders. The Red Sox are 1 1/2-games back after beating California 2-1; the Tigers are two games behind following a 4-3 loss to Minnesota. Texas beat Milwaukee 5-1 and Cleveland beat Oakland 9-5 in the other AL games.

In the National League, it was: San Francisco 8, Montreal 3; Atlanta 8 St. Louis 5; Pittsburgh 2, Houston 1; Cincinnati 8, Chicago 3; Colorado 6, Florida 3; San Diego 4, New York 1; and Philadelphia 8, Los Angeles 2.

The Orioles' seventh victory in their last nine games moved them a season-high 10 games over .500. McDonald has been a key factor in the Orioles' resurgence.

Gary Gaetti clean liner in the fourth was the lone hit off McDonald, who has gone 14 straight starts allowing three earned runs or less.

"Gaetti hit a pretty good pitch," McDonald said. "I threw a fastball on the outside part of the plate and he guessed right and took it to left."

David Cone (6-9) was the loser. Mariners 9 Yankees 5

Ken Griffey Jr. hit a two-run single off Steve Howe during a six-run rally in the seventh and also homered as Seattle ended New York's four-game winning string. Dave Fleming (6-1) won his sixth straight decision. Howe (3-4) threw one pitch and was the loser.

Twins 4 Tigers 3
Shane Mack's two-run homer in the eighth inning broke a tie and three Minnesota pitchers held the Tigers to four hits. Jim Deshaies (10-7) allowed two runs on three hits through the first seven innings. Carl Willis pitched a perfect eighth and Rick Aguilera finished up for his 26th save, allowing Cecil Fielder's 25th homer.

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