BAY SPORTS DAILY

AUGUST 1, 2033 · THE TAMPA BAY CANNONS BEAT

Cannons hold last Ice spot; Jimenez out with torn labrum

BY **JUNIOR ESCAMILLA** · BAY SPORTS DAILY

I have to tell you something, and I want you to sit down first. On the morning of August 1, the Tampa Bay Cannons hold a playoff spot.

I have checked this four times. We are 51-54, third in the Jade, eighth of 16 in the Ice Conference, and eighth is the last one in. New Orleans and Galveston are a game behind us. Rochester is a game ahead. I have covered this team since 2025 and I have never covered a winning club. My stated goal in March was fewer than 100 losses. We are on pace for 83. I do not know how to do this. Nobody has told me what you're supposed to do with your hands in a pennant race.

Now the bad news, right under the good, like always. On July 24 James Jimenez partially tore his labrum. He is out two to three months. He is 35, he makes $1.5 million this year, and he has 25 saves, a 1.16 earned run average and six walks in 46 and two-thirds innings. In July he was as good as any closer alive, and I would have had that argument with anybody. The bullpen without him has a 4.37, 31st of 32. The most valuable thing on this team just left the building, and the sim ended with three straight losses in San Diego, the last one 4-3.

Why are we here? Honestly? The same reason as May, and I still don't fully trust it. We have been outscored by 61 runs. That is the record of a team about 45-60. We are 22-22 in one-run games, 32-22 at home, and we took all three from Cincinnati in July. Six games of the difference between what we are and what the numbers say we are came from somewhere, and I would like nobody to go looking.

The rotation is actually good now, which I did not have on my card. Starters' earned run average: 3.81, 12th in the league. Pat Cline, the minimum-salary guy, is 8-3 with a 3.02. He has allowed five home runs in 116 and a third innings. Justin Davis, who was 0-6 in May and who I was sorry about, is 5-10 with a 3.65,

and I would like to apologize to him on behalf of the people in my mentions. Jon O'Rourke showed up in April, at 34, and has made 14 starts. Danny Roman has walked 50 men. We don't discuss that. Mark Flinn and Chris Ricks are on the injured list.

The lineup is 25th in runs. Chris McMillian has 20 home runs, which is what you want, and the .224 is what you get. Tomas Ramirez has 15 home runs and 27 stolen bases. Curtis Legget, signed two days into the season, has 47 runs batted in as the catcher. Victor Rodriguez has gone from .165 with 11 home runs to .182 with 13, and I said that was a real stat line a real player has, and it still is. Nick Hancock has one home run in 297 plate appearances. Mike Lunsford has three in 419. It is fine. We're fine. It's fine.

Somebody is going to ask Leo about the deadline, and I want it on the record that I don't know what a buyer looks like, because I have only ever covered sellers. This franchise has sold cash to half the league. We are the ones other clubs call. Now we are eighth in the Ice with no closer, and Sarasota, in Rookie ball, is 22-6. David Drake has climbed to 13th on the game's Top 100, and Jeff Raymond is 66th. Jeff Yocom, the 10th pick in this year's draft, is 87th. Those are the guys I refuse to make a graphic about. I have learned my lesson. I am not selling anybody hope.

I am, however, going to enjoy this. Three in Virginia, then Huron and Oklahoma City at home. If you have a phone, you know where to find me.
