

# Baseball’s biggest spenders are stumbling

BY RONALD BLUM  
AP BASEBALL WRITER

NEW YORK — Baseball’s biggest spenders are stumbling, slowed by injuries and scrambling to patch rosters with help for battered bullpens and other positions ahead of Thursday’s trade deadline.

Opening the season with a top payroll of \$326 million, the New York Mets have a 1 1/2-game NL East lead but are 17-20 since mid-June.

Just \$200,000 behind them in spending, according to Major League Baseball’s figures, the World Series champion Los Angeles Dodgers are four games ahead in the NL West but are 5-13 since July 3.

Third at \$294 million, the defending AL champion New York Yankees blew a seven-game division lead and trail AL East-leading Toronto by 5 1/2 games after a 22-28 skid that started in late May.

“It is in a lot of ways a game of survival,” Yankees manager Aaron Boone said.

While all three are in playoffs positions, they have not had the seasons they hoped for.

All three teams were considered “winners” of the offseason. The Mets lured Juan Soto from the Yankees for a record \$765 million, 15-year contract. The Dodgers added prized pitcher Roki Sasaki and left-hander Blake Snell along with reliever Tanner Scott, outfielder Michael Conforto and second base-



Godofredo A. Vásquez | Associated Press

Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Emmet Sheehan, center, hands the ball over to manager Dave Roberts as he exits July 12 during the eighth inning of a baseball game against the San Francisco Giants in San Francisco.

man Hyeseong Kim. The Yankees brought in Max Fried, Cody Bellinger, Paul Goldschmidt and Devin Williams.

Projected lineups and the ones in box scores have been markedly different.

The Mets have used 13 starting pitchers, losing Kodai Senga, Sean Manaea, Frankie Montas, Tylor Megill and Griffin Canning for significant stretches.

“We’re not going to sit here and feel sorry for ourselves. Nobody will,” manager Carlos Mendoza said. “We’re facing a lot of adversity, but every team goes through it.”

Los Angeles had 14 pitchers on the injured list in early June and has used

16 different starters.

“It was very important to have the depth. We went through a lot last year and I didn’t think that we would kind of match what we did last year, but sure enough we have,” Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. “To kind of manage it hasn’t been easy, but we’re doing it.”

The Yankees lost ace Gerrit Cole and Clarke Schmidt to torn UCLs and Luis Gil to a lat strain. They are now without two-time AL MVP Aaron Judge for at least 10 days because of a flexor injury.

Los Angeles leads the major leagues with 1,495 player days on the IL, the Mets are fifth at 1,095 and the Yankees sixth at 1,022. Philadelphia, 1 1/2 games

back of the Mets in the NL East, has the fewest IL days at 214.

In addition to relievers, the Mets could use a center fielder and an upgrade at third. The Yankees added infielders Ryan McMahon and Amed Rosario, boosting payroll and tax by \$11.56 million.

Modern MLB is a sport for the wealthy. Just two of the current division leaders were not among the top seven spenders as of opening day: Detroit (19th at \$148 million) and the Chicago Cubs (14th at \$195 million).

And the spending doesn’t include luxury tax, with seven teams projected to pay. The Dodgers were on track at the season’s start to owe a record \$151

million — more than the payrolls of seven teams. The were were projected at \$73 million and the Yankees \$52 million, with Philadelphia, Toronto, San Diego and Boston at lesser amounts.

“I’m a piker now compared to the Dodgers,” Mets owner Steve Cohen said during spring training.

All seven teams set to owe tax would be in the 12-club playoffs if the season ended now along with Houston, currently just below the tax threshold.

In the past decade, three teams outside the top 10 spenders have won titles: Atlanta in 2021 (14th), Houston in 2017 (18th) and Kansas City in 2015 (13th). While the biggest spender has won twice, the Dodgers in 2020 and Boston in 2018, a top six payroll has won six titles of the past 10 titles.

Some owners say MLB should push for a salary cap in negotiations to replace the collective bargaining agreement that expires in December 2026, a proposal the players’ association would fight.

“Payroll disparity is such a fact of life among the ownership group that there’s not a lot of need for talking about whether we have it or not,” baseball commissioner Rob Manfred said. “We understand that it has become a bigger problem for us.”

Last year, the top three spenders reached the League Championship Series along with Cleveland, which finished at No. 25. Ten of 20 LCS teams in the last five years paid tax.

“I have the ability to spend if I have to,” Cohen said. “I want to win and I want to I can on the field.”

# Football season looms with no guidance in athlete battles to win more eligibility

BY TERESA M. WALKER  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

The stream of lawsuits across the country from college athletes trying to grab another season of eligibility appears ready to fizzle out for a bit.

With fall football practice cranking up this week, players still hoping for a judge allowing them to take the field may be left waiting for a ruling that likely won’t help them compete again.

“We’re at a point in the summer where I think any athlete out there is going to know that it’s probably too late to file a case and be able to get relief on it,” said Sam Ehrlich, a professor of legal studies at Boise State studying the 2021 Alston ruling’s effect on college athletics.

Relief on a larger question surrounding eligibility may be a while coming, too: In cases from California to Wisconsin, judges have provided inconsistent results for players seeking legal help for another season, and it may very well be a topic settled for good by a higher court.

Vanderbilt quarterback Diego Pavia is perhaps the highest-profile athlete to win his court fight. The New Mexico State transfer sued the NCAA last fall, arguing that his junior college years should not count against his eligibility, citing the potential losses in earnings from name, image and likeness deals. U.S. District Judge William Campbell Jr. in Tennessee granted a preliminary injunction, ordering the NCAA to allow Pavia to play.

The NCAA is appealing Campbell’s decision but granted a blanket waiver that will allow an extra year of eligibility for Pavia and other athletes who played at non-NCAA Division I schools before enrollment if they were going to exhaust their eligibility this year.

Pavia won. Others, such as Wisconsin cor-



Aaron Gash | Associated Press

Wisconsin’s Nyzier Fourqurean reacts Nov. 18, 2023, during overtime of an NCAA college football game against Nebraska in Madison, Wis.

nerback Nyzier Fourqurean, have lost or are in limbo.

Practice starts Wednesday for Southeastern Conference members Vanderbilt and Tennessee. Chris Bellamy and Targhee Lambson are among four football players waiting on the same federal judge who gave Pavia another season of football last December.

Some schools have helped by filing waivers. Others wait and hold a spot, letting the athlete fight the legal battle.

“They’re just kind of in limbo in the transfer portal because schools don’t really know whether they’re going to have eligibility,” Ehrlich said. “It’s a really weird situation right now.”

The NCAA would like Congress to grant limited liability protection to help address all the lawsuits over eligibility. NCAA President Charlie Baker noted in June that athletes had five years to play four seasons for about a century, a situation that changed recently. Baker told The Associated Press then that the NCAA has won more of these cases than the association lost.

“But the uncertainty it creates, the consequences of this for the

next generation of young people if you play this thing out, are enormous,” Baker said. “Moving away from an academic calendar to sort of no calendar for college sports is hugely problematic.”

Duke coach Manny Diaz thought such eligibility issues would be addressed after the House settlement, which took effect July 1.

“All I have been told is once they got House out of the way they are going to double back on a lot of these oddities and make sure eligibility is tied into a college career,” Diaz said at ACC media days. “We don’t want nine-year guys playing the sport.”

Thanks to the extra season added to careers for the coronavirus pandemic, the college eligibility calendar has been scrambled a bit. Pavia will be playing his sixth season after starting with two at New Mexico Military Institute, a junior college, then two more at New Mexico State.

Fullback Hayden Large played three NAIA seasons at Dordt before transferring to Iowa, where he will be playing his sixth season this fall after being granted another year.

Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz sees a simple solution in giving players five years

to play five seasons. He’s also in favor of players who start in junior college having an extra year, even as he sees the need for a limit even if he doesn’t know what that should be.

“If a guy during his first year ends up being able to play five or six games, why not let him play?” Ferentz said. “It’s all about creating opportunity, in my mind. I’ve never understood the rationale for not doing that.”

Ehrlich is attempting to track all lawsuits against the NCAA, ranging from the House settlement name, image and likeness litigation; college athletes as employees; and Title IX lawsuits, along with other cases. Ehrlich has tracked more than a dozen lawsuits involving eligibility, and common factors are hard to come by.

He saw three very different rulings from judges appointed by President Donald Trump. Standards of evidence for a preliminary injunction also have varied from judge to judge. Three cases have been appealed, with other motions helping delay some waiver requests.

Ehrlich said there remains the chance a case lands before the U.S. Supreme Court.

“I don’t see these cases drying up anytime soon,” Ehrlich said.

## LEGAL NOTICE

**Child Find for children with disabilities in need of special education or 504 services and notification of restraint/seclusion**

The Daviess County Public Schools (DCPS) district keeps educational records in a secure location in each school and Board office.

The DCPS district obtains written consent from a parent or eligible student (age 18 or who is attending a postsecondary institution), before disclosing personally identifiable information to an entity or individual not authorized to receive it under FERPA.

For students who have been determined eligible for Special Education, educational records will be destroyed at the request of the parents when they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services. The DCPS district may destroy the educational records of a child without parent request 3 years after they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services. Parents are advised that data contained in the records may later be needed for Social Security benefits or other purposes. The DCPS district may retain, for an indefinite period of time, a record of the student’s name, address, telephone number, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed.

Children eligible for Special Education include those children with disabilities who have autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional-behavior disability, hearing impairment, mental disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment and who because of such an impairment need Special Education services.

Children eligible for 504 services include those children in a public elementary and secondary education program who have a current physical or mental impairment that currently substantially limits some major life activity which causes the student’s ability to access the school environment or school activities to be substantially limited.

Children eligible for the State-Funded Preschool program include 3- and 4-year-old children identified with disabilities and 4-year-old children who are at-risk, as defined by federal poverty levels up to 150%. Preschool children eligible for special education must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) instead of a 504 plan to receive State-Funded Preschool program services.

The DCPS district has an ongoing “Child Find” system, which is designed to locate, identify and evaluate any child residing in a home, facility, or residence within its geographical boundaries, age three (3) to twenty-one (21) years, who may have a disability and be in need of Special Education or 504 services. This includes children who are not in school; those who are in public, private, or home school; those who are highly mobile such as children who are migrant or homeless; and those who are advancing from grade to grade, who may need but are not receiving Special Education or 504 services.

The district’s “Child Find” system includes children with disabilities attending private or home schools within the school district boundaries who may need special education services.

The DCPS district will make sure any child enrolled in its district who qualifies for Special Education or 504 services, regardless of how severe the disability, is provided appropriate Special Education or 504 services at no cost to the parents of the child.

Parents, relatives, public and private agency employees, and concerned citizens are urged to help the DCPS district find any child who may have a disability and need Special Education or 504 services. The district needs to know the name and age, or date of birth of the child; the name, address, and phone number(s) of the parents or guardian; the possible disability; and other information to determine if Special Education or 504 services are needed.

Letters and phone calls are some of the ways the DCPS district collects the information needed. The information the school District collects will be used to contact the parents of the child and find out if the child needs to be evaluated or referred for Special Education or 504 services.

If you know of a child who lives within the boundaries of the DCPS district, whom may have a disability, and may need but is not receiving Special Education or 504 services, please call (270) 852-7000 or send the information to:

Director of Special Education and Section 504 Coordinator Robin Bush, Daviess County Public Schools, 1700 Parrish Plaza Drive, Owensboro KY 42301.

If you know of a child who attends a private or home school within the boundaries of the DCPS district, who may have a disability, and may need but is not receiving Special Education services, please call (270) 852-7000 or send the information to Director of Special Education Robin Bush, Daviess County Public Schools, 1700 Parrish Plaza Drive, Owensboro KY 42301.

“Child Find” activities will continue throughout the school year. As part of these efforts, the DCPS district will use screening information, student records, and basic assessment information it collects on all children in the district to help locate those children who have a disability and need Special Education or 504 services. Any information the district collects through “Child Find” is maintained confidentially.

Written Policies and Procedures have been developed which describe the district’s requirements regarding the confidentiality of personally identifiable information and “Child Find” activities. There are copies posted on the district’s website [www.daviesskyschools.org](http://www.daviesskyschools.org), and in the Board of Education office. Copies of these Policies and Procedures may be obtained by contacting: Director of Pupil Personnel Charles Broughton, Daviess County Public Schools, 1622 Southeastern Parkway, Owensboro KY 42303, or calling (270) 852-7000. The district office is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The DCPS Board of Education has adopted a policy regarding physical restraint and seclusion. The use of physical restraint and seclusion must be in compliance with Policy 09.2212. To request a copy of this policy, contact the Director of Special Education at the address or phone number listed above.

The DCPS district provides a public notice in the native language or other mode of communication of the various populations in the geographical boundaries of the district to the extent feasible.

If you know of someone who may need this notice translated to another language, given orally, or delivered in some other manner or mode of communication, please contact the Director of Pupil Personnel, the Director of Special Education or the Section 504 Coordinator at the address or phone number listed above for the Daviess County Public Schools.