August Division Challenges — August 20–30, 1981

The Desk / Action Baseball League / Data cutoff August 19, 1981

Special Coverage. This pre-simulation guide preserves the standings, schedule and questions as they stood before play on August 20. All August 20–30 matchups are scheduled, with outcomes left open.

Phoenix and San Francisco begin level and play each other four times. Dallas has a one-game lead and Chicago gets the first shot at Detroit. In Boston, Philadelphia has exactly as many head-to-head games as its deficit. Those are the races with the clearest chance to move on opening day.

How to follow the challenge

Opening series	Middle series	Closing series
Aug 20-23 · four games	Aug 24-26 · staggered two-game sets	Aug 27-30 · four games

Schedule exception. The schedule has 120 games in the standard sets and one unfinished St. Louis at Houston game, #1113, listed on August 20 at 15:05 with five innings recorded. Houston and St. Louis have 11 listed games each. All other clubs have ten. Houston at St. Louis #1462 opens the regular four-game set at the opposite venue that evening.

The wild-card line before play

NBC	W-L	GB
Detroit	65-56	0
Miami	64-56	0.5
Chicago	64-57	1
PHO or SF[1]	64-57	1
Los Angeles	62-59	3

ABC	W-L	GB
Denver	66-55	0
Seattle	64-57	2
Cincinnati	63-58	3
Nashville	59-62	7
St. Louis	58-62	7.5
Philadelphia	57-64	9

[1] Phoenix and San Francisco share the NBC West lead. Under either division-winner assignment, the other club is tied with Chicago one game behind Detroit. The standings supply no tiebreak ruling.

Three division winners and one wild card qualify per conference. The 1981 DCS rule keeps same-division opponents apart: if seeds 1 and 4 share a division, the pairings become 1 vs. 3 and 2 vs. 4. This is an August position check. Qualification and pairings depend on the completed season and any official tiebreaks.

Starting point: 1,450 verified regular-season finals through August 19. The six boards show each club's schedule, the stakes and the players to follow.

NBC EAST race board

Miami has six games to close the gap

Charlotte led Miami by eight games on July 26. That margin is 4.5 after the Colonels went 9-12 and the Hurricanes 12-8 in the intervening stretch. Both lost on August 19. Charlotte's entire challenge is on the road, ending with four in Miami. The Hurricanes' series in Atlanta and two at home against Tampa Bay decide how much the finale can settle.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Charlotte Colonels	69-52	.570	0	5-5	7-10
Miami Hurricanes	64-56	.533	4.5	4-6	9-7
Atlanta Kings	55-66	.455	14	6-4	9-8
Tampa Bay Storm	53-68	.438	16	4-6	7-10

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
CHA	at TB · Aug 20-23	at ATL · Aug 24-25	at MIA · Aug 27-30
MIA	at ATL · Aug 20-23	vs TB · Aug 25-26	vs CHA · Aug 27-30
ATL	vs MIA · Aug 20-23	vs CHA · Aug 24-25	at TB · Aug 27-30
TB	vs CHA · Aug 20-23	at MIA · Aug 25-26	vs ATL · Aug 27-30

What the games can move. At the opening gap, even a Miami sweep of Charlotte would leave the Hurricanes half a game behind. If both clubs complete their first six as scheduled, the gap stays in half-game increments. A Miami sweep can put the Hurricanes ahead if they enter the series 3.5 games back or closer. Atlanta and Tampa Bay can help determine that number. Charlotte and Miami are the only clubs that can finish August 30 atop the division by winning percentage on the listed schedule.

Wild card. Miami starts half a game behind Detroit for the wild card. Its four with Charlotte are a route toward the division as well as a chance to gain on teams playing one another in the Central. Keep an eye on both races when Miami and Detroit have played different numbers of games.

Four club notes

Charlotte. The 1980 division winner has held first despite being outscored 77-61 in August. Dabir Aly allowed three earned runs in 15 1/3 innings since August 10. Watch whether the offense gives starts like those room, especially with Santiago Castro 6-for-36 in the same span.

Miami. The club finished 73-89 last year. Daniel Vega hit 13-for-37 for Miami in August after the trade, and Addie de Ruijter had 55 plate appearances. Track the lineups and which newcomer gets the important trips in the Atlanta series.

Atlanta. The Kings have won nine of 15 from Miami this season. Eric Gray homered three times in 37 plate appearances from August 10-19. Atlanta beat Detroit 8-6 on the cutoff day and hosts the East's top two clubs before visiting Tampa Bay.

Tampa Bay. Tampa Bay was 4-11 against Charlotte through the cutoff and allowed 88 runs in 17 August games. Frank Jimenez went 12-for-29 from August 10-19. Jonathan Funches' outings give the Storm a second story to track after the July starter swap.

NBC CENTRAL race board

Chicago gets a say before Dallas and Detroit meet

Dallas overtook Detroit during the conference challenges. Now the Rustlers lead the defending ABL champions by one and Chicago by two. The Fire took seven of their last ten and beat Los Angeles 10-3 on August 19. Dallas and Detroit both lost that day, leaving Chicago in position to change the race at home.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Dallas Rustlers	66-55	.545	0	5-5	10-7
Detroit Dukes	65-56	.537	1	5-5	8-9
Chicago Fire	64-57	.529	2	7-3	9-8
Minneapolis Blizzard	54-66	.450	11.5	5-5	8-8

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
DAL	at MIN · Aug 20-23	at CHI · Aug 24-25	vs DET · Aug 27-30
DET	at CHI · Aug 20-23	vs MIN · Aug 25-26	at DAL · Aug 27-30
CHI	vs DET · Aug 20-23	vs DAL · Aug 24-25	at MIN · Aug 27-30
MIN	vs DAL · Aug 20-23	at DET · Aug 25-26	vs CHI · Aug 27-30

What the games can move. Chicago trails Detroit by one. Three wins in their opening four would move Chicago one game ahead of Detroit in isolation. At the opening two-game gap to Dallas, Chicago can draw even with a sweep of its two home games against the Rustlers. If Detroit still trails Dallas by one entering their four, a 3-1 series would put Detroit one ahead of Dallas. Compare all three positions before the finale. Minneapolis can affect the order throughout.

Wild card. Detroit starts on the NBC wild-card line, with Miami half a game back and Chicago and the conditional West runner-up one back. A division lead change can move the former leader onto the wild-card board within the same round of games.

Four club notes

Dallas. The club's only recorded tournament team through 1980 won the 1977 title. Brian Manchester has one earned run in 31 2/3 innings across five Dallas starts after the July 24 swap. Dallas was 5-9 against each of Detroit and Chicago at the cutoff.

Detroit. Mike Miranda worked 17 innings without an earned run across two starts from August 10-19. New arrival Kennie Murdock added 31 2/3 August innings over four starts. Detroit's 9-5 season mark against Dallas supplies context for the finish in Dallas.

Chicago. Heriberto Jimenez gave up no runs in 18 innings across two starts from August 10-19, and Jorge Montoya drove in four on the cutoff night. The Fire get six straight dates against the two teams ahead of them before going to

Minneapolis

Minneapolis. The Blizzard beat Charlotte 9-3 on August 19 and have outscored their August opponents 65-50 despite an 8-8 record. Fernando Blancas went 10-for-26 with two homers from August 10-19. See whether that production carries through a home-heavy schedule.

NBC WEST race board

First place opens in San Francisco

San Francisco led Phoenix by six games on July 26. They now share first at 64-57. Phoenix won seven of ten and shut out Dallas on August 19. San Francisco won two of ten, including an 18-2 finish against Tampa Bay. Los Angeles is two back and gets six later games against the two leaders.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Phoenix Firebirds	64-57	.529	0	7-3	11-6
San Francisco Warriors	64-57	.529	0	2-8	6-11
Los Angeles Cobras	62-59	.512	2	6-4	11-6
San Diego Seraphs	45-76	.372	19	4-6	6-11

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
PHO	at SF · Aug 20-23	at LA · Aug 24-25	at SD · Aug 27-30
SF	vs PHO · Aug 20-23	at SD · Aug 24-25	vs LA · Aug 27-30
LA	vs SD · Aug 20-23	vs PHO · Aug 24-25	at SF · Aug 27-30
SD	at LA · Aug 20-23	vs SF · Aug 24-25	vs PHO · Aug 27-30

What the games can move. The opener's winner goes one game ahead of the other. A split leaves Phoenix and San Francisco level with one another, a 3-1 series separates them by two, and a sweep separates them by four. If they split and Los Angeles sweeps San Diego, all three reach 66-59. The Cobras then host Phoenix for two and finish with four in

San Francisco

Wild card. Whichever of Phoenix or San Francisco is outside first would start tied with Chicago, one game behind the wild-card pace. Los Angeles is three back on that board. The two races will move together when Phoenix and San Francisco play.

Four club notes

Phoenix. Last year's 107-win division winner has taken nine of 15 from San Francisco this year. Stephen Grimes threw 8 1/3 shutout innings against Dallas and Alex Monge homered. Their August 19 win gives the offense and rotation two concrete threads to follow.

San Francisco. Bernardo Valenzuela went 13-for-34 from August 10-19. Luke Margalit drove in five in the 18-run game. Compare scoring across the four Phoenix games to see whether the lineup can test that pitching more than once.

Los Angeles. Dante Lima hit 15-for-34 with four homers from August 10-19. The Cobras have gone 11-6 in August while being outscored 67-57. Look for production deeper in the order and keep their six games against Phoenix and San Francisco in view.

San Diego. Leonardo Gonzalez homered and drove in two against Miami on the cutoff night. The Seraphs are 7-7 against Phoenix. They face all three contenders and get the last six games at home.

ABC EAST race board

Four games back, four at Boston

Boston is the division's only club above .500. It lost to Nashville 6-2 while Philadelphia beat Portland 3-1 on August 19. The gap fell from five to four. Philadelphia, with zero recorded tournament appearances through 1980, goes straight to Boston for four.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Boston Patriots	61-60	.504	0	4-6	7-10
Philadelphia Fury	57-64	.471	4	6-4	9-8
Pittsburgh Express	54-67	.446	7	7-3	10-7
New York Aces	53-68	.438	8	2-8	6-11

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
BOS	vs PHI · Aug 20-23	vs NY · Aug 25-26	at PIT · Aug 27-30
PHI	at BOS · Aug 20-23	vs PIT · Aug 24-25	vs NY · Aug 27-30
PIT	vs NY · Aug 20-23	at PHI · Aug 24-25	vs BOS · Aug 27-30
NY	at PIT · Aug 20-23	at BOS · Aug 25-26	at PHI · Aug 27-30

What the games can move. A Philadelphia sweep brings both clubs to 61-64. Three wins in four cut the gap to two. A split leaves Boston's margin at four. Pittsburgh is three games behind Philadelphia and has two at Philadelphia before hosting Boston for four. New York starts one behind Pittsburgh and opens with four there. All four have a mathematical path to first by August 30.

Wild card. Philadelphia opens nine games behind the ABC wild-card pace. Boston would fall into that same chase if passed. Head-to-head games against Boston offer Philadelphia the most direct route to change its position now.

Four club notes

Boston. Andy Ayala was 13-for-33 from August 10-19. Deadline acquisition Miguel Martinez has taken 79 Boston plate appearances in August. Watch who reaches base ahead of the middle of the order as Boston tries to protect home field.

Philadelphia. Rich Pena hit two homers from August 10-19, and Roberto Hernandez worked 24 innings over three starts in that span. The Fury lead the season series with Boston 8-7. Watch whether the starts can hold the lead long enough for the offense to matter.

Pittsburgh. The defending division winner is 7-3 in its last ten with a season run margin of minus 78. Antonio Serrano is hitting .351 through the cutoff. Taking games from New York and Philadelphia would give the Boston visit a different weight.

New York. The Aces are 2-8 in their last ten, but they are 9-6 against Pittsburgh this season. Angel Casillas struck out 14 in 15 1/3 innings from August 10-19. Track whether the staff can keep the opening series close enough for the lineup.

ABC CENTRAL race board

Cincinnati trails in two races

Houston went 15-6 from July 27 through August 19 and leads Cincinnati by 9.5. St. Louis went 12-9 in that stretch and still lost ground to Houston. The unusual August 20 listing gives the opening day two Houston-St. Louis decisions if both are finished.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Houston Mavericks	72-48	.600	0	7-3	11-6
Cincinnati Cougars	63-58	.521	9.5	6-4	10-7
Nashville Blues	59-62	.488	13.5	3-7	6-11
St. Louis Stallions	58-62	.483	14	6-4	10-7

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
HOU	at STL · Aug 20-23	at CIN · Aug 24-25	vs NAS · Aug 27-30
CIN	vs NAS · Aug 20-23	vs HOU · Aug 24-25	at STL · Aug 27-30
NAS	at CIN · Aug 20-23	vs STL · Aug 25-26	at HOU · Aug 27-30
STL	vs HOU · Aug 20-23	at NAS · Aug 25-26	vs CIN · Aug 27-30

Plus August 20: St. Louis at Houston, unfinished game #1113, listed at 15:05.

What the games can move. A Cincinnati sweep of the two home games against Houston would cut the starting margin to 7.5 in isolation. On August 20, one Cincinnati win plus two Houston losses would cut the margin to eight. With all listed games completed, two Houston wins in the entire block would keep the Mavericks ahead through August 30 by winning percentage. Cincinnati is the only club that can overtake them in that span.

Wild card. Cincinnati is three behind Denver, Nashville seven, and St. Louis 7.5. Cincinnati has eight games against Nashville and St. Louis in addition to two with Houston. A strong challenge can narrow the wild-card gap while Seattle and Denver face each other.

Four club notes

Houston. Chris Jenkins has a 2.32 ERA in 31 August innings since arriving. Brent Keyser is on the injured list in the starting snapshot, with 365 ABL plate appearances this season. Watch how Houston allocates outs and lineup turns across its 11 listed games.

Cincinnati. Last year's 97-win division champion has Esteban Martinez at 13-for-34 with two homers since August 10, and Alex Perez struck out 17 in 15 1/3 innings. Lance Lynd, Ricky Chavez and Tony Jones carry injured-list flags. Their availability is a question to follow as the series begin.

Nashville. Brett Petrillo went 12-for-33 from August 10-19 as the Blues went 3-7 in their last ten. Nashville is 8-6 against Houston and 10-4 against St. Louis. Its two opponents in the last six games give that recent form a direct test.

St. Louis. St. Louis has a plus-21 season run margin at 58-62 and is 7-7 against Houston. Jonathan Medrano went 9-for-25 with two homers from August 10-19. Keep the five-inning unfinished game separate when judging the opening series.

ABC WEST race board

Seattle gets its two nearest rivals

Seattle took sole first on August 9 and has since slipped five games behind Las Vegas. The Gamblers, last year's division winners, open for four in Seattle, then go to Denver for two. Denver is three off first and has the better starting wild-card position. Portland hosts both Las Vegas and Seattle later in the block.

Club	W-L	Pct.	GB	Last 10	Aug 1-19
Las Vegas Gamblers	69-52	.570	0	7-3	9-8
Denver Rocketeers	66-55	.545	3	6-4	10-7
Seattle Comets	64-57	.529	5	2-8	6-11
Portland Lumberjacks	49-72	.405	20	4-6	8-9

Each club's three series

Club	Opening four	Middle two	Closing four
LV	at SEA · Aug 20-23	at DEN · Aug 24-25	at POR · Aug 27-30
DEN	vs POR · Aug 20-23	vs LV · Aug 24-25	at SEA · Aug 27-30
SEA	vs LV · Aug 20-23	at POR · Aug 25-26	vs DEN · Aug 27-30
POR	at DEN · Aug 20-23	vs SEA · Aug 25-26	vs LV · Aug 27-30

What the games can move. A Seattle sweep cuts its starting deficit to Las Vegas from five to one in isolation. If Denver enters the middle two still three back, a sweep would cut that margin to one. Denver and Seattle start two apart. Those four games in Seattle can erase that gap with a 3-1 Seattle series if it is still two when they meet.

Wild card. Denver leads Seattle by two and Cincinnati by three. Denver's two with Las Vegas can pull it toward a division berth. The finale in Seattle may matter to both races. Portland's games can change the standings of all three clubs ahead of it.

Four club notes

Las Vegas. Mario Smithson went 16-for-32 from August 10-19. Mike Rabel homered and drove in two as Las Vegas beat Houston 5-4 on August 19. The Gamblers open with six games against their two nearest pursuers.

Denver. Dave DiAngelo allowed two earned runs in 14 1/3 innings from August 10-19. The Rocketeers are 11-4 against Portland and 5-9 against Las Vegas. Their first six at home are the clearest opportunity to change the gap before Seattle.

Seattle. The Comets are 2-8 over their last ten despite a 58-57 August run balance. Seattle's opening roster flags list Rene Oregon, Billy Mendoza and Bobby Aparicio on the injured list. Follow Seattle's starting pitchers and lineups as the club tries to reverse the slide.

Portland. Adam Strate allowed two earned runs in 15 2/3 innings from August 10-19. Portland has four at Denver before hosting Seattle and Las Vegas. Watch those starts for games that can move the two races above Portland.

Trade deadline analysis

The deadline's first returns

The July ledger records 27 trades between ABL organizations and four on deadline day. Most performance samples below begin August 1. Manchester's starts are counted from July 25. Receiving-club game lines show how players have been used and how they have performed. The clubs' reasoning remains open.

A starter swap with two races attached

July 24, #19798. Dallas got Brian Manchester and Tampa Bay got Jonathan Funches. Manchester is 4-0 with one earned run in 31 2/3 innings over five Dallas starts since July 25. Funches allowed 17 earned runs in 20 2/3 Tampa Bay innings in August, including his start in the 18-2 loss on August 19. Compare how each club uses its new starter.

Chicago's late innings and Boston's order

July 31, #19901. Justin Bowen and Javy Madrigal went to Chicago. Miguel Martinez went to Boston. Bowen worked 16 August innings in eight appearances with four earned runs and two saves. Martinez went 17-for-73 with a home run for Boston in August. Track Bowen's actual assignments and Martinez's place in the lineup.

Houston's new starters and a debut still to record

July 31, #19908 and #19904. Chris Jenkins, acquired from Minneapolis, made four August starts with eight earned runs in 31 innings. Ricky Bautista, acquired from Pittsburgh, is flagged active with zero Houston appearances through the cutoff. From earlier deals, Jerry Wilson threw 24 2/3 August innings and Chris Sullivan went 9-for-52. Follow roles as the schedule asks for 11 games.

The other deadline-day deal

July 31, #19907. Bill Torres and Rodolfo Gonzalez went from Atlanta to Chicago for Jaden Pierce. None has an August receiving-club ABL appearance in the cutoff data. Check assignments when the rosters expand before assigning a major-league role.

Two newcomers in Miami's infield

July 28-29, #19868 and #19877. Daniel Vega went 13-for-37 for Miami in August. Addie de Ruijter went 13-for-50 with a homer. Joe Good, sent to Pittsburgh in the Vega deal, allowed 14 earned runs in 17 2/3 August innings. Omar Garcia has zero completed Phoenix appearances in the sample. Check their actual lineup and bullpen assignments.

Phoenix got an August 19 swing from Monge

July 28, #19865. Alex Monge has three homers and 10 RBI in 75 August plate appearances for Phoenix, with a homer in the cutoff win over Dallas. Kerry Darling made three August starts for Houston, allowing eight earned runs in 25 innings. The moves have yielded playing time on both sides.

Detroit gained starts and the ABC West added relief

Kennie Murdock, from San Diego (#19867), made four Detroit starts with nine earned runs in 31 2/3 August innings. Harry Benjamin pitched two scoreless innings for Seattle (#19866). Las Vegas' Bill Hall allowed seven earned runs in 4 2/3 August innings and recorded one save (#19878). Check their next actual assignments before drawing a conclusion about either bullpen.

Five leading storylines

1. Phoenix and San Francisco go straight to the question of first

The two are tied after San Francisco held a six-game lead. The first game settles their head-to-head position for the night, and four games can separate them by four. After the series, see whether the difference came from repeated run creation, pitching, or a single outsized game. Keep Los Angeles' record alongside theirs.

2. The NBC Central runs through Chicago

Chicago hosts Detroit four times and Dallas twice before Detroit visits Dallas. The Fire enter two off first and one off the wild-card pace. Follow all three clubs' finals to see whether Chicago's six home games change the division lead or move the Fire into wild-card position.

3. Philadelphia's four games at Boston are a direct test

Four back and four road games against first place. The Fury can draw level with a sweep. After August 23, check whether their pitching and run support carried over from one game to the next and whether Pittsburgh closed on either club.

4. The ABC West asks Seattle two separate questions

Can Seattle cut Las Vegas' division margin, and where will it be relative to Denver when their four begin? Keep Denver's two in between against Las Vegas on the same board. Check how much of the movement came from the clubs meeting directly.

5. Miami needs to bring a smaller number home

At 4.5 back, four wins alone against Charlotte leave Miami half a game short. Miami's first six games and Charlotte's road games at Tampa Bay and Atlanta will determine the gap entering the finale. If the first six are complete as scheduled, a gap of 3.5 or less lets a four-game Miami sweep overtake Charlotte.

Matchups to follow first

1. PHO at SF, Aug 20-23. 2. DET at DAL, Aug 27-30. 3. PHI at BOS, Aug 20-23. 4. CHA at MIA, Aug 27-30. 5. DEN at SEA, Aug 27-30. Also keep the Chicago home sequence and LV at DEN on Aug 24-25 visible.

More races and matchups to watch

Houston's August 20 workload

Watch for a posted final in #1113 and see which pitchers work the two fixtures. Follow the regularly scheduled series separately.

A third team in either West

Track Los Angeles and Seattle. Check whether either club enters the last four with a path to change first place or the wild-card order.

Keep the samples in proportion

One 18-run game, a hot ten-day bat, and a new reliever's first few innings warrant follow-up. Look for repeat production, documented lineup changes, and the game situations that explain the usage.

ABL Advance viewing guide · August 20-26

Openers and the two-game turn

Follow the ABL 411 alongside EAB's games and standings. After each slate, look for the leader, the closest gap, the result that changed it and the next game that could move it again. August 23, 26 and 30 are the checkpoints for comparing all six divisions and both wild-card races.

Thu 20 · 13 listed games

PHO at SF, PHI at BOS, DET at CHI, LV at SEA. Start with the August 19 standings. Watch who takes the first game between the West co-leaders. St. Louis at Houston #1113 is listed at 15:05 and Houston at St. Louis #1462 at 19:05. Follow them as separate fixtures and count each once it is final.

Fri 21 · 12 listed games

Game 2 in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago and Seattle. Use the opening day's actual gaps. In the NBC Central, read DAL at MIN alongside DET at CHI. In the NBC East, compare CHA at TB with MIA at ATL before assigning movement.

Sat 22 · 12 listed games

PHI at BOS, LV at SEA, DET at CHI. Read the third games for sweep or split opportunities. Follow PHO at SF as well, with the box score showing any changes to the starters or lineups.

Sun 23 · 12 listed games

All twelve four-game series close on the schedule. Compare all six division standings and both wild-card boards once the first series finish. Look for any finale with first place directly at stake.

Mon 24 · 7 listed games

DAL at CHI, PHO at LA, LV at DEN, HOU at CIN. Seven two-game sets open. Also follow CHA at ATL, SF at SD and PIT at PHI. The other five pairs wait until Tuesday. Read the new opponent and venue before revisiting each race.

Tue 25 · 12 listed games

Seven finales and five new openers. Close Monday's two-game series. TB at MIA, MIN at DET, NY at BOS, STL at NAS and SEA at POR open today. Follow the Monday finales and Tuesday openers as two distinct sets.

Wed 26 · 5 listed games

Five Tuesday series finish. Only those five pairings are listed. Review all six divisions with idle clubs carried forward at their existing records. Compare the resulting gaps before Thursday's four-game finales.

How to read an end-of-day board

A half-game margin often reflects different games played. Read the W-L next to it. If a game stays unfinished, look for its final on the schedule before counting it in the standings.

ABL Advance viewing guide · August 27-30

The closing four and what follows

Follow the ABL 411 alongside EAB's games and standings. After each slate, look for the leader, the closest gap, the result that changed it and the next game that could move it again. August 23, 26 and 30 are the checkpoints for comparing all six divisions and both wild-card races.

Thu 27 · 12 listed games

CHA at MIA, DET at DAL, LA at SF, DEN at SEA. Use the records and listed venues at first pitch to see what each series could change. BOS at PIT and CIN at STL add two races to the board.

Fri 28 · 12 listed games

Game 2 in Miami, Dallas, San Francisco and Seattle. Read which gap can still close in the remaining two games. Check the box scores for batting orders, starting pitchers and relief appearances that show how the deadline arrivals are being used.

Sat 29 · 12 listed games

Third game of each closing series. After the finals, calculate what one game can change Sunday. Check ties by winning percentage. Look for a Sunday matchup that can directly change a division or wild-card position.

Sun 30 · 12 listed games

All twelve scheduled series finales. Compare the results and both wild-card races with the opening boards for Baseball Matters. Check the schedule for any games that remain unfinished or have moved.

After August 30 · Baseball Matters

Which division or wild-card leads changed, and on which dates? How much came from contenders facing each other? Which acquisitions changed their role or repeatedly delivered in it? Which hot or cold stretches carried into the block? Which club finishes with an unresolved game, a roster question, or a new path into September?

August 31 · Final Conference Challenges

Use the August 30 standings as a starting point for Monday's eight listed cross-division games: ATL at DAL, TB at LA, MIA at PHO, DET at SF, CIN at NY, PIT at DEN, STL at POR, NAS at SEA. Recheck DET at SF, MIA at PHO and PIT at DEN against the actual wild-card picture. The league schedules roster expansion from 26 to 40 on September 1. Check the team rosters and box scores for confirmed call-ups and appearances.