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Weekend Watch: June 12-14

Rasmus, Rivera, Wilson rapidly ascending fantasy ranks

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By Kyle Stack / MLB.com

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As the season nears its midpoint, owners look for ways to get any edge they can in the standings.

Which under-the-radar players are worth adding? Who's cooling off as the trade winds begin to blow? Find out in this edition of the Watch.

Keep an eye on

Colby Rasmus, OF, Cardinals: Rasmus has turned over a new leaf recently after battling through a rash of struggles at the plate in April and May. Despite a shaky 21.5 percent strikeout rate and a .229 average over the season's first two months, the rookie refused to relent, kicking off June with a double and a homer in his first two at-bats to begin a 10-game hitting streak. Rasmus has stepped up his production significantly in that stretch, going 15-for-32 (.469 AVG) with six doubles, two homers and just three strikeouts. With the 22-year-old playing less like a jittery rookie and more like the star he's expected to become, owners would be wise to make a move while they still can.

Juan Rivera, OF, Angels: With injuries and inconsistent play limiting Rivera to just three seasons of 100-plus games during his first eight years in the bigs, it's been difficult to rely on the outfielder for consistent fantasy production. The 30-year-old has been the picture of dependability in recent weeks, though, stepping seamlessly into the void created by Vladimir Guerrero's shift to full-time designated hitter duties. Rivera has gone 16-for-42 (.381 AVG) with six doubles, two long balls and 11 RBIs in his last 11 games, delivering six multi-hit efforts in that span while upping his slugging percentage roughly 50 points. If he can stay healthy, the resurgent veteran will merit consideration in all formats.

C.J. Wilson, RP, Rangers: Wilson seemed a fantasy afterthought at the start of this season with Frank Francisco racking up the saves in Arlington. Things have quickly changed, though, as Francisco has already suffered through one stint on the disabled list and may be headed for another if his lingering shoulder issues aren't soon resolved. That's good news for Wilson, who left little doubt about his abilities to handle the job by nailing down his sixth save in seven opportunities on June 11. True, Wilson stumbled to an unsightly 6.02 ERA over 46 1/3 frames a year ago, but he did enter '09 with 38 saves in 45 career chances. Given that he's now the clear-cut ninth-inning option for the American League West-leading Rangers, Wilson should be owned almost universally.

Heating up

David Wright, 3B, Mets
17-for-26 (.654 AVG), 6 XBH, 5 RBIs, 7 R, 5 SB in last 7 G

Adam Lind, OF, Blue Jays
16-for-33 (.485 AVG), 4 HR, 7 RBIs, 8 R in last 8 G



Rasmus' three-run shot

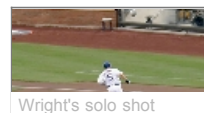
Duration: 00:00:49

06.10.09: Colby Rasmus hits a three-run home run to right, giving the Cardinals an early 3-0 lead in the first inning

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Andre Ethier, OF, Dodgers
13-for-31 (.419 AVG), 5 HR, 8 RBIs in last 8 G

Cooling down



Mike Cameron, OF, Brewers
2-for-21 (.095 AVG), 1 XBH, 0 SB, 12 Ks in last 7 G



Ian Kinsler, 2B, Rangers
2-for-21 (.095 AVG), 1 XBH, 0 RBIs, 0 R, 0 SB in last 5 G



B.J. Upton, OF, Rays
3-for-22 (.136 AVG), 1 XBH, 1 RBI, 1 R in last 5 G

Matching up



Ted Lilly, SP, Cubs
1.29 ERA, 0.80 WHIP, 8.2 K/9 ratio at home in '09 (4.40 ERA, 1.26 WHIP, 6.5 K/9 ratio on road)



J.D. Drew, OF, Red Sox
.351 AVG, 1.163 OPS in 57 career AB at Citizens Bank Park



Adam LaRoche, 1B, Pirates
.333 AVG, 1.012 OPS at home in '09 (.164 AVG, .622 OPS on road)

Beat the Streak picks



SAT: Carlos Beltran, OF, Mets
.350 AVG in 40 career AB vs. NYY LHP Andy Pettitte
.383 AVG on road in '09



SUN: Pablo Sandoval, C/1B/3B, Giants
10-for-19 (.526 AVG) in last 5 G
.376 AVG at home in '09

Home Run Beat the Streak picks



SAT: Mark Teixeira, 1B, Yankees
3 HR in last 7 G
.743 SLG at home in '09



SUN: Chase Utley, 2B, Phillies
3 HR in last 3 G
.661 SLG in day games in '09

Kyle Stack is a fantasy reporter for MLB.com. This story was not subject to the approval of Major League Baseball or its clubs.

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Weekend: Rasmus, Rivera making moves

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