

DISPATCH • PITCHING & ROSTER

Yanase Done for the Year in Texas — a Reminder the Mets Got Out at the Right Time

NEW YORK — The Rangers announced Sunday that right-hander Katsuo Yanase will miss the rest of the season with shoulder inflammation, an injury doctors say will keep the 31-year-old sidelined at least five months. For a Mets front office that shipped Yanase out of Flushing over the winter, the timing lands as validation of a call that looked, at the time, like a coin flip.

Yanase was a fixture of the Mets rotation for four seasons, peaking in 2028 with a 16-3 record and a 2.45 ERA before backing up in 2029 with an 8-11, 4.66 line that read like the first real crack in the foundation. New York moved on that winter rather than bet on a bounce-back from a pitcher already on the wrong side of 30 — general terms of the return haven't been widely circulated, but the point of the deal was always the rotation spot it opened up, not the prospects that came back for it.

"Every front office has a Yanase-type decision at some point — a good pitcher, a track record, and a number in the ERA column that's trending the wrong way a year before it becomes undeniable. Most clubs wait for undeniable. New York didn't."

— RIVAL NL PITCHING EVALUATOR, GRANTED ANONYMITY

With the rotation spot open, the Mets turned around and signed Garrett Crochet as a free agent — a move that has aged about as well as a roster decision can. Crochet has been the best pitcher on New York's staff in each of the last two Octobers and was at it again in April, a 3.41 ERA and 32 strikeouts across five starts to open this season. He's had rougher nights too, Sunday's 4-earned-run outing against Washington among them, but the gap between "a true No. 1 with an occasional bad start" and "an aging arm with a rising ERA on the injured list for the year" isn't close. Yanase, for his part, wasn't performing badly in Texas before the injury — 6-9 with a 3.45 ERA and 110 strikeouts over 109.2 innings across 17 starts — which only sharpens the point. The Mets didn't get out because he'd become bad. They got out a year before the shoulder made the decision for them.

YANASE, LAST 2 MLB SEASONS	2029 NYM: 8-11, 4.66 ERA • 2030 TEX: 6-9, 3.45 ERA (season over, shoulder)
CROCHET SINCE ARRIVING	Rotation's ace two Octobers running; 3.41 ERA through April 2030
THE TRADE	Yanase (RHP, 31) out of NYM • return unremarkable, rotation spot was the return that mattered

IN BRIEF

- **Standings:** The Mets sit 48-29, first in the NL East, two games clear after Sunday's walk-off win over Washington.
- **Yanase's outlook:** At 31 and now facing a lengthy shoulder recovery, questions about his next contract are starting a year earlier than Texas would like.

- **The bigger picture:** A pitching decision that looked defensible-but-debatable in the moment reads a lot more like foresight with six months of hindsight attached.

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