

Round Table

WHO WILL TAKE FIRST PLACE
or get a playoff spot in the AL East?



Max Fried pitching for the New York Yankees in their game against the Boston Red Sox.
PHOTOGRAPH BY "NEW YORK YANKEES" ON FACEBOOK

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Yankees

It remains an uphill battle for now, but the Yankees will end up on top of the AL East over the Rays. The Yankees have the advantage in terms of strength of schedule, with their strongest opponent who isn't Tampa being the Diamondbacks, while the Rays see both the Phillies and Red Sox. The Yankees should be able to gain ground in those bouts.

The division will then come down to this week's series between the two, but the Yankees' stellar pitching and re-addition of Aaron Judge makes them the far stronger team. The Bombers are hot right now, and once the Tampa series is said and done, they should stand atop the east.

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Red Sox

With just two weeks left in the regular season and 12 games left for the Boston Red Sox, it is basically impossible for them to take the top spot in the AL East. However, I do think they either stay in third place or move to second place in the AL East. The Red Sox just need six total wins to clinch the playoffs, and it seems probable they will do so with their next series against the Texas Rangers and then their weekend series against the Tampa Bay Rays.

The Red Sox are coming off of dominant wins

against the Royals this past weekend and with Caleb Durbin at their disposal, it looks like they will dominate again this weekend. Over the last season, Durbin has been the offensive catalyst for the squad with 64 RBIs. On the pitching side of things, southpaw Payton Tolle has been a force for the Sox throwing an immaculate inning on Sunday versus the Royals. With players like Durbin and Tolle, they will be sure to light a fire under Boston to solidify their playoff spot.

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Tampa Bay Rays

In the race for the AL East, the Rays have a 6.5-game lead over the New York Yankees. No team in AL East history has overcome a 6.5-game deficit with 13 games left to win the division. While the Yankees face lighter opponents for the remainder of the season, it's not enough to catch up to Tampa Bay.

Coming off a series sweep against the Houston Astros, the Rays are hot and aren't slowing down. Against the Athletics this week, they are projected to win two of three games. While the Yankees, facing the Minnesota Twins, are projected to win one of three games. These outcomes would put the teams at 92-59 and 87-65, respectively. If the odds fall as predicted, with Tampa Bay staying consistent, the gap between first and second likely won't change much, and New York would have to perform a miracle to overtake the Rays.



Payton Tolle, a Red Sox starting pitcher during a winning game against the Kansas City Royals.
PHOTOGRAPH BY BOSTON RED SOX ON FACEBOOK.