

Lockout over? NFL owners approve CBA

The NFL lockout may be nearing an end, as owners voted Thursday to OK a new collective bargaining agreement, but as of press time players had yet to vote on the deal.

"Hopefully we can all work quickly, expeditiously, and get this agreement done," NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said.



Among the terms, there would be no change to the 16-game season format until at least 2013; rookies would sign four-year contracts with an option for a fifth year; and salary caps plus benefits would top out at \$142.4 million per club in 2011.

The Aug. 7 Hall of Fame game between Chicago and St. Louis will be canceled, and the preseason could begin Aug. 11, assuming players ratify the deal. (AMNY/REUTERS)

3B Wright set to return to Friday's lineup vs Marlins

The Mets' lineup will get a big boost Friday night with the return of David Wright.

The third baseman, who has spent the last two months on the disabled list with a stress fracture in his lower back, will be activated Friday and start against the Florida Marlins. (NEWSDAY)

Players who could be on the move

The race to the MLB playoffs is filled with teams scheming to position themselves ahead of their division rivals. Each of MLB's six divisions has a second-place team 4.5 games or less behind the division leader, which has created a frenzied trade market. In lieu of the July 31 trade deadline, here are five deals which make sense for both buyers and sellers. (KYLE STACK)

Carlos Beltran, OF, Mets Ideal landing spot: Giants

San Francisco's anemic offense, which ranks in the bottom five in MLB in numerous offensive categories including OPS, could use the boost that Beltran (.917 OPS, 61 RBI) can provide. And the Giants have the requisite prospects to entice the Mets. The Phillies are also a sensible fit.

Heath Bell, RP, San Diego Padres Ideal landing spot: Phillies

Extended injuries to relievers Brad Lidge and Jose Contreras have forced the Phils to overuse Ryan Madson and Antonio Bastardo. Acquiring Bell (27 saves) would ease their stressed bullpen, although they'd likely have to part with an elite prospect. Bell could be paired in a deal with teammate Ryan Ludwick, who fits Philly's need for a right-hand-hitting corner outfielder.

Ubaldo Jimenez, SP, Colorado Rockies Ideal landing spot: Yankees

This is an unlikely trade during the regular season, but it could happen during the off-season, when the Yankees could look to reload for 2012 with a high-grade player such as Jimenez, who's having an off year (4.00 ERA, 1.31 WHIP).

He'd likely cost the Yanks their top pitching and catching prospects.

Hunter Pence, OF, Houston Astros Ideal landing spot: Red Sox

A case of the rich getting richer, although the BoSox would have to further deplete their stellar farm system to obtain Pence. But the Red Sox need a right-handed hitter in right field, and 28-year-old offensive machines like Pence (.316 AVG, .845 OPS) aren't available every day.

Michael Bourn, OF, Houston Astros Ideal landing spot: Brewers

The Brewers lost slick-fielding center fielder Carlos Gomez to a fractured left clavicle Wednesday, and with the Brewers intent on making the playoffs, Bourn (35 steals in 40 attempts, .353 OBP) becomes a reasonable replacement. The Brewers' farm system is thin after previous trades, but they could likely pull a deal together.

(PHOTOS: GETTY)

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Last night's Yankees-Rays game ended too late for this edition.

TV SPORTS FRIDAY

GOLF
ESPN2 Senior British Open, Round Two, noon

MLB
SNY Mets (RHP Mike Pelfrey, 5-9, 4.67) at Florida

(RHP Chris Volstad, 5-8, 5.59), 7 p.m.

MY9 Oakland (RHP Trevor Cahill, 8-8, 3.16) at Yankees (RHP Phil Hughes, 1-2, 8.44), 7 p.m.

Wacky fifth inning prevents Mets from sweep of Cardinals

The Mets turned a manageable two-run deficit into an insurmountable hole, thanks to a host of head-scratching errors that sealed their fate in a 6-2 loss to the St. Louis Cardinals on Thursday.

With the Cardinals up 2-0 in the fifth, Daniel Descalso doubled before Mets starter

ST. LOUIS (52-47) 6

METS (49-50) 2

at Citi Field

Jonathon Niese walked the pitcher, Jake Westbrook, who was hitting .115.

Nick Punto then reached on a fielder's choice as Lucas Duda tried to throw out Westbrook at second. But Duda's throw hit the pitcher on the shoulder and the ball rolled toward the outfield, allowing Descalso to score and putting the Cards up 3-0.

And the inning only got

wackier: Jon Jay's single ricocheted off the second-base bag and went into center field. Angel Pagan fielded the ball and, curiously, fired it toward first base — but unfortunately for the Mets, no one was covering the bag. Westbrook and Punto scored easily, resulting in a 5-0 deficit. (NEWSDAY)



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