

Clemens' 20 strikeouts leave Red Sox in awe

BOSTON (AP) — It took another pitcher to let Roger Clemens know that he was flirting with history as the Boston Red Sox right-hander neared a major league record 20 strikeouts.

"He told me I needed two strikeouts and to go out and get it," Clemens said of teammate Al Nipper's comments entering the ninth inning of Boston's 3-1 victory Tuesday night over the Seattle Mariners.

"That entire inning was all adrenaline. I was just out there throwing," said Clemens, a former standout in the collegiate ranks with the Texas Longhorns in 1982-83.

It was a power-pitching performance that left Nipper in awe.

"I'd love to throw as hard as he did tonight," Nipper said. "That (20 strikeouts) was something nobody has ever seen. That was the greatest game I ever saw anyone pitch. We're all going to Atlanta tomorrow and get our arms operated on."

Nipper was referring to the arthroscopic surgery Clemens underwent in Columbus, Ga., Aug. 30, 1985 to repair torn cartilage in his right shoulder.

But it's something Clemens said is history.

"All of the injury is behind me," Clemens said. "I'm tired of hearing about that. All I know is what the record book says."

Clemens' effort moved him past three of modern baseball's legendary pitchers in the record book.

Nolan Ryan of the 1974 California Angels, Tom Seaver of the 1970 New York Mets and Steve Carlton of the 1969 St. Louis Cardinals each struck out 19 batters in nine innings.

But Clemens' record performance was not limited to the

nine-inning feat.

He fanned eight consecutive batters from the fourth into the sixth innings to tie the American League mark accomplished twice by Ryan with the Angels and once by Ron Davis while he was with the New York Yankees.

The 20 strikeouts also snapped the previous high of 16 by one pitcher at Fenway Park set by Jack Harshman of the Chicago White Sox on July 25, 1954.

All the statistics and names are not wasted on Clemens.

"To be mentioned in the same breath with all the great pitchers who have played this game, I have no words for that," he said. "I'm just happy there's someone up there looking over me."

Praise and big numbers had been projected for Clemens ever since he was the winning pitcher for UT in the Longhorns' 4-3 victory over Alabama in the final game of the 1983 College World Series championship game.

However, the shoulder injury shortened his first two seasons in the majors after Clemens experienced quick success in the Red Sox farm system.

He had a 3-1 record with Winter Haven and went 4-1 with a 1.38 era in seven starts with New Britain of the Eastern League in 1983.

He posted two victories in the Eastern League playoffs, allowing one earned run in 17 innings while helping New Britain win the league championship.

On Aug. 31, 1984, Clemens' season was cut short by the injury to his right forearm while pitching against the Cleveland Indians. He had struck out seven in 3 1/2 innings before being forced out of the game.

So far this year, Clemens has won all four of his decisions.

Astros homer to nip Phillies 1-0

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Mike Scott combined with three relievers on a six-hitter, and Glenn Davis homered in the fourth inning Wednesday night, leading the Houston Astros over the Philadelphia Phillies 1-0.

Scott, 3-2, gave up six hits over 6 1/2 innings while striking out seven and walking four.

The Houston right-hander was working on his second consecutive shutout when pinch-hitter Greg Gross led off the Philadelphia seventh with a single. Milt Thompson popped up a sacrifice bunt, but Rick Schu followed with a single that sent Gross to second.

Frank DiPino relieved Scott, and retired Von Hayes on a grounder to

first base with the runners advancing to second and third. Charles Kerfeld then relieved and intentionally walked Mike Schmidt, loading the bases. Kerfeld worked a 3-2 count on Glenn Wilson before getting on a popout.

Kerfeld worked the eighth inning, and Dave Smith pitched a hitless ninth for his seventh save.

Davis connected for his fourth home run on a 1-0 pitch from Kevin Gross, 1-3. Gross gave up five hits in seven innings.

Mets 8, Braves 1
ATLANTA (AP) — Darryl Strawberry went 5-for-5, including a two-run homer and a double, and Dwight Gooden pitched six-hit ball for eight innings Wednesday night

as the New York Mets tied a team record with their 11th consecutive victory, an 8-1 decision over the Atlanta Braves.

Strawberry, who drove in three runs, set a personal high with five hits in a game. Gary Carter added a two-run homer, the 250th home run of his career.

Expos 8, Reds 0
CINCINNATI (AP) — Jay Tibbs shut out his former teammates on four hits Wednesday and Tim Lincecum, Hubie Brooks and Tim Wallach led a 13-hit attack as the Montreal Expos rolled to an 8-0 victory over the punchless Cincinnati Reds.

Giants 6, Padres 5 (12)
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Chris Brown, who tied the game with a

sacrifice fly in the ninth inning, tied the bases loaded, and struck out in the 12th inning Wednesday night, giving the San Francisco Giants a 6-5 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Padres 5, Cardinals 0
SAN DIEGO (AP) — Matt Mond pitched 6 1/2 perfect innings and finished with a one-hitter as the San Diego Padres defeated the St. Louis Cardinals 5-0 Wednesday night.

Dodgers 4, Cubs 0
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Marshall, Franklin Stubbs and Sax each hit home runs as the Los Angeles Dodgers scattered six hits Wednesday night as the Los Angeles Dodgers won their fourth straight game with a 4-0 victory over the Chicago White Sox.

Tribe rips Rangers to win 4th straight

ARLINGTON (AP) — Pat Tabler hit a two-run homer and Julio Franco added a two-run double as Cleveland defeated the Texas Rangers 6-4 Wednesday night for the Indians' fourth consecutive victory.

The game was delayed 2 hours and 4 minutes in the top of the fifth inning because of rain. Don Schulze, 2-0, struck out four in 3 1/2 innings of relief and Ernie Camacho pitched 1 1/2 innings for his sixth save.

Trailing 2-1, the Indians scored two runs in the fourth off starter Jose Guzman, 1-4.

With one out, Brook Jacoby doubled down the right-field line and Tabler followed with his second homer of the year.

Cleveland added a run in the rain-delayed fifth-inning to take a 4-2 lead. Brett Butler led off with double, and after the delay, Franco beat out a ground ball to second, moving Butler to third. Butler scored on Joe Carter's double play grounder.

The Indians added two runs in the seventh when Franco doubled home Chris Bando and Butler. In that inning, Rangers' relief pitcher Dave Rozema and Manager Bobby Valentine were ejected by home plate umpire Nick Bremigan.

The Rangers rallied for two runs in the bottom of the seventh when Pete O'Brien doubled home Curtis Wilkerson and Oddibe McDowell, both of whom had singled. The benches emptied briefly after Pete Incaviglia was hit by a pitch by reliever Jim Kern. But no punches were thrown.

The Indians took a 1-0 lead in the third inning when Tony Bernazard singled with one out and Chris Bando followed with a run-scoring double.

Blue Jays 6, Angels 4
TORONTO (AP) — Jesse Barfield hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning to power the Toronto Blue Jays to a 6-4 victory over the California Angels on Wednesday night.

Yankees 3, Twins 2
NEW YORK (AP) — Don Mattingly's first home run of the season, a three-run shot off Bert Blyleven in the fifth inning, gave the New York Yankees a 3-2 victory over the Minnesota Twins on Wednesday night and the winningest month of April in their history.

White Sox 8, Orioles 6
CHICAGO (AP) — Ron Kittle's two-run

homer capped a six-run third inning Wednesday night, powering the Chicago White Sox to a 6-2 victory over the Baltimore Orioles.

Red Sox 9, Mariners 4
BOSTON (AP) — Ed Romero snapped a two-run bases-loaded double in the seventh inning Wednesday night as the Red Sox rallied for a 9-4 victory over the Seattle Mariners.

The Mariners struck out 16 times against Boston pitchers, after being fanned 20 times by the Red Sox on Tuesday night. The total of 36 set a major-league mark.

Royals 7, Tigers 3
DETROIT (AP) — Angel Salazar hit a home tieing run and scored on Willie Randolph's single, keying a five-run rally in the ninth inning Wednesday night that lifted the Kansas City Royals over the Detroit Tigers 7-3.

Brewers 5, A's 1
MILWAUKEE (AP) — Mike Felder scattered three runs and Ted Higuera scattered five in a 5-1 Milwaukee Brewers defeated the Oakland Athletics Wednesday night.

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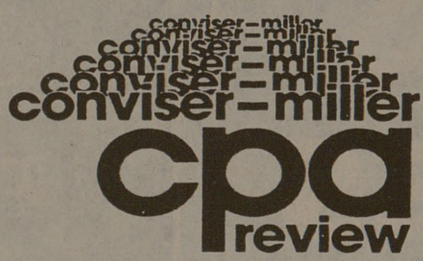
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