

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

A's beat Texas in 13 innings

ARLINGTON (AP) — Mike Piazza helped put an end to a wild game that included a huge comeback, ejections and a whole lot of strikeouts.

Piazza singled in the go-ahead run in the 13th inning and seven Oakland pitchers combined for 21 strikeouts in a 9-7 victory over the Texas Rangers on Monday night.

Marco Scutaro hit a grand slam to help Oakland build a 7-0 lead but the Rangers tied it in the ninth on Michael Young's solo homer off Alan Embree.

Young and Texas manager Ron Washington were ejected two innings later for arguing a called third strike.

The 4-hour, 33-minute contest finally ended when Kiko Calero struck out Marlon Byrd.

"In this ballpark we have a history of games just like this," Oakland manager Bob Geren said. "These high-scoring games, you can never get a big enough lead, and this was another one."

Rob Bowen led off the 13th with a walk and Travis Buck sacrificed. Willie Eyre (3-5), who started two days ago against Toronto, got Shannon Stewart to foul out before intentionally walking Nick Swisher.

Piazza, who is the subject of trade rumors after clearing waivers, then lined a single to right. It was Oakland's first hit since the fifth inning.

"I think I've cleared waivers before," said Piazza, who can now be traded to any team. "It's not the first time. That stuff is out of my control. I just want to show up at the field and just get quality work in."

Mark Ellis drove in another run in the 13th with an infield single on a close play at first.

A fan threw a plastic water bottle in the direction of first after Ellis was called safe. Oakland first base coach Tye Waller immediately pointed toward the fan, who was ejected.

Andrew Brown (2-0) struck out five in two innings. Calero pitched the 13th to earn his first save in four chances, striking out Byrd with runners on the corners to end it.

Byrd struck out twice, part of the Rangers' club-record total. Ramon Vazquez fanned four times and three players had three strikeouts.

Jarrod Saltalamacchia went 1-for-6 with three Ks in his first home game with Texas since he was acquired last week from Atlanta.

The last time a team struck out 20 times was the Milwaukee Brewers, who struck out 22 times against the Florida Marlins on July 6, 2005.

Young hit his fifth homer of the season and first since May 6 — a span of 77 games and 317 at-bats. He went 3-for-4 and reached base five times before he and Washington were ejected.

Young was called out on strikes and tossed by plate umpire Bill Miller for arguing. Washington charged out of the dugout to defend Young and was quickly booted himself.

"I don't think he earned that strike," Washington said. "(Miller) gave me a lesson on the strike and I gave him my opinion. He then gave me the rest of the night off."



AP Photo

MEDIA DARLING — Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Terrell Owens (above, center) speaks with reporters. An MRI exam was conducted on Owens' back, and turned out to be negative, a good thing for the Cowboys, who need the controversial receiver on the field making plays.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE/ DALLAS COWBOYS TRAINING CAMP

T.O.'s back problems not deemed serious

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Terrell Owens' back pain is just spasms and isn't considered serious.

An MRI done Monday, when Owens missed the Dallas Cowboys' practice for the second straight day, showed no problems.

Dallas opens its preseason schedule at home Thursday against Indianapolis.

The Cowboys had the exam done because the 33-year-old receiver still had muscle stiffness a day after being treated by team trainers. T.O. got more treatment Monday and wasn't on the field for either of the team's two practice sessions.

Even before the test results came back, coach Wade Phillips didn't sound concerned. "We feel sure that he just has back spasms, but we don't want to take any chances," Phillips said after the first practice. "There's no alarm, but we wanted to make sure."

Receivers coach Ray Sherman said he didn't know if Owens would be at practice Tuesday, when the Cowboys will have their last full workout in the Alamodome. The

team will break camp after a short walk-through Wednesday.

Before missing Sunday, Owens had taken part in four straight workouts since being given time off by Phillips to rest his sore legs. Owens went through drills at full speed without any apparent problems during workouts, including two Saturday.

While the team practiced Sunday, Owens was with the trainers doing whirlpool therapy and work on a stationary bike.

"I thought he would be a little better today, because he did all the stuff our trainers wanted him to do," Phillips said. "But it wasn't better."

Still, Phillips hasn't ruled out the possibility of Owens playing in the preseason opener Thursday night against Indianapolis.

"No, he wants to play," Phillips said.

Owens missed about half of his first training camp with the Cowboys last year, including the first three preseason games, because of a hamstring problem. Owens' coach-ordered hiatus last week included sitting out both workouts Wednesday. That

was a day after he came on the field in uniform, minus shoulder pads or a helmet, after being told by Phillips to take it easy.

Notes: QB Tony Romo and the first-team offense are expected to play about a quarter Thursday. Phillips said he might use all four quarterbacks in the game. ... RB Julius Jones was in a feisty mood, slamming safety Pat Watkins to the ground at the end of a play late in the second practice. On his next play, Jones had words with Jacques Reeves and then threw the football toward the defender without hitting him. "It's part of football, everybody wants to be a bully," linebacker Kevin Burnett joked. Jones ran off the field without talking, but Watkins said everything was OK between them. ... The guest list at practice Monday included former coach Barry Switzer, former Minnesota Vikings owner and San Antonio resident Red McCombs and Lee Roy Jordan, a Cowboys linebacker from 1963-76 who is in the team's famed Ring of Honor. Phillips had Jordan address the team after the first practice.



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