

# SPORTS

The Detroit News Saturday, October 3, 2009 | Section B



## Wings take early lead but lose to Blues in opener

RED WINGS, 3B

WHITE SOX 8, TIGERS 0

# Throwing it away



Magglio Ordonez had one of the Tigers three hits (all singles) and is one of the lineup's few bright spots as of late.



Carlos Guillen can't come up with this ball, leading to Jermaine Dye's double and a 2-0 Sox lead in the fourth.

## Should Tigers miss playoffs, blame the bats

**B**aseball connoisseurs saw Jake Peavy pitch a masterly game Friday night as the Chicago White Sox fricasseed the Tigers, 8-0, at Comerica Park. But you might have wondered if it were Peavy or someone else who had stuck a baseball down the Tigers' throats in 2009?



LYNN HENNING

It looked a lot like the same game I saw this season from Ian Snell, Felix Hernandez, Jason Hammel, Brian Duensing, Robinson Tejeda, David Price, Carl Pavano, Clayton Richard, Joba Chamberlain, CC Sabathia, Dallas Braden, Brett Anderson, Felipe Paulino, Jose Contreras, Ervin Santana, Daisuke Matsuzaka, David Hernandez, Zack Greinke, Mark Buehrle, Phil Hughes and any of the relief pitchers who joined all those starters in holding the Tigers to one run or less this season.

And because all those pitchers found the Tigers to be not the toughest brandishers of a bat, manager Jim Leyland's team has two games to show why it's worthy of heading off next week to the American League playoffs.

It might not happen. And if it doesn't, can anyone truthfully say they were shocked?

The Tigers are in trouble this weekend, beyond any justification for being so stressed, because they don't hit the way a playoff contender must craft an offense.

Part of the explanation for having been in first place for 162 days this season is they normally pitch sturdily and field the ball cleanly and with range in the infield (it includes catcher Gerald Laird's arm).

The other half of a not-so-complex equation is that, as we know, the AL Central Division is the gift that continues to give, at least if you're the Tigers.

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## Leyland to club: Don't expect help

Counting on losses by Twins (yes, they won again) isn't an option

BY TOM GAGE  
The Detroit News

**Detroit** — Yeah, but if you won those Russian Nutcracker tickets, it wasn't a complete loss.

Clincher Two turned out to be as bad as Clincher One — except no one threw a pitch at Adam Everett.

### Tigers magic number

# 2



**More online:** Join the discussion in Tigers Talk, browse photo galleries and read baseball blogs at [detnews.com/tigers](http://detnews.com/tigers).

The Tigers defeat coincided with the first night of Fan Appreciation Weekend at Comerica Park. A lot of prizes were given away, including those Nutcracker tickets.

But a free tire alignment isn't what you really wanted. It's not the reason you attended — although with 34,726 on hand, good seats available, it wasn't a sellout.

What you wanted to see was the Tigers take an assertive step in the right direction, the step they

Please see Tigers, Page 4B

## Playoff scenarios

### Tigers win division:

- With two wins
- With one win and one Twins loss
- With no wins and two Twins losses

### Twins win division:

- With two wins and two Tigers losses

### Tie, one-game playoff:

- Tigers win no games and the Twins win one games
- Tigers win one game and the Twins win two games

## Steelers are draw for Lions

Nothing sells like winning.

The Lions have done brisk business at the box office all week for the next home game — against the Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers on Oct. 11.

The Lions have sold about 10,000 tickets since beating the Redskins, said **Bob Raymond**, the Lions' vice president of business operations and head of ticket sales.

"That's very good for us," Raymond said Friday morning. "We got a lot of buzz from the Washington game."

"We created a lot of momentum. A win against Chicago would really help."

It's likely the Lions are well within reach of selling out the Steelers game before the NFL deadline of 72 hours before kickoff to lift the blackout for local television.



Kathy Willens/Associated Press

Golfer Greg Norman was married 15 months to tennis star Chris Evert.

## Norman, Evert have separated

Just 15 months after they were married, golf star **Greg Norman** and tennis great **Chris Evert** announced they have separated.

Norman and Evert, each in the Hall of Fame in their respective sports, did not say whether they planned to divorce.

They were married June 28, 2008.

## 14-year-old girl tied for LPGA lead

Ninth-grader **Alexis Thompson**

shot a 3-under 69 for a share of the lead with **Lorena Ochoa** and three others at 10-under 134 after the second round of the Navistar LPGA Classic in Prattville, Ala.

Thompson, 14, from Coral Springs, Fla., is trying to become the youngest winner in LPGA Tour history.

## Contact us

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# U-M, MSU fans seem to be very confused



ANGELIQUE S. CHENGELIS

**More inside:** How Michigan, Michigan State match up. 2B

**W**hat happened to the days when Michigan-Michigan State week meant the regurgitated, but always amusing, stories about the Michigan graduate who married the Michigan State grad, and how on one day of the year they're bitter enemies?

What about all that venomous talk among the Michigan and Michigan State fans, the nasty jokes, the vicious verbal, trash-talking jabs?

It's been awfully tame and downright boring around these college-football parts the last week, hasn't it?

Honestly, what was the best Michigan-Michigan State joke you heard in the office, on the radio or out and about? Can't think of it? That's because there hasn't been the kind of buzz that dominates this time of the year.

Hey, why not blame the economy,

since everyone else does?

In a lot of ways, it hasn't really felt like a Michigan-Michigan State football week, and that's stunning since the annual grudge match is today at Spartan Stadium in what is expected to be a dreary day weather-wise, the kind of day that tests fast-break offenses and makes special teams of the utmost importance.

Perhaps the general malaise regarding today's game boils down

to this — Michigan State is an underachieving 1-3, featuring close losses to Central Michigan and Notre Dame as well as a mediocre defense, and Michigan is an overachieving 4-0 team with a national ranking and a mediocre defense.

And because of that reality, it seems neither fan base really has a good feel for today's game.

Please see Rivalry, Page 2B

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