

BILL BURT ON REASONS TO BELIEVE • 2025 SCHEDULE • AL EAST PREDICTIONS



2025 SEASON PREVIEW

IN CROCHET, BREGMAN AND BUEHLER, RED SOX
HAVE ADDED VETERANS WHO CAN RISE ABOVE HUB PRESSURES

BUILT FOR BOSTON



Garrett
Crochet

Alex
Bregman

Walker
Buehler

BOSTON PHOTO BY SEAN PAVONE; PLAYER PHOTOS BY GERALD HERBERT



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10 REASONS TO BELIEVE

Bill Burt

First the truth. While the Red Sox franchise and its fanbase have an obvious bounce in their collective steps heading into April, there are a few reasons to slow your roll.

Finishing on top, winning a World Series in October, will be harder than hard.

Why?

The N.Y. Yankees, N.Y. Mets, Los Angeles Dodgers, Atlanta Braves and the Philadelphia Phillies – not necessarily in that order – appear to better on paper and, really on the field.

All are star-studded with strengths and depth that the Red Sox would have to decipher and retaliate.

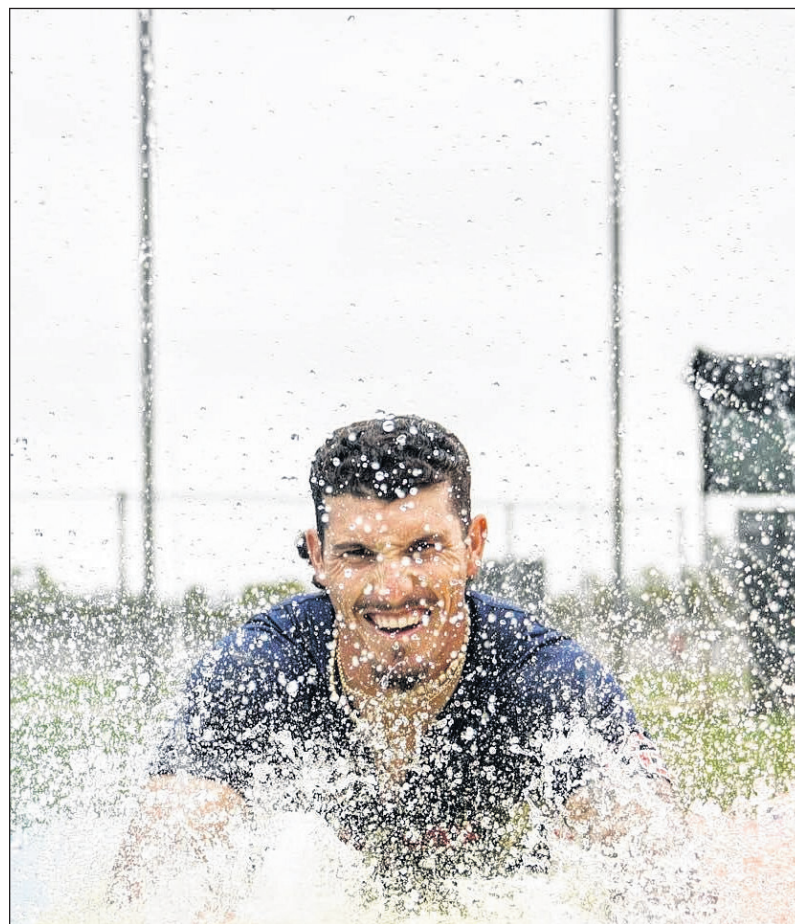
But the good news is four of those Big Five are in the National League, and by October, if the Red Sox are both healthy and have several of their top guys hit expectations, it “could” happen.

I’m going to take a different tack. While I can’t guarantee anything, especially in the tough American League East division, there is a lot to like about this particular Red Sox team and direction it is heading.

Here are 10 reasons to believe this really could be the year:

1. Yanks lose Cole for season

The best team in the A.L. lost its best pitcher Gerrit Cole for the year (Tommy John surgery). And they are not replacing him, at least not yet. This brings the Yankees down a peg and leaves them vulnerable at top of A.L. East. The Red Sox match up well, now, if they come close to



Red Sox outfielder Jarren Duran is making a slide at superstardom. He was MVP of the MLB All-Star game last July.

meeting expectations, the top of the division is a real target, instead of chasing the last Wild Card spot.

2. Bregman, Crochet are elite adds

The Red Sox added two, key missing components to last year, a leader and an ace. These two fill

those bills. They add both high-end numbers, but also a mentality. Those voids mattered, especially when last August arrived and the team, very young, fizzled. Alex Bregman plays 155 games. And Garrett Crochet dominates hitters.

See **BELIEVE**, Page S8



TIM JEAN/Staff photo

Red Sox Manager Alex Cora answers questions from the media after the panel discussion at Lawrence High two months ago. Bill Burt says Cora's best work might be handing the health of his pitching staff.

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BUILT FOR BOSTON

Bregman, Crochet and Buehler appear made for what this region demands

By Bill Burt

» bburt@eagletribune.com

It is not easy playing baseball in Boston, particularly those that received big money and fanfare to do so.

Over the last two decades, most acquired for a lot cash and/or prospects, these dudes stick out:

Carl Crawford, Pablo Sandoval, Edgar Renteria, David Price, J.D. Drew and John Lackey.

Some had varying success here, but all finished their time here basically taking a Formula One car get out of town.

The scrutiny is unlike anything. While New York may have more media members and more people rooting their teams on, Boston/New England can be downright nasty when things aren't going their way.

Basically, if you're struggling, the fans around here probably won't be rooting you back to success, like, say, happens in Kansas City.

Which brings us to the matter at hand:

The Red Sox added several new faces to the 2025 squad, adding talent and depth to a franchise that has struggled in both categories.

But let's be honest, there are three new faces that have had more to do with changing the public perception of the 2025 Boston Red Sox.

Alex Bregman, Garrett Crochet and Walker Buehler.

This trio has something most other free agents or big trade acquisitions didn't have: Championships or All-Star seasons. In the case of Bregman and Buehler, both.

The new trio have another characteristic not really



COURTESY PHOTO BOSTON RED SOX

The Alex Bregman effect, says Bill Burt, has been huge only six weeks into his career with the Red Sox.



The Red Sox got their new ace, Garrett Crochet, in December and he hasn't disappointed this spring training.

measured on a resume. They are mentally tough.

Bregman's been an elite prospect player since high school. He led LSU, as a shortstop, to two College World Series berths. And in

the majors with the Astros, he has been to four World Series, winning two.

Crochet's "grit" and mental strength isn't based on time served, but what he has overcome. A reliever/



Walker Buehler has been named the third-game starter for the Red Sox to open the 2025 season. A two-time World Series champ, he closed out last October's 4-1 series win over the Yankees.

closer in the White Sox organization, after Tommy John surgery, he made the change to starting pitcher ... and became an all-star.

Buehler's ascension in the game as been more rollercoaster-like, with two Tommy John surgeries. But his competitive

juices, always evident on the mound, showed up in two World Series titles, including him closing out with back-to-back swinging strikeouts in the Dodgers title win in October, in Yankee Stadium.

While all three add value inside the white lines, their presence is equal to the resume.

The trio has a way, each in their own way, of putting fear in the eyes of the competition.

Bregman, who signed a \$40 million per year deal over three years (he can opt out after Year 1 and 2), has been up at the plate in every big moment imaginable.

Crochet, who was acquired in a major December trade for three prospects including high-end catcher Kyle Teel, has a moving, upper-90 mph pitch that is difficult to follow thanks to a huge, high leg kick. And the fastballs keep coming.

Buehler, who signed a one-year, \$21 million deal, has four pitches, including a curve, slider and changeup. And with his swagger on the rubber, he's not afraid to throw it inside.

The only thing issue that could come into play, particularly with the pitchers here, is health.

Both will be on a short leash, but with a strong bullpen behind them – God-willing – the Red Sox should have optimum chance to win two out of every three games this duo pitches.

Bringing in new players usually takes time, maybe a full season, to adjust.

It doesn't feel that way with Bregman, Crochet and Buehler. They appear to be born to play here with a fanbase that will let them know their strong opinions on the matter.

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Red Sox found their leader

Bregman takes over key role

On Baseball

Bill Burt

Kudos to Alex Cora. He knew what Alex Bregman could add to his and New England's favorite ball club.

During the wait to sign him, Cora, without naming names, said there was a player out there who could affect this club like no other.

Yes, there are about 30 home runs in the middle of the lineup, Gold Glove-ish play in the field, and a dude that isn't afraid of the bright Boston lights that our athletes face.

But the Red Sox have been lacking, inside the white lines and inside the clubhouse, for the guy that will face the music — see a few dozen media members — when the going is tough.

The guy who will take the hits on behalf of the other 24 dudes.

Trevor Story tried to take the mantle of “captain,” but his injury in early April last year ended that experiment.

The highest paid player and best hitter, Rafael Devers, still uses a translator, even though — wink! wink! — he doesn't always need it.

There is only so much Cora, the manager, can do and say.

The Red Sox of yesteryear, say from 2004 through 2018, when winning was both important and expected had their “team meeting” guys, like Jason Varitek, Mike Lowell, Dustin Pedroia, Xander Bogaerts and, of course, the best of them all, David Ortiz.

The post-COVID Red Sox have been lacking in that

department.

No more.

Bregman has taken the role and, well, run with it.

One signing, an expensive one at \$40 million in 2025, has changed everything.

He has buddied up with Story, who is quietly on a mission to prove his worth as not only an every day, elite shortstop, but as a possible All-Star caliber hitter.

Bregman's one-on-one discussions with the “kids,” borders on epic.

One of the top Red Sox prospects, Mikey Romero, was in awe after one discussion with the newest veteran.

“I was standing together watching live at-bats and I would ask (Bregman) about what he'd be looking for on a certain pitch,” said Romero. “Then at one point, he was predicting what the pitcher was throwing. I swear to God he was 10-for-10. He was right every time.

“I said, ‘How do you do that?’ He said the pitcher was tipping his pitches,” said Romero. “I asked what did he see. He said, ‘When his glove is down a little, it's a breaking ball.’ I'm like, ‘What?! How can you see that?’ It's incredible what I'm learning every day. It's exciting.”

Then there's a few stories about Bregman's locker stall in the jetBlue clubhouse and the “suits.”

He not only asked for his locker to be put next to the Red Sox's top three prospects — Roman Anthony, Marcelo Mayer and Kristian Campbell — in spring training, but he bought the trio each custom-made suits.

“It's the sickest thing ever.



Alex Bregman's bat is expected to make a lot of noise near the top of the Red Sox lineup in 2025.

It was my first suit,” Mayer said. “We got to the field one day and he's like, ‘Hey, the suit lady is outside. Go get whatever you want.’ Me, Roman and Kristian and some other guys. He took good care of us. It was cool. He's such a great guy. He wants us to feel comfortable here.”

Then there was “the bus” story, in which Mayer joked that the stars usually don't join the team on the one to two-hour spring training road trips.

Bregman surprisingly not only signed up to be on the bus to the Red Sox spring training game in Sarasota,

Fla. against the Orioles, but he was the first person on the bus.

“It has been great getting to know all these guys,” Bregman said on ESPN. “Kristian and Celo and Roman, we all went out to eat. We talked baseball for a long time. They asked great questions. They're mature beyond their years. I feel like all three of them can help us win baseball games this year.”

Bregman's influence is, well, huge.

The veterans have also noticed and welcomed his input.

“He's amazing, the

experiences he's had. We were talking about at-bats and what he's thinking,” said another new Red Sox acquisition as a possible closer, Liam Hendriks. “I've learned just from talking to him. He's very intelligent and he's been through a lot.” Most importantly, Bregman's resume fits the bill, too.

They needed someone that's been in the trenches, been to All-Star games, been to and won a World Series, and isn't afraid to talk about it.

While his “numbers” slipped a bit from his peak years in 2018 and 2019

— with an average of .291, 36 HRs and 108 RBI — he has averaged 154 games over his last three seasons.

Which means he's there. Almost every day.

“He's a dog,” said Red Sox reliever Greg Weissert. “He's been an incredible addition. It's definitely different with the team before (Bregman was signed), with all of the new guys. But Bregman is special. He's got so much experience and information.”

This is a new role for Bregman. He was a cog in an efficient baseball machine in Houston, with elite and outspoken talent all around him.

“We just want him to be himself,” said Cora. “Everyone knows what he brings ... which is a lot. He's very similar to Dustin (Pedroia), the baseball rat that he is.

“The thing that caught my eye, in 2017 (with Astros), was I thought I was a baseball rat. And he was above me.”

Bregman, of course, has to deliver on the field for the clubhouse stuff to work and he has produced since his first spring training game, hovering .400 with a few homers and OPS well over the All-Star like 1.000.

As of now, this \$40 million investment may be a bargain.

“Playing in a city that not only loves to win, but expects to win,” said Bregman on his first day with the organization. “I like playing in those pressure-packed environments.”

The Bregman “vibe” isn't going to matter come April. But one free agent signing, late in the game, has literally changed this season inside the clubhouse and, as importantly, in the six state region that supports it.

You can email Bill Burt at bburt@northofboston.com.

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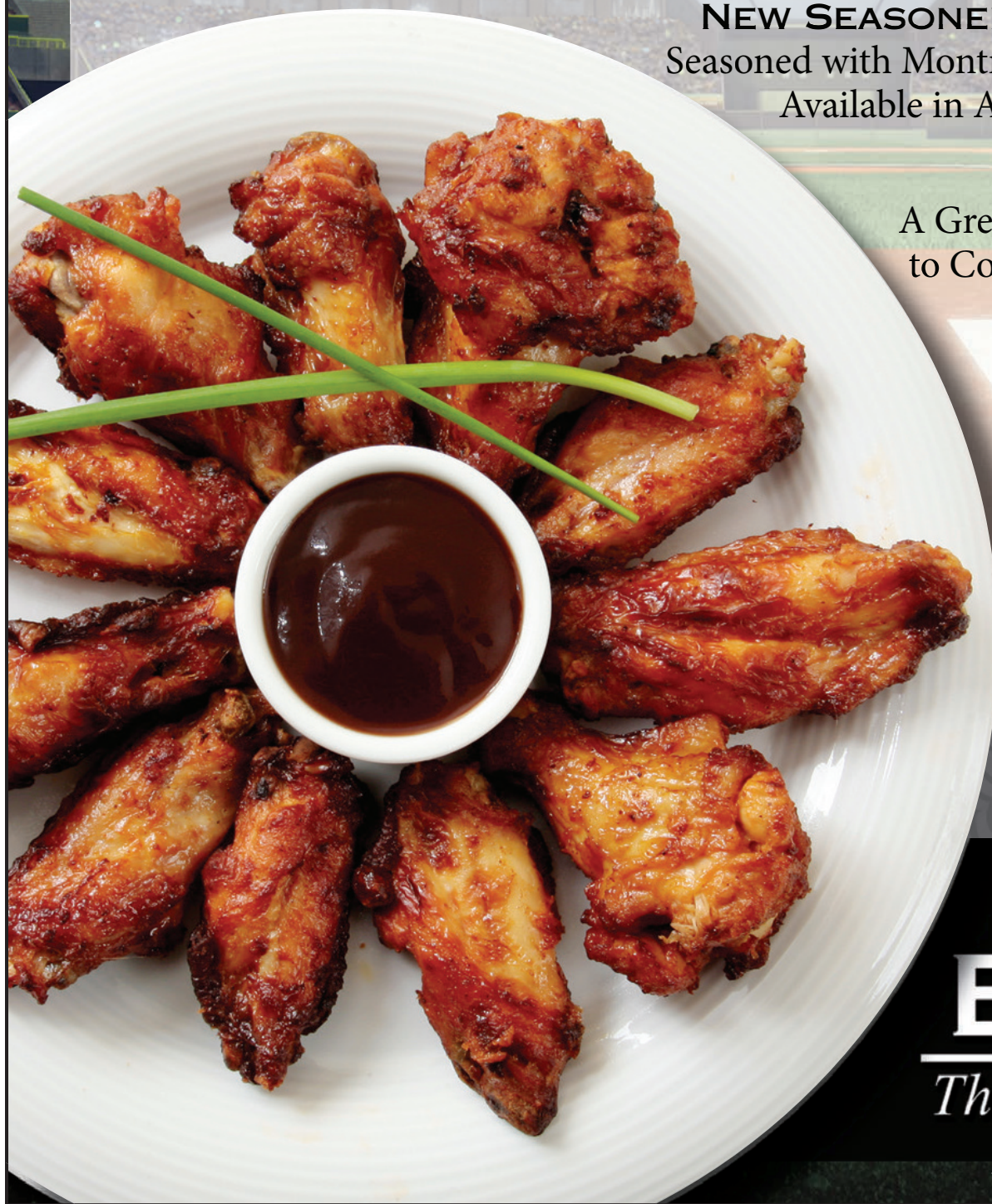
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Continued from Page S3

An September swoon won't happen if these two are popping.

3. Cora's experience

The Red Sox manager has been on a wild ride as manager here, winning it all in Year 1, then followed by some disappointing seasons and franchise mentality of building for the future. Cora's ability to deal with a clubhouse and his players, on a one-to-one basis, is among his best qualities.

4. Buehler's feisty spirit

Walker Buehler was on the mound for last inning and the last out of the last World Series when the Dodgers KO'd the Yankees last October. In fact, he didn't allow a run over his last 10 innings. While he is quiet off the mound, he borders on cocky on it.

Basically, he wants the ball and he wants to embarrass the hitter. The Red Sox haven't had that guy, well, for years. If healthy, he adds an ingredient the rest of the staff needs to see. As for his experience, which includes 18 postseason starts, only four that weren't elite, he will be a factor in the early fall when games matter most.

5. Story can just play

Trevor Story needs to catch a break and shy away from the horrific injuries that have hit him as the Red Sox shortstop. With the addition of Bregman and the best lineup since 2018, Story doesn't have to be an all-star here to prove his worth. He just needs to be good. The shoulder injury might have dropped his "ceiling," but his ability to affect the game in every area, including on the bases, is a quiet key for 2025.

6. Devers can just hit

It's a rite of spring the last



BY MICHAEL DWYER, AP PHOTO

With the addition of Alex Bregman, Trevor Story doesn't have to be an all-star here to prove his worth. He just needs to be good.

four or five years ... Rafael Devers' defense. He's a 20-error guy at third base if he plays 150 games. That's twice as many, on average, that Bregman usually has. The fact that Devers won't have to answer the "defense" question and allowing him to focus on his MVP-ish bat "could" be a game-changer. We are waiting for the 40

homer/doubles-machine guy to make that a consistent part of his repertoire. This might help. Really.

7. Duran's status grows

With the newbies getting a lot of focus, deservedly so, Jarren Duran may be the best player on the team. And we may get to understand that more with better

pieces around him. The All-Star game MVP last July is not only durable but he is improving. He may indeed have a 30-homer, 40 stolen base season in him with the protection, top to bottom. He may be a superstar. And we may see it real soon.

8. Defense improves

Among the sleeper improvements for 2025 is defense. It matters. Too many games were lost in 2024 because of blunders in the field. With Bregman at third base and Story at shortstop, healthy, the Red Sox are exponentially better on that side. It's a little thing, but knock 30 errors from the previous year and you win five more games. Yes, five!

9. Depth at elite level

This isn't to say the Red Sox are ready to handle big losses, but they are in position, because of their roster depth and young talent, to survive the standard fare injury or two. They have

a potentially elite defensive outfield with Duran, Cedanne Rafaela and Willyer Abreu. Rob Refsnyder gives the Sox a top shelf utility outfielder, too. Remember, Marcelo Mayer, Roman Anthony and Kristian Campbell are close, maybe very close to adding value at the major league level.

10. Fenway will be loud again

Don't discount the noise. And by noise I'm talking from the fans at Fenway Park. It has been a long time since the old barn has been a consistent sell-out like it should be this spring and summer. The Red Sox management, though a little late, did their job. They have put out a roster worthy of support. It might take a little time for the jelling to begin, with so many key newbies, but it will happen I believe. And the Fenway Faithful will let them know it, good or bad.

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Breslow came through in clutch

Bill Burt

This in akin to Bill Belichick against the Seattle Seahawks and “The Malcolm Butler Game.”

While a few important Patriots coaches were, politely, reminding the then-head coach he might want to call a timeout, Belichick, alone, stood silently looking at the commotion on the Seahawks sideline.

Instead, he let the clock run. And run. And run.

The Seahawks, trying to out-think Belichick – nice try – threw a pass instead of run the obvious option of a Marshawn Lynch rush.

The rest is history.

Fast-forward to Wednesday and Red Sox president of Baseball Operations Craig Breslow.

His team needed, desperately, a proven, veteran right-handed bat. The best available, albeit expensive, was free agent Alex Bregman.

The clock was ticking with pitchers and catchers already starting up in sunny Fort Myers.

Instead of coaches respectfully informing Breslow of the time issue, New Englanders – Red Sox fans and media – weren’t so quiet or respectful.

As Bregman’s status remained in limbo, with the Cubs and Tigers as possible suitors, the overwhelming cry was “What the hell is he waiting for?”

It was a gamble because the drop-off from Bregman as a middle-of-the-lineup guy was steep. Cardinal Nolan Arenado, on the 15th hole of his illustrious career, was pretty good. The rest were fill-in guys, a year at best.

The Red Sox weren’t going six years for Bregman. And they weren’t going four years. I get it: They have too many hot prospects to wait that long.

And they got him.



CHARLES KRUPA — AP

In addition to marquee signing Alex Bregman, Red Sox chief baseball officer Craig Breslow beefed up the pitching staff and made the team a potentially strong contender in 2025.

The price – \$40 million per year – sounds steep. But that’s the going over-pay rate these days.

But the Red Sox got “the” missing piece.

Grading Breslow’s work this offseason now changes. In terms of high-end needs he got his ace, Garrett Crochet, another starter Walker Buehler and Bregman.

All affordable, relatively speaking, in terms of the Grade A prospects, only catcher Kyle Teel, was sacrificed, and Bregman’s big yearly salary.

Instead of Wild Card berths the Red Sox have enough to chase the New York Yankees.

The lineup is elite. The defense is good. The starting staff is good, maybe very good. And the bullpen, with Garrett Whitlock not needed to start, is the best



Alex Bregman, second left, poses with, left to right, with agent Scott Boras, Craig Breslow, chief baseball officer for the Boston Red Sox, manager Alex Cora and president and CEO Sam Kennedy, as he is introduced after signing a three year contract with the Red Sox in Fort Myers, Fla., in February.

it’s been since the 2018 run.

The Red Sox have decisions, because of their newfound depth, in the outfield, third base (Bregman or Rafael Devers), designated

hitter and, most impressive, an ideal mix of veterans and youth.

The irony was that Breslow, who said it himself, appeared to be more

the Ivy League nerd behind the big desk in the Fenway Park offices – Chaim Bloom 2.0 – than the hungry and demanding leader of champions.

2025 Red Sox probable opening day lineup

1. Jarren Duran, LF
2. Rafael Devers, DH
3. Alex Bregman, 3B
4. Triston Casas, 1B
5. Trevor Story, SS
6. Willyer Abreu, RF
7. Connor Wong, C
8. Kristian Campbell, 2B
9. Cedanne Rafaela, CF

Breslow, as a reliever, was just that, the ultimate competitor on the 2013 Red Sox.

The three big acquisitions – Crochet, Buehler and Bregman – have something in common. They are dogs, which in baseball is the ultimate attribute.

Buehler and Bregman have competed for championships for most of their careers. Crochet is still a rookie in that sense, but the tell-tale signs, the way he competes with batters, point in a very positive direction.

Forget about the last three disappointing seasons during crunch time in August and September, this was a long offseason.

It took every month, week and day, really down the final minutes, before it met its goal.

Was there luck involved, the fact nobody else jumped in? Sure. Hell, Belichick guessed right, luckily, too.

On paper, the Red Sox are officially competitors for a championship.

There may be some “extra credit” work ahead, as in late July, to fill a hole or two. If the Red Sox are sniffing first place in the A.L. East, the expectation would be that Breslow will finish the job.

Anyway, the discussion for another day. As for now, as April beckons, take a bow, President Breslow. You’ve earned it.

You can email Bill Burt at bburt@eagletribune.com.

Biggest concern in 2025? Health of pitching staff

Depth-laden bullpen, 6-man rotation are options Bill Burt

The newest, updated Boston Red Sox pitching staff has credentials. Galore. World Series rings. Fastballs touching 100 miles per hour. All-Star game appearances. And, best of all, high-end talent.

They also have another common bond: Tommy John surgeries.

Starters in the mix in 2025, Garrett Crochet, Walker Buehler (two surgeries), Lucas Giolito, Brayan Bello, Patrick Sandoval and Kutter Crawford all have come under the knife to repair their ulnar collateral ligament (UCL).

Those in the bullpen “mix” have their share too, with Garrett Whitlock, Liam Hendriks, Justin Wilson and Chris Murphy all missing more than year of their careers due to the famed surgery.

What does that all mean?

The Red Sox will be careful when it comes to monitoring most of these well-oiled arms (really elbows) when it comes to amount of pitches thrown, amount of innings pitched and, maybe most of all, rest.

Red Sox manager Alex Cora has his work cut out for him, beyond the everyday lineup, which is as good as he has had, even better than 2018.

A year ago, Red Sox starters had one complete game, thrown by Tanner Houck back on April 17, 2024, a 2-0 win over the Cleveland Guardians.

It was an anomaly. The 2024 Red Sox ace only got to the seven innings four times the entire season.

Back to the original question and what this means going forward, well, the Red Sox bullpen had better be good, maybe even very good, to survive the five-inning starts.

It has the makings of being good/very good. There will be a pretty good pitcher or two left off the Opening Day roster.

A few relievers have already made some noise this spring, including Greg Weissert (acquired from Yankees in Alex Verdugo trade), Bernardino, Whitlock and free agent Aroldis Chapman, who is making a bid at the closer position.

But again, Hendriks, Wilson and Murphy will, because of their Tommy John surgery history, have to be managed, probably shying away from back-to-back outings.

Another possible/probable move by the Red Sox would be to protect all of their arms by going to a six-man rotation.

The defending champion L.A. Dodgers have intimated that they will probably go the six-man route, particularly with Shohei



Red Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito throws during spring training baseball practice in mid-February.

GERALD HERBERT — AP

Facts about Tommy John surgery

- ▶ Tommy John surgery, more formally known as ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) reconstruction, is used to repair a torn ulnar collateral ligament inside the elbow.
- ▶ A UCL is a ligament on the inner side of your elbow that helps secure your elbow joint.
- ▶ Some people, typically athletes who play throwing sports, may experience UCL tears that may need surgical repair.
- ▶ A UCL reconstruction surgery involves harvesting a tendon from your own body, or from a donor, and attaching it to act as a new UCL.
- ▶ It may take overhead athletes more than a year or longer to return to their prior level of play after a UCL reconstruction.
- ▶ Tommy John didn't invent this procedure—he was a baseball pitcher who was the first to undergo it and successfully return to his sport.

Source: Hopkins Medicine Org.

Ohtani's elbow surgery in 2023 (they said it was not Tommy John surgery).

While he was able to hit without both-ering his “throwing elbow,” he missed the



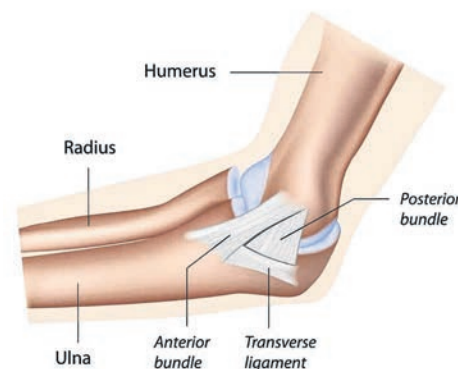
STEVEN SENNE

Kutter Crawford is in the club of Red Sox pitchers who have had Tommy John surgery.

entire 2024 season as a pitcher, which at times is equal to his amazing offensive output.

The Red Sox have the pieces, on paper, to compete not only for an A.L. Division title but possibly a World Series.

Ulnar Collateral Ligament



The surgery, rehab

Tommy John surgery is the reconstruction or repair of the ulnar collateral ligament. It is most commonly performed in high level baseball players, particularly pitchers.

The ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) has three components — the anterior bundle, posterior bundle and transverse ligaments. The anterior ligament is the strongest and most significant stabilizer to valgus stress. Valgus stress is the stress that occurs when a thrower is cocking back to throw the ball.

Symptoms of a UCL tear may include a pop with medial (inner side elbow) pain, loss of velocity, loss of control and accuracy and occasionally numbness and tingling into small and ring fingers.

There are several tear patterns possible on imaging such as an mri. One example is shown here. Fluid was injected into the elbow to evaluate if the ligament has torn off the bone. In the second image, we see the T sign, in which fluid is seen passing down past where the ligament should be attached, but has torn off the bone.

Treatment options for UCL tear include rest and physical therapy which is the first line treatment in many cases, particularly partial tears. Surgical options include UCL repair with augmentation techniques, or the current gold standard Tommy John reconstruction (UCL reconstruction).

Source: Dr. Nima Mehran

The Alex Bregman signing in February and trade for Crochet has changed everything, particular perception.

But the history of injuries to Red Sox arms, including some of their best, is going be the final decision-maker when it comes to a run in September and October.

Cora isn't just managing a team, he's also managing health.



PAUL BILODEAU/Staff photo
Rafael Devers is entering the second year of a contract that will keep him with the Red Sox through 2033.

Red Sox 2025 contracts

Players with guaranteed salaries

Player	Age	Service Time	Contract
Alex Bregman	31	8.07	3 yr, \$120M (2025-27) can opt out after 2025 or 2026 ; deferrals lower AAV
Rafael Devers	28.4	7.07	10 yr, \$313.5M (2024-33)
Trevor Story	32.3	9	6 yr, \$140M (2022-27), 2028 club option; opt out after 2025 that club can void by exercising 2028 option
Walker Buehler	30.6	6.168	1 yr, \$21.05M (2025), 2026 mutual option
Lucas Giolito	30.7	7.08	2 yr, \$38.5M (2024-25), 2026 mutual option \$14M club option if under 140 IP in 2025
Masataka Yoshida	31.7	2	5 yr, \$90M (2023-27)
Aroldis Chapman	37	14.009	1 yr, \$10.75M (2025)
Brayan Bello	25.8	2.082	6 yr, \$55M (2024-29), 2030 club option
Patrick Sandoval	28.4	4.149	2 yr, \$18.25M (2025-26)
Ceddanne Rafaela	24.5	1.035	8 yr, \$50M (2024-31), 2032 club option
Liam Hendriks	36.1	10.164	2 yr, \$10M (2024-25), 2026 mutual option
Garrett Whitlock	28.8	4	4 yr, \$18.75M (2023-26), 2027-28 club options
Jarren Duran	28.5	2.155	1 yr, \$3.85M (2025), 2026 club option
Justin Wilson	37.6	12.035	1 yr, \$2.25M (2025)
Rob Refsnyder	34	6.048	2 yr, \$3.95M (2024-25)

Players Eligible For Arbitration

Player	Age	Service Time	Contract
Garrett Crochet	25.7	4.028	1 yr, \$3.8M (2025)
Tanner Houck	28.7	3.1	1 yr, \$3.95M (2025)
Kutter Crawford	29	2.136	1 yr, \$2.75M (2025)

Notable Players Not Yet Eligible For Arbitration

Player	Age	Service Time	Contract
Connor Wong	28.8	2.079	1 yr, \$790K (2025)
Triston Casas	25.2	2.032	1 yr, \$774K (2025)
Zack Kelly	30	2.017	1 yr, TBD (2025)
Cooper Criswell	28.6	1.117	1 yr, \$1M (2025)
Wilyer Abreu	25.7	1.041	1 yr, \$780K (2025)
David Hamilton	27.5	1.02	1 yr, \$780K (2025)
Justin Slaten	27.5	1	1 yr, \$776K (2025)
Brennan Bernardino	33.2	1.153	1 yr, TBD (2025)
Greg Weissert	30.1	1.079	1 yr, TBD (2025)



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THE FUTURE IS GETTING CLOSER

Campbell is in, Mayer and Anthony have to wait a bit

By Bill Burt

» bburt@eagletribune.com

In another year, really with another franchise, two or three of the Red Sox top prospects — Marcelo Mayer (SS), Kristian Campbell (2B) and Roman Anthony (OF) — would probably be making their major league debuts as opening day beckons.

But the 2025 Red Sox are in a different place than more than half of the MLB franchises.

They not only need to win now, as in today, but they have enough talent to let the process play out a little bit.

But it should be known, this trio, all have the makings of All-Star-caliber futures according to those in the know.

Anthony is the second ranked prospect by Baseball America. Campbell is ranked third. And Mayer, probably the most talked about prospect the last five years, is at No. 14.

All have shown signs of greatness this spring, but that is not enough, not with the Red Sox as they stand today.

The Red Sox did announce that Campbell has won the job at as starting second baseman, probably batting him eighth, a safe haven for a rookie.

As for when we will see them all, together, we may have to wait, a bit.

"I think it's fair to say it. There's still development, but at the same time you see it," said Red Sox manager Alex Cora, recently to a group of reporters, including MLB.com's Ian Browne.

"But that at-bat (recently) by Roman against the lefty, that was a mature bat, and we've seen that through camp," said Cora. "He played some good outfield in Jupiter. He moved well. Marcelo's doing the same thing. Campbell has struggled. That's part of it, right? Like, not everybody is going to be able to slow it down in camp and be perfect, but that's part of the progression."

There is nothing fake about their



COURTESY BOSTON RED SOX

The top Red Sox prospects Marcelo Mayer, Kristian Campbell and Roman Anthony, shown here against the Florida sky, have been together for nearly two years.

friendship. They have been seemingly together all of the time, especially off the field.

"Those are my boys," said Mayer. "It makes being around clubhouse that much more comfortable having those guys with me."

Campbell said there is a lot of joking between them, but most of all the positive vibes exuding when they are together.

"Both are super positive people," he said. "What you see on the field is what like off. Both very good teammates and very good people."

Anthony said while they appreciate their time together, there is a bigger goal individually and as a group.

"Put yourself in position to help this team, and win a job, as soon as possible," said Anthony. "That's the goal for all of us."

The point is this trio is not coming to Boston, at this stage of their young careers, as platoon guys.

For now, the plan appears to be keep them together — they are together a lot! — and probably start the season in AAA Worcester.

Last summer, Campbell and Anthony were elevated from AA

Portland to Worcester with catcher Kyle Teel (included in trade for Garrett Crochet) while Mayer was injured.

Anthony killed it the last six weeks in Worcester, hitting .344 with two homers and 20 RBI. Campbell was nearly as impressive hitting .286 with four homers and 17 RBI in just 19 games.

Is that enough experience?

The first thought is "probably not," but they have looked and talked the part.

"Those three guys, that's all they do, they talk baseball," said Cora. "They were at dinner the other day, they asked about (Barry) Bonds, about (Roberto) Alomar, about what they have to do at camp. That's refreshing."

"We play in this environment where technology rules," said Cora. "And we get it. But at the end of the day, it's observation and conversation."

This spring training has been, by far, the most productive for the trio off the field, as well.

The Alex Bregman signing even touched this trio.

"He's the man," said Marcelo

of the Red Sox starting third baseman. "His first day here we were eating lunch, me, Roman and Campbell. We had just finished our day. And he took the time to sit with us for like an hour and a half, talking shop, just talking baseball."

Cora intimated recently that keeping the trio together might be the best option, though one injury in the outfield or a "hole" at second base could change things. But the bet is it will take some time, maybe a few weeks or a few months, before at last Anthony and Campbell make the MLB debuts.

The fact that each of the prospects, particularly Willyer Abreu in right field and Trevor Story at shortstop, have the positions more than covered, these young men need more successful professional at bats to prove their mettle on a team that is pretty set.

"Playing time is important," noted Cora. "The development of the player is important, but I think winning games right now is more important."

Let the clock begin.

MLB.com scouting reports on trio

Roman Anthony (OF)

His advanced swing decisions, quick stroke and growing strength allow him to make more consistent contact and generate higher exit velocities than most players his age. He pulled the ball with more authority than ever in 2024, though he won't fully tap into his plus-plus raw power until he lifts pitches more regularly. He could become a .300 hitter who provides 30 homers and ranks among the league leaders in walks on an annual basis.

Kristian Campbell (2B)

He looks like an entirely different hitter than he did in college, trading a bit of contact to do a lot more damage with a more aggressive right-handed stroke that allows him to hit balls harder and launch them in the air more frequently. He controls the strike zone, handling left-handers and right-handers equally well while driving the ball to all fields. There may be even more power to be had if he can continue to reduce his groundball rate, which was still higher than most last year at 43 percent (compared to 56 percent at Georgia Tech).

Marcelo Mayer (SS)

He has a fluid left-handed stroke and makes decent swing decisions, though he's been more aggressive at the plate and sought more power as he has gotten stronger. He stands out with his bat speed and exit velocities and has improved his ability to drive pitches to his pull side, though a propensity to make ground-ball contact may cap his power output at 20-25 homers per year. He still needs to make adjustments against non-fastballs (1.019 OPS against heaters in 2024, .690 vs. everything else) and same-side pitchers (.896 OPS against righties, .674 vs. lefties).

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Crochet, Sox have history on their side

By Ken Powtak

» Correspondent

The Boston Red Sox made a big bet on Dec. 13, 2024.

They traded for a very talented pitcher without a storied resume and gave away a few of their top prospects to do it.

While new Red Sox pitcher Garrett Crochet made the American League All-Star team last July, his final numbers with the Chicago White Sox — 6-12, 3.58 ERA and 146 innings pitched — weren't good enough for consideration for any end-of-season awards.

But his upside is, well, through the roof, particularly the 206 strikeouts.

If recent Red Sox history is an indication, the risk and reward appear to be in their favor in terms of longevity and October baseball.

Look back first to Nov. 18, 1997, when the Sox dealt two of their highest-rated prospects, right-handed pitchers Tony Armas and Carl Pavano, the latter considered one of the top prospects in the game, to Montreal for a 26-year-old right-hander named Pedro Martinez.

While Martinez was flashy, exciting, explosive and coming off a Cy Young Award season with the Expos, there were questions about doing it in the vaunted American League East division.

Well, those questions were answered immediately.

Martinez was exactly that dominant starter they really needed. At one point, he trumped Roger Clemens status as possibly the greatest Red Sox pitcher of all-time, snaring two more Cy Youngs in his second and third season here.

Best of all, he along with Curt Schilling, helped get the Red Sox their first World Series title in 86 seasons in 2004.

In November 2005 the



New Red Sox ace Garrett Crochet, acquired in a trade with the Chicago White Sox in December, throws a bullpen session on Thursday at jetBlue Park in Fort Myers, Fla.

Red Sox did it again in their search for an ace of aces. They sent more of their top prospects away, including shortstop prospect Hanley Ramirez and pitchers Anibal Sanchez and Jesus Delgado to Florida in a deal that brought back 25-year-old righty Josh Beckett.

The Red Sox also took veteran Mike Lowell, who was more of a salary dump in the Marlins' eyes.

Beckett, like Crochet, had some history of problems the season before.

While Beckett had championship pedigree, winning the World Series MVP following his complete game shutout over the Yankees in Game 6, clinching the title at age 23, two years later there were questions about his health.

In 2004, he had three different stints on the disabled list and despite one of his best seasons in 2005 — 15-8, 3.38 ERA, 179 IP — there were intermittent arm issues.

Beckett made three All-Star teams with the Red

Sox and, most importantly, was their big gun on the mound during the 2007 World Series run, snaring the ALCS MVP with two masterful wins over C.C. Sabathia.

Enter Crochet, like Beckett's first appearance with Red Sox, is only 25 years old.

A reliever for most of his pro career, he wanted to be a starter. The White Sox gave him his wish in 2024.

His success, despite some arm woes, opened his eyes and really the rest of baseball.

"I feel like I just have a better understanding of what I need to do," he said this week at the team's spring training complex. "Last year, I was still trying stuff out from college, trying to add it to my routine, it had been that long since I was in a starting role."

By Week 1, he was hitting 97 miles per hour on the radar gun throwing off the mound inside an empty jetBlue Park.

Through his first three

starts, all about two innings, he was his healthy, dominant self, striking out 14 batters without giving up a run.

Imagine what happens with 37,000 fans will be like at Fenway Park.

"There's a lot of good things happening right now," manager Alex Cora said of his staff, but mainly Crochet. "You see Garrett and you see the stuff. I was actually up in the stands. The velocity and the stuff plays."

While Crochet's numbers from 2024 don't look attractive, the fact he was on the worst team in the Major League Baseball probably had something to do with it.

Being his first full season as a starter, he apparently learned a lot.

"Now, having a full season under my belt, I feel like I have a great idea of what I need to do each day coming into the ballpark of the full expectation of things," he said.

The first order of business is adding another pitch to his tool bag.

"Really just fine-tuning things. I'm not really trying to overhaul anything," he said. "Last year, I was just kind of a one-pitch guy when I got to camp, just kind of figured out the cutter once spring training got going. I was spending essentially (this) whole offseason working on my sweeper and changeup since I added the cutter."

After being limited to just 146 innings last season he felt kind of cheated when his starts were mostly limited to four innings after the All-Star break.

"Then to kind of have the rug pulled out from under me was tough," he admitted. Now, he wants to put up the innings and numbers to be an elite starter.

"It's exciting," he said. "Obviously, I want to be a guy that throws 200 innings, everybody wants to but to be that guy."

And he might just be willing to roll the dice on himself instead of signing an extension for security, which could be a challenge

for the team.

But that comes down the road. Right now, he'll be a free agent after 2026.

"There's always pros and cons to everything. The long-term security thing is obviously very attractive. As player we like to look out for our family first, but with last year being my first taste of starting I'd like to see what I can do with a full season's workload."

Crochet, like Beckett, comes at a time when Boston needs an ace, the guy you can depend on in a Game 1 or Game 7 in October.

Dealing top prospects, particularly catcher Kyle Teel, expected to a sure thing over the next decade, is certainly risky business.

Based on the rewards and past history in pursuing potential staff aces, it's a gamble the Red Sox needed to take.

(Ken Powtak is a freelance sportswriter for Associated Press and various other national outlets.)

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Red Sox 2024 offense statistics

Name	Age	G	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	SB	CS	BB	SO	BA	OBP	SLG	OPS	GDP	HBP
Jarren Duran	27	160	671	111	191	48	14	21	75	34	7	54	160	0.285	0.342	0.492	0.834	6	6
Rob Refsnyder	33	93	272	32	77	16	1	11	40	2	2	28	78	0.283	0.359	0.471	0.83	6	5
Masataka Yoshida	30	108	378	45	106	21	0	10	56	2	0	27	52	0.28	0.349	0.415	0.765	6	14
Connor Wong	28	126	447	54	125	24	1	13	52	8	7	28	114	0.28	0.333	0.425	0.758	7	9
Nick Sogard	26	31	77	13	21	4	0	0	8	3	0	7	25	0.273	0.326	0.325	0.65	4	0
Rafael Devers	27	138	525	87	143	34	5	28	83	3	0	67	147	0.272	0.354	0.516	0.871	13	3
Romy González	27	89	199	25	53	10	1	6	29	11	3	12	58	0.266	0.306	0.417	0.723	5	1
Trevor Story	31	26	94	8	24	7	0	2	10	6	3	11	33	0.255	0.34	0.394	0.733	2	1
Wilyer Abreu	25	132	399	59	101	33	2	15	58	8	3	40	125	0.253	0.322	0.459	0.781	7	3
David Hamilton	26	98	294	47	73	17	1	8	28	33	4	22	80	0.248	0.303	0.395	0.697	1	1
Ceddanne Rafaela	23	152	544	70	134	23	5	15	75	19	10	15	151	0.246	0.274	0.39	0.664	8	7
Tyler O'Neill	29	113	411	74	99	18	0	31	61	4	0	53	159	0.241	0.336	0.511	0.847	13	7
Triston Casas	24	63	212	28	51	8	0	13	32	0	1	30	77	0.241	0.337	0.462	0.8	6	1
Dominic Smith	29	84	249	29	59	20	0	6	34	1	1	25	65	0.237	0.317	0.39	0.706	7	4
Enmanuel Valdéz	25	76	201	23	43	12	0	6	28	1	1	17	53	0.214	0.27	0.363	0.633	4	0
Reese McGuire	29	53	139	10	29	3	0	3	18	3	0	13	39	0.209	0.28	0.295	0.575	4	2
Vaughn Grissom	23	31	105	10	20	3	0	0	6	2	0	7	24	0.19	0.246	0.219	0.465	3	1
Danny Jansen	29	30	80	8	15	0	0	3	6	0	0	15	19	0.188	0.323	0.3	0.623	3	1
Pablo Reyes	30	21	60	4	11	2	0	0	5	1	2	3	19	0.183	0.234	0.217	0.451	1	1
Garrett Cooper	33	24	70	3	12	4	0	0	5	0	0	3	22	0.171	0.227	0.229	0.455	2	2
Jamie Westbrook	29	21	40	4	6	2	0	2	7	0	0	4	14	0.15	0.234	0.35	0.584	0	1
Bobby Dalbec	29	37	83	6	11	2	0	1	8	3	0	8	43	0.133	0.217	0.193	0.41	1	1
Mickey Gasper#	28	13	18	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	0	0.217	0	0.217	1	1
Zack Short	29	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tyler Heineman#	33	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.333	0	0.333	0	1



Red Sox 2024 pitching statistics

Player	Age	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	HR	BB	SO	HBP	WP	WHIP
Kutter Crawford	28	9	16	4.36	33	33	0	0	0	183.2	155	97	89	34	51	175	9	4	1.122
Tanner Houck	28	9	10	3.12	30	30	1	1	0	178.2	156	75	62	11	48	154	16	2	1.142
Brayan Bello	25	14	8	4.49	30	30	0	0	0	162.1	157	84	81	19	64	153	11	6	1.361
Nick Pivetta	31	6	12	4.14	27	26	0	0	0	145.2	128	70	67	28	36	172	1	4	1.126
Cooper Criswell	27	6	5	4.08	26	18	0	0	0	99.1	103	52	45	10	31	73	7	2	1.349
Kenley Jansen	36	4	2	3.29	54	0	0	0	27	54.2	38	20	20	4	20	62	1	2	1.061
Greg Weissert	29	4	2	3.13	62	0	0	0	1	63.1	65	32	22	7	20	58	0	2	1.342
Zack Kelly	29	6	3	3.97	49	3	0	0	0	56.2	44	31	25	10	27	61	2	2	1.253
Brennan Bernardino	32	4	3	4.06	57	3	0	0	0	51	50	25	23	6	22	56	6	7	1.412
Chris Martin	38	3	1	3.45	45	0	0	0	2	44.1	47	22	17	5	3	50	3	2	1.128
Josh Winckowski	26	4	2	4.14	40	6	0	0	2	76	81	44	35	10	26	60	4	1	1.408
Justin Slaten	26	6	2	2.93	44	0	0	0	2	55.1	47	21	18	4	9	58	2	4	1.012
Chase Anderson	36	0	2	4.85	27	1	0	0	3	52	46	34	28	10	19	35	3	2	1.25
Cam Booser	32	2	3	3.38	43	0	0	0	1	42.2	41	17	16	5	16	43	0	0	1.336
Brad Keller	28	0	2	5.84	11	0	0	0	1	24.2	31	18	16	4	9	19	2	1	1.622
Richard Fitts	24	0	1	1.74	4	4	0	0	0	20.2	19	6	4	0	7	9	0	1	1.258
Garrett Whitlock	28	1	0	1.96	4	4	0	0	0	18.1	14	4	4	1	7	17	1	0	1.145
Bailey Horn	26	1	1	6.5	18	0	0	0	0	18	22	14	13	5	10	13	0	0	1.778
Luis García	37	0	0	8.22	15	0	0	0	0	15.1	24	15	14	4	1	13	0	0	1.63
Lucas Sims	30	0	2	6.43	15	0	0	0	0	14	11	10	10	2	10	9	1	1	1.5
Joely Rodríguez	32	0	1	5.93	14	0	0	0	0	13.2	19	13	9	3	2	12	1	1	1.537
James Paxton	35	1	1	4.09	3	3	0	0	0	11	13	8	5	1	2	9	0	0	1.364
Luis Guerrero	23	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	10	6	1	0	0	2	9	0	0	0.8
Chase Shugart	27	0	0	4.15	6	0	0	0	1	8.2	8	4	4	1	3	8	0	0	1.269
Isaiah Campbell	26	0	1	16.2	8	0	0	0	0	6.2	14	13	12	3	2	6	0	1	2.4
Quinn Priester	23	1	0	1.8	1	1	0	0	0	5	4	1	1	0	1	2	1	0	1
Zach Penrod	27	0	0	2.25	7	0	0	0	0	4	3	2	1	0	4	3	1	1	1.75
Naoyuki Uwasawa	30	0	0	2.25	2	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	1	0	2	3	0	0	1
Rich Hill	44	0	1	4.91	4	0	0	0	0	3.2	1	2	2	1	3	5	1	0	1.091
Dominic Smith	29	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Trey Wingenter	30	0	0	27	2	0	0	0	0	2.1	5	7	7	1	2	3	0	1	3
Joe Jacques	29	0	0	5.4	1	0	0	0	0	1.2	3	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	1.8
Yohan Ramírez	29	0	0	13.5	1	0	0	0	0	1.1	3	3	2	0	0	1	2	1	2.25
Pablo Reyes	30	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2



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2025 Boston Red Sox Schedule

March/April

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				TEX 4:05	TEX 8:05	TEX 7:05
TEX 2:35	BAL 3:05		BAL 6:35	BAL 1:05	STL 2:10	STL 4:10
STL 7:10	TOR 6:45	TOR 6:45	TOR 6:45	TOR 4:10	CWS 7:40	CWS 4:10
CWS 2:10	TB 7:05	TB 7:05	TB 7:05		CWS 7:10	CWS 4:10
CWS 1:35	CWS 11:10 AM	SEA 6:45	SEA 6:45	SEA 1:35	CLE 7:10	CLE 6:10
CLE 1:40		TOR 7:07	TOR 7:07			

June

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
ATL 1:35	LAA 7:10	LAA 7:10	LAA 1:35		NYY 7:05	NYY 7:35
NYY 1:35	TB 7:10	TB 7:10	TB 7:10		NYY 7:10	NYY 7:15
NYY 1:35	SEA 9:40	SEA 9:40	SEA 4:10		SF 10:15	SF 4:05
SF 4:05	LAA 9:38	LAA 9:38	LAA 4:07		TOR 7:10	TOR 4:10
TOR 1:35	CIN 7:10					

August

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					HOU 7:10	HOU 4:10
HOU 11:35 AM	KC 7:10	KC 7:10	KC 7:10		SD 9:40	SD 8:40
SD 4:10	HOU 8:10	HOU 8:10	HOU 7:10		MIA 7:10	MIA 4:10
MIA 1:35	BAL 7:10	BAL 7:10		NYY 7:15	NYY 7:05	NYY 1:05
NYY 1:35	BAL 6:35	BAL 6:35	BAL 6:35	BAL 1:05	PIT 7:10	PIT 4:10
PIT 1:35						

May

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				TOR 7:07	MIN 7:10	MIN 4:10
MIN 1:35		TEX 6:45	TEX 6:45	TEX 1:35	KC 7:40	KC 7:10
KC 2:10	DET 6:40	DET 6:40	DET 6:40		ATL 7:10	ATL 7:15
ATL 1:35	NYM 6:45	NYM 6:45	NYM 6:45	BAL 6:45	BAL 7:10	BAL 4:10
BAL 1:35	MIL 2:10	MIL 7:40	MIL 1:10		ATL 7:15	ATL 4:10

July

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		CIN 7:10	CIN 7:10		WSH 11:05 AM	WSH 4:05
WSH 1:35	COL 7:10	COL 7:10	COL 7:10	TB 7:10	TB 7:10	TB 4:10
TB 1:35	★ ALL-STAR BREAK ★				CHC 2:20	CHC 7:15
CHC 2:20	PHI 6:45	PHI 6:45	PHI 7:05		LAD 7:10	LAD 7:15
LAD 1:35	MIN 7:40	MIN 7:40	MIN 1:10			

September

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	CLE 1:35	CLE 6:45	CLE 6:45		AZ 9:40	AZ 8:10
AZ 4:10	ATH 10:05	ATH 10:05	ATH 3:35		NYY 7:10	NYY 4:10
NYY 1:35		ATH 6:45	ATH 6:45	ATH 1:35	TB 7:35	TB 7:05
TB 12:10		TOR 7:07	TOR 7:07	TOR 7:07	DET 7:10	DET 4:10
DET 3:05						

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Culture

- | | |
|-----------|--|
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| June 14 | "A Chorus Line": One Singular Sensation in Manchester |
| August 13 | "Hairspray": Welcome to the 60s! See a Musical by the Sea |

Cuisine

- | | |
|------------|---|
| April 29 | Pickity Place: A New Hampshire Culinary Destination |
| July 24 | Isles of Shoals: The Shores of New Hampshire & a Clambake |
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Bill Burt's MLB postseason predictions



CHRIS O'MEARA — AP
New York Yankees' Gerrit Cole is lost for the season due to Tommy John surgery and Bill Burt believes the Yankees short reign on the American League ends because of it.

A.L. East
► **Boston Red Sox (93-69)** ... Cole injury opens door
► **New York Yankees (92-70)** ... Still very good, but questions
► **Baltimore Orioles (86-76)** ... Quiet off-season means third place
► **Toronto Blue Jays (83-81)** ... About time they make run
► **Tampa Bay Rays (82-80)** ... Will have winning record

A.L. Playoffs
Play-in
► Orioles beat Tigers
► Yankees beat Rangers
Divisional
► Guardians beat Orioles
► Red Sox beat Yankees

ALCS
► Guardians beat Red Sox

National League
Play in
► Mets beat Braves
► Brewers beat Diamondbacks
Divisional
► Phillies beat Brewers
► Mets beat Dodgers

NLCS
► Phillies beat Mets

World Series
► Phillies beat Guardians

Burt on World Series:
"The Philadelphia Phillies have underperformed in October. And that will change in 2025. The Phillies,

like about three to four other teams in National League, are built for the long haul. Top hitter Bryce Harper and ace Zach Wheeler will headline a Phillies team hungrier than most. In the A.L., the Guardians are the best of a very good group, but not elite group. The Red Sox will be around in October, I truly believe that, with health of pitching staff the biggest issue. But the Guardians are on course, with the Yankees without a true ace, to finally return to the World Series. The only issue is the Phillies are better, top to bottom, and they and their fans have more at stake because of the so-so Octobers of the past."



Bryce Harper gives the Phillies a great chance at finally getting to and winning a World Series.



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2**



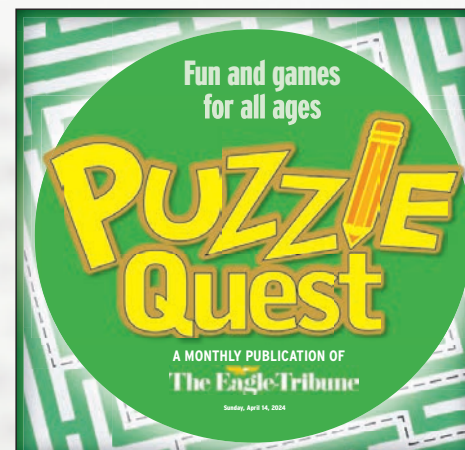
Spring Home and Garden

**April
3**



Puzzle Book

**April
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