

## JAGUARS NAME BLAKE BORTLES STARTING QB HEADING INTO SEASON

**JACKSONVILLE:** Blake Bortles is getting another shot as Jacksonville's starting quarterback. Coach Doug Marrone made the surprising announcement yesterday, naming Bortles his starter for the opener at Houston and ending any uncertainty heading into the preseason finale.

Marrone was scheduled to address his decision after practice. The call came a little more than a week after Marrone opened up the job and pleaded with Bortles and veteran Chad Henne to "go out there and take it." Bortles presumably did enough in Thursday's exhibition loss to Carolina to keep the starting job he's had the last three years. The third overall pick in the 2014 NFL draft will make his 46th consecutive start when the Jaguars open the season Sept. 10 at Houston.

Henne started Thursday's exhibition

against the Panthers and had some decent moments, but the 10th-year pro also got sacked three times in the first half, had a pass batted down at the line of scrimmage and badly overthrew a receiver down the middle of the field. Henne completed 8 of 14 passes for 73 yards and had a would-be touchdown pass dropped by rookie Keelan Cole.

Bortles delivered his best outing of the preseason, finishing with a touchdown and an interception. He completed 12 of 16 passes for 125 yards, playing mostly against backups in the second half. It's unclear how much stock Marrone put on those performances. This much is certain: Bortles has more upside than Henne and should be more effective scrambling behind what appears to be a shaky offensive line this season.

Bortles looked like a franchise quar-

terback in his second season, throwing for 4,428 yards and 35 touchdowns while smashing several team records. Although he racked up a chunk of his statistics late in lopsided games, there was belief that Bortles would only get better. Instead, he regressed in 2016 and was admittedly frazzled by the end of the year. His numbers were down, finishing with 23 touchdown passes and 16 interceptions. His mechanics were a mess, leading to accuracy issues. And many of his decisions were suspect at best, leaving coaches and teammates shaking their heads.

Marrone worked closely with Bortles the past two seasons as the team's offensive line coach and was convinced he would be more successful with an improved rushing attack. So Marrone and top decision-maker Tom Coughlin drafted LSU running back Leonard Fournette with the fourth overall pick

and added Alabama left tackle Cam Robinson early in the second round to beef up the ground game.

But when training camp opened, Bortles was making headlines for all the wrong reasons. He threw five interceptions in the team's first padded practice. He completed 5 of 17 passes in 11-on-11 drills during joint practices with New England. A few days after the preseason opener against the Patriots, Bortles threw two interceptions so ugly that Marrone pulled him and said he must have a tired arm. And then Bortles woefully underthrew two passes to Allen Robinson in last week's exhibition game against Tampa Bay.

Marrone had seen enough and wanted to send a message. Bortles' time on the bench ended up being brief. Although Marrone likely will have Bortles on a short leash to start the season, the long-term solution to

Jacksonville's quarterback quandary includes drafting or signing another one in 2018.

In the meantime, the Jaguars will hope to keep Bortles healthy. Jacksonville exercised a fifth year option in Bortles' rookie deal in May that could pay him \$19 million in 2018. His salary is guaranteed only for injury, meaning Jacksonville is taking a risk by even putting Bortles on the field.

But the 6-foot-5 Orlando native has been durable, starting every game since Week 4 of his rookie year. Bortles has completed 59 percent of his passes for 11,241 yards, with 69 touchdowns and 51 interceptions. He also has been sacked 140 times and lost 12 fumbles. Maybe his most damning statistic: He has 11 victories and 11 interceptions returned for touchdowns in three seasons. Now he's getting another chance to change the narrative. — AP



NEW YORK: New York Yankees' Tyler Austin (26) reaches second base on a wild pitch as Seattle Mariners shortstop Taylor Motter (21) loses control of the ball during the third inning of a baseball game Friday, in New York. — AP

BASEBALL

## ALONSO HOMERS IN 11TH AS MARINERS EDGE YANKEES

**NEW YORK:** Yonder Alonso homered on a 100 mph fastball from demoted closer Aroldis Chapman in the 11th inning, and the Seattle Mariners outpitched the New York Yankees for a 2-1 victory Friday night. Mike Zunino homered and had three hits for the Mariners, right in the middle of a crowded race for the second AL wild card. They used seven pitchers to hold down the Yankees, who lead the wild-card chase but trail first-place Boston by 4 1/2 games in the AL East. Alonso entered as a pinch hitter in the ninth and sent a drive to center field with two outs in the 11th against Chapman (4-3), the \$86 million reliever who recently lost his job as closer. James Pazos (4-4) tossed a perfect inning against his former team and Edwin Diaz got three outs for his 30th save.

**MARLINS 8, PADRES 6**

Giancarlo Stanton homered twice, increasing his major league-leading total to 49, and tied a career high with five RBIs, helping the Marlins climb above .500 for the first time since April. Miami grabbed the lead for good on Marcell Ozuna's three-run drive in the seventh inning. It was Ozuna's 30th homer of the season. Carlos Asuaje and Jabari Blash homered for San Diego. Kirby Yates (3-5) got the loss. Dustin McGowan (8-1) got five outs for the win and Brad Ziegler pitched a perfect

ninth for his ninth save, all this month.

**PHILLIES 7, CUBS 1**

Rhys Hoskins hit another homer and Cesar Hernandez ripped a three run triple to back Jerad Eickhoff, helping Philadelphia to the victory. Called up from the minors too late to get a nickname on the back of his uniform for Players Weekend, Hoskins has put on a tremendous power display. He has nine homers and 21 RBIs in 16 games. No player in major league history has reached nine homers that quickly, according to MLB.com. Eickhoff (4-7) allowed one run and five hits in five innings. He has won four straight decisions. Jose Quintana (4-3) gave up six runs and nine hits in five innings, tying his worst start in eight outings since the Cubs acquired him from the White Sox. Kyle Schwarber hit a solo homer in the first for NL Central-leading Chicago.

**METS 4, NATIONALS 2**

New York ace Jacob deGrom had 10 strikeouts in 7 2/3 innings against Washington's makeshift lineup. DeGrom (14-7) allowed one run and five hits. He upped his strikeout total to 201 this season by fanning the side in the seventh. But the Mets lost outfielder Yoenis Cespedes in the first inning with a right hamstring strain that could end his season based

on the schedule. A.J. Cole (1-4) allowed one run and four hits over six innings for Washington. Adam Lind homered in the ninth off New York's AJ Ramos, who then loaded the bases with one out on a hit and two walks. Ramos retired Howie Kendrick and Andrew Stevenson to earn his 24th save in 26 opportunities.

**ORIOLES 16, RED SOX 3**

Mark Trumbo and Chris Davis homered, and the Orioles used a seven-run fifth inning to pull away for the victory. The Orioles have won three of four as they try to stay in the mix for an AL wild card. Trey Mancini led Baltimore with four RBIs. Jeremy Hellickson (8-7) pitched seven innings of three-run ball for his second win in an Orioles uniform. Boston committed a season-high five errors. Rick Porcello (8-15) was charged with 11 runs, four earned, and nine hits in 4 2/3 innings.

**DODGERS 3, BREWERS 1**

Yasmani Grandal hit a tiebreaking RBI single in the fifth for Los Angeles, and Yasiel Puig and Logan Forsythe homered. Grandal drove in Justin Turner with a single to center against Chase Anderson (7-3). Puig tacked on a solo drive in the sixth for his 23rd homer. Domingo Santana hit his 21st homer for Milwaukee, which has dropped three of four. Anderson allowed six hits in five innings. The Brewers stayed three games back of NL Central-leading Chicago, which lost 7-1 at Philadelphia. Santana connected against Kenta Maeda (12-5) in the second, but that was Milwaukee's only hit of the night. Maeda struck out seven in six innings and Kenley Jansen got three outs for his 35th save.

**DIAMONDBACKS 4, GIANTS 3**

Paul Goldschmidt hit a three-run homer for Arizona, and Zack Greinke got his 15th win of the season. Greinke (15-6) allowed three runs, two earned, and seven hits in 6 2/3 innings. He improved to 12-1 at home this season and Arizona pulled 1 1/2 games ahead of Colorado for the NL's top wild-card slot. Fernando Rodney pitched a perfect ninth for his 31st save in 36 tries. Brandon Crawford doubled twice, singled and scored twice for San Francisco. Ty Blach (8-10) was charged with four runs and six hits in five innings.

**RAYS 7, CARDINALS 3**

Corey Dickerson had four hits, including two doubles, and Tampa Bay won for the

fourth time in five games. Adeiny Hechavarria added three hits and two RBIs. Steven Souza Jr. homered, Kevin Kiermaier also drove in two runs and the Rays finished with 16 hits. Sergio Romo (2-1) earned the win with two scoreless innings in relief of Jake Odorizzi, who allowed three runs in 3 2/3 innings. The Rays' bullpen combined for 5 1/3 scoreless innings. St. Louis right-hander Michael Wacha (9-7) was charged with five runs and nine hits in 3 1/3 innings. The Cardinals have dropped five of six and eight of 11.

**WHITE SOX 3, TIGERS 2**

Yolmer Sanchez drove in Tim Anderson with a game-ending single, and the White Sox earned their third straight win. Anderson had a game-ending hit Wednesday against Minnesota. This time, he hit a leadoff double and scored easily on Sanchez's single off Joe Jimenez (0-2). Jose Abreu homered and went 2 for 2 with two intentional walks for Chicago. Juan Minaya (2-1) pitched a scoreless ninth for the win. Detroit starter Justin Verlander allowed two runs and six hits in seven innings.

**INDIANS 4, ROYALS 0**

Rookie Ryan Merritt pitched a career-high 6 2/3 innings and Cleveland recorded its AL-leading 13th shutout. Merritt (1-0) was called up from Triple-A Columbus before the game to take the injured Danny Salazar's spot in the rotation. The 25-year-old left-hander scattered seven hits for his second career win, both coming against Kansas City. Francisco Lindor hit a two-run drive for Cleveland, and three relievers finished the eight-hitter. Kansas City left-hander Jason Vargas (14-8) allowed four runs in five innings. He has dropped four of his five August starts.

**ASTROS 2, ANGELS 1**

Rookie J.D. Davis homered for Houston, and George Springer scored the winning run on a wild pitch. Astros right-hander Collin McHugh (2-2) allowed one run in six innings. Ken Giles pitched the ninth for his 25th save. Right-hander Parker Bridwell (7-2) went seven innings for the Angels, allowing two runs and six hits. He did not walk a batter and struck out five. The Angels fell 1 1/2 games behind Minnesota for the final AL wild card.

**TWINS 6, BLUE JAYS 1**

Minnesota right-hander Bartolo Colon pitched 6 2/3 innings for his second straight win, and Byron Buxton had three hits and two

RBIs. Joe Mauer had three hits and scored twice as Minnesota snapped a seven-game losing streak north of the border. The Twins, who began the day a half-game ahead of Kansas City and Los Angeles for the second AL wild card, had not won in Toronto since June 11, 2014. Justin Smoak hit his 35th homer for Toronto, but the Blue Jays lost for the sixth time in seven games. J.A. Happ (6-10) yielded five runs and eight hits in six innings. Colon (6-10) allowed nine hits and walked one while improving to 4-1 in August.

**BRAVES 5, ROCKIES 2**

Matt Kemp and Kurt Suzuki homered for Atlanta, and Julio Teheran won at home for the first time in four months. Teheran (8-11) allowed two runs and five hits in 7 1/3 innings while stopping an Atlanta record streak of nine straight home losses. Aroldys Vizcaino pitched the ninth for his eighth save. Kemp and Suzuki each hit first-pitch homers off Chad Bettis (0-1). Kemp hit a two-run shot in the first and Suzuki led off the second with a line drive over the left-field wall. Mark Reynolds hit his 27th homer in the seventh for Colorado.

**REDS 9, PIRATES 5**

Reds rookie Robert Stephenson fanned a career-high 11, and Scott Schebler drove in three runs with a homer and his first triple of the season. Stephenson (2-4) stymied Pittsburgh with sharp-breaking pitches in his fifth start and 19th overall appearance, allowing two runs in 5 2/3 innings. The right-hander fanned the first six batters for a modern Reds record, according to information from the Elias Sports Bureau provided by the team. Pittsburgh's Josh Bell hit a three-run homer off Tim Lincecum in the seventh, one of his four hits. Ivan Nova (11-11) gave up seven runs - matching his season high - in five innings.

**ATHLETICS 3, RANGERS 1**

Khris Davis homered twice for Oakland, including a tiebreaking leadoff drive in the seventh. Kendall Graveman (4-4) improved to 3-0 at home in his fifth start back from a stint on the disabled list. He allowed one run and nine hits in seven innings. Blake Treinen worked the ninth for his sixth save since coming to the A's in a July 16 trade with the Nationals. Texas right-hander Nick Martinez (3-5), called up from Triple-A Round Rock to make the start, struck out seven in seven innings and allowed three runs. — AP

### MLB Results/Standings

LA Dodgers 3, Milwaukee 1; Houston 2, LA Angels 1; Oakland 3, Texas 1; Arizona 4, San Francisco 3; Tampa Bay 7, St. Louis 3; Chicago White Sox 3, Detroit 2; Atlanta 5, Colorado 2; Baltimore 16, Boston 3; Cleveland 4, Kansas City 0; Cincinnati 9, Pittsburgh 5; Miami 8, San Diego 6; Minnesota 6, Toronto 1; Philadelphia 7, Chicago Cubs 1; NY Mets 4, Washington 2; Seattle 2, NY Yankees 1 (11 innings).

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division				
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	Miami	Atlanta	NY Mets	
Boston	73	55	.570	-	76	50	.603	
NY Yankees	68	59	.535	4.5	64	63	.504	
Tampa Bay	64	66	.492	10	57	69	.452	
Baltimore	63	65	.492	10	56	71	.441	
Toronto	60	68	.469	13	47	80	.370	
Central Division				Central Division				
Cleveland	71	56	.559	-	Chicago Cubs	68	59	.535
Minnesota	66	62	.516	5.5	Milwaukee	66	63	.512
Kansas City	64	63	.504	7	St. Louis	64	64	.500
Detroit	55	72	.433	16	Pittsburgh	61	68	.473
Chicago White Sox	51	76	.402	20	Cincinnati	55	74	.426
Western Division				Western Division				
Houston	78	50	.609	-	LA Dodgers	91	36	.717
Seattle	66	63	.512	12.5	Arizona	71	58	.550
LA Angels	65	64	.504	13.5	Colorado	69	59	.539
Texas	64	64	.500	14	San Diego	57	71	.445
Oakland	56	72	.438	22	San Francisco	52	78	.400