

SPORTS

Ex-Viking star Lowe has big night

Hits 2 HRs in Rays romp of Red Sox

BY MARK DIDTLER
Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG – Nate Lowe hit two homers and drove in four runs as Tampa Bay fielded a lineup of all lefties, Blake Snell worked 5 1/3 scoreless innings and the AL East-leading Rays routed the cellar-dwelling Boston Red Sox, 11-1, on Friday night.

Tampa Bay became the first major league team since at least 1900 to use a batting order with only left-handed hitters, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

“We had a good time with it,” Lowe said.

Rays manager Kevin Cash said there will be no repeat of the all-lefty lineup Saturday with right-handed-hitting shortstop Willy Adames returning from a day off.

Snell (4-1) gave up five hits and two walks. He struck out five.

“He’s got nasty stuff,” Red Sox manager Ron Roenicke said. “That’s why this guy is so good. We had some good at-bats against him, but this is an elite pitcher and it shows.”

Yoshi Tsutsugo also homered for the Rays, who stopped a three-game skid. Tampa Bay entered the game trailing Oakland by percentage points for the AL’s best record.

“Seeing what the offense can do, that was exciting,” Snell said.

Boston rookie Bobby Dalbec had his five-game home run streak end but had an RBI double in the ninth.

The Red Sox would be eliminated from AL East title contention with a loss on Saturday night.

Cash stacked his lineup with lefties against right-hander Andrew Triggs, who made his second start with Boston.

Roenicke appeared to counter quickly by removing Triggs after he allowed a hit and walk in a scoreless first. However, the manager said after the game that Triggs was pulled with a pinched nerve in his neck.

Tsutsugo started the second with a homer off lefty Matt Hall (0-3).

Kevin Kiermaier had an RBI grounder in the third and Austin Meadows hit a two-run double in the fourth.

Hall gave up four runs and six hits over 2 1/3 innings.

Tsutsugo had a run-scoring single before Lowe connected for a three-run drive off Robinson Leyer to put the Rays up 9-0 in the seventh.

Lowe had a solo shot off Domingo Tapia, who made his big league debut, in the sixth and finished with three hits in four at-bats. He entered 1 for 14

Rays

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on the season.

While some teams have started a lineup in which all batters hit from the left side the first time up, all previous occasions since 1900 included at least one switch-hitter.

Roenicke said when bench coach Jerry Narron gave him the Rays’ lineup before the game, he thought it was wrong.

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