Sports

Photo of the Day | Women's Soccer



UConn Women's Soccer battles the University of Vermont on Sept. 25, 2026 at Morrone Stadium. The game ended in a draw.
PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

YANKEES VS. RED SOX:
WHO WILL WIN THE AMERICAN LEAGUE WILD CARD SERIES?

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Red Sox

The Boston Red Sox are no strangers to postseason success. Some fans may remember former broadcaster Joe Castiglione's famous call, when the Red Sox defeated the St. Louis Cardinals in 2004. The iconic line, "Can you believe it?" still brings chills to any Boston sports fan.

With this win against the Cardinals, the Red Sox broke their 86-year losing streak that fans deemed "the curse of the bambino." Since then, the Red Sox have won four World Series Championships. Back in 2004, many fans doubted the Red Sox's abilities due to the curse and, after falling 3-0 in the ALCS series against the New York Yankees, it seemed like they would never win again. However, for the first time in MLB history, they came back and won.

Now, since 2004, the Red Sox have played the Yankees four times in the MLB postseason. On Tuesday and Wednesday, they will face them for a fifth time in the Wild Card round.

Both squads have faced their fair share of adversity this past season. Especially the Red Sox, who had a tough stretch to the beginning of the season, finding themselves still under .500 in late June. While the series is short, a best-of-three, the Red Sox will take it and advance to the American League Division Series.

While the Red Sox haven't necessarily found success in the batter's box this season, they have in their starting pitchers and bullpen, which will prove to be the Yankees' Achilles heel. Southpaw Payton Tolle is scheduled to start the game No.1 for the Red Sox on Tuesday, followed by Sonny Gray on Wednesday, and, if necessary, Ranger Suarez for game No. 3 on Thursday. In his rookie year, Tolle boasted an ERA of 3.03 and Gray and ERA 2.72. Relievers like Garret Whitlock and Aroldis Chapman will be tremendous assets for the Red Sox, as well. 38-year-old Chapman is currently flaunting a below .200 ERA and alongside Crochet, Tolle and Gray they give the Sox the upper hand over the Yankees.

In terms of position players, the Red Sox have Caleb Durbin and Wilyer Abreu at their disposal. After acquiring him from the Milwaukee Brewers, Durbin quickly became a fan favorite racking up 13 home runs and 64 RBIs during his 2026 campaign. Abreu has been the catalyst for his squad as of late and has broken his career record in hits, home runs and RBI's.

Fans won't want to miss this set of games, as this rivalry is as old as time. You better believe the Red Sox will come out on top Tuesday night.

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Yankees

Since the three-game Wild Card series format was introduced in 2022, 15 of 16 teams who have won game No. 1 have gone on to win the series. If you include the two Wild Card series from the shortened 2020 season, that number bumps up to 17 of 18. Ironically, the Red Sox were the first team to break that mold last year when they lost two straight games after beating the Yankees in game No. 1.

An indispensable part of that New York comeback was a rookie starter striking out 12 Red Sox across eight scoreless innings en route to a 4-0 Yankees shutout victory. That relatively unknown pitcher, Cam Schlittler, has blossomed into the American League Cy Young favorite in 2026 after posting an AL-leading 1.95 ERA in 193 2/3 innings. Schlittler will get the nod in game No. 1 of this year's Wild Card series.

Schlitter has been even better against the Red Sox. In 24 1/3 innings against Boston in 2026, Schlittler posted a 0.74 ERA and struck out 24. Red Sox star outfielder Wilyer Abreu struggled to a .633 OPS in a team-high 12 at-bats against Schlittler. First baseman Willson Contreras' OPS in as many at-bats was .250, while outfielder Jarren Duran's was .318.

Only third baseman Caleb Durbin (.919) and center fielder Cedanne Rafaela (.780) posted above average OPS marks against Schlittler. That does not bode well for Boston, as both Durbin and Rafaela have slumped as of late. Durbin posted a .669 OPS in September, while Rafaela put up a .558 mark while missing time due to injury. In Rafaela's last full month of play, August, he posted a .713 OPS. Shortstop Trevor Story (.715) and outfielder Roman Anthony (.733) had OPS marks around the league average in September. Abreu (.615) was below average.

Only Contreras (.944) and catcher Adley Rutschman (.846) put up above average OPS in September. Contreras only appeared in five games while battling injuries and posted a .716 mark in his last full month, August.

In contrast, all of first baseman Ben Rice (1.055), catcher Austin Wells (.830) and outfielders Helliot Ramos (.814), Cody Bellinger (.802) and Spencer Jones (.747) were above average by measure of OPS in September for the Yankees.

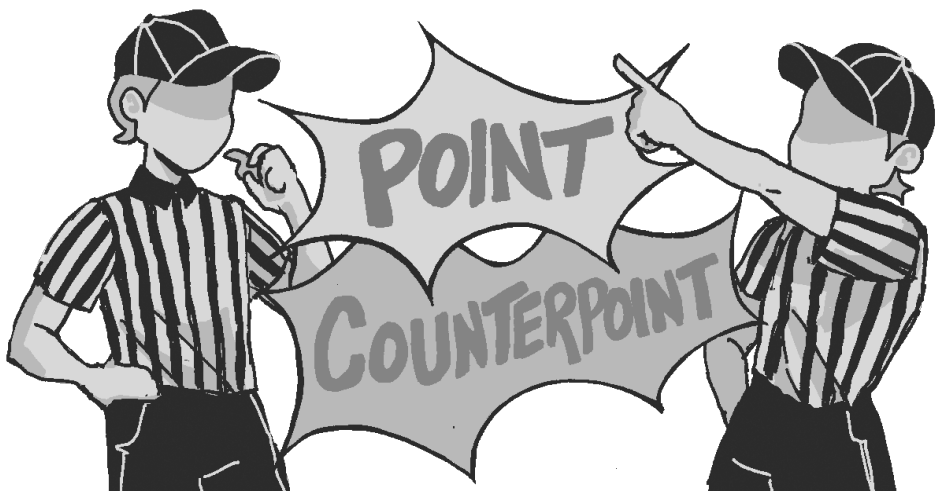
Designated hitter Giancarlo Stanton, who is a career .254/.322/.605 hitter across 48 postseason contests, may also return to the roster as a pinch hitter or DH after missing the majority of this season with multiple calf injuries.

The Yankees also have closer David Bednar, who has gone a steady 35 of 39 in save opportunities. Paul Blackburn (1.69 ERA) and Brent Headrick (2.18) should be plenty capable of bridging the gap between Schlittler and Bednar.

Sprinkle in a hint of home field advantage, and the Yankees should be in good position to take game No. 1. If New York can accomplish that, history says that they should book their flights for the ALDS.



A Boston Red Sox player holds up hat on the field. The Yankees and the Red Sox have had a rivalry for over a hundred years.
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