

Films disrupt business downtown



INSIDE
Stocks, 8B
Comics, 9B
Puzzles, 11B
TV listings, 11B

SPORTS

The Detroit News Wednesday, October 7, 2009 | Section B



Lidstrom, Rafalski can be relied upon
RED WINGS, 3B

TWINS 6, TIGERS 5, 12 INNINGS

HEART-WRENCHING

TIGERS' COLLAPSE COMPLETED

CASILLA'S SINGLE WINS IT IN 12TH

PORCELLO FANS CAREER-HIGH 8

Game recap

The big stats

3 Teams since 1901 that have blown a three-game lead with four scheduled games left in the season: these Tigers, the 1980 Astros and the 1982 Brewers, but the Astros and Brewers both won tiebreakers to make the playoffs.

165 Days the Tigers spent in first place, including every day since beating the Indians on May 10, before the Twins walked away with the American League Central championship Tuesday night.

He said it

"It's hard for me to believe there is a loser in this game." — **Jim Leyland**, Tigers manager, after his team played 163 games — and 12 innings in No. 163 — before surrendering their lead in the AL Central for good.

A fitting end

The Tigers have seen it all in blowing what at one point in September was a seven-game lead, and Tuesday was no exception:

■ **Top of ninth:** After Placido Polanco took a questionable strike three call, Magglio Ordonez lined into a double play as the Tigers came up empty with runners on first and third and no outs.

■ **Bottom of 10th:** Right after Brandon Inge put the Tigers up 5-4 with a two-out double, Michael Cuddyer hit a sinking liner that left fielder Ryan Raburn would've been better off playing on one hop. Instead, he slid, the ball got by him and Cuddyer led off with a triple.

■ **Bottom of 10th:** While Cuddyer scored on Matt Tolbert's slow-rolling single to center, Raburn made up for his gaffe and kept the game going by catching Nick Punto's fly ball and firing a strike to gun down tagging Alexi Casilla at home.

■ **Top of 12th:** With the bases loaded on two one-out walks (one intentional) and a Don Kelly single, Brandon Inge's jersey was clipped by an inside pitch from reliever Bobby Keppel, but plate umpire Randy Marsh didn't make the call — and cost the Tigers the go-ahead run. A brief argument led to nothing, and Inge followed by hitting a grounder that Nick Punto turned into a nifty force at the plate.

For more on key plays, see **5B**

Cabrera mashes

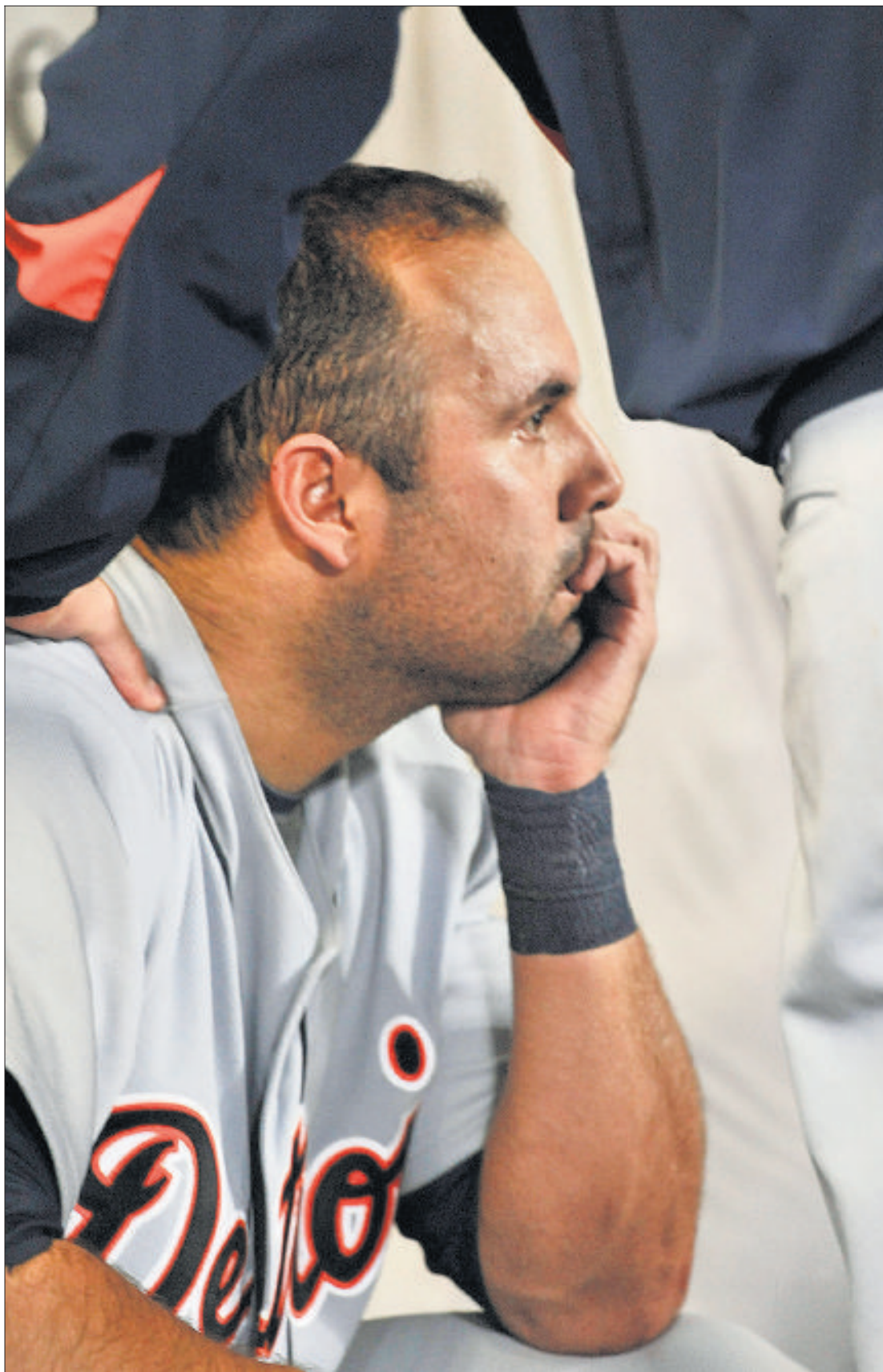
In his first action since the story about his Saturday-night escapades exploded, **Miguel Cabrera** played like a man who wasn't in a hurry to get back to Detroit.

Doing everything he could to get Detroit into a playoff game in New York tonight, Cabrera hit a leadoff double in the second inning — he didn't score — then hit a mammoth two-run homer in the third to put the Tigers up 3-0.

He finished 2-for-5 with a walk and a strikeout and hit .324, fourth in the American League.

More online: For complete coverage, visit detroitnews.com and edetroitnews.com.

More baseball: Lynn Henning's column, Tony Paul's playoff preview and much more, **4-6B**



Robin Buckson/The Detroit News

Tigers catcher Gerald Laird gets consoled while watching the Twins celebrate on the Metrodome field following another classic tiebreaker game — it was the third one-game playoff in as many years decided by a single run.

From 7 up with month to play, season comes to bitter end

BY TOM GAGE
The Detroit News

Minneapolis — First prize, a trip to New York City.

Second prize: Be serious. No such thing.

Other than a sad flight home to Detroit

On Alexi Casilla's single to right off Fernando Rodney in the 12th inning, driving in the speedy Carlos Gomez from second base, the Minnesota Twins — with a 6-5 victory — completed their improbable surge to overtake the Tigers and win the American League Central.

The Tigers had been in first, by themselves or a few days of sharing it, since May 10.

But when the dust settled after a truly classic 163rd game, they finished second. Out of the playoffs. Out, over and done.

It will be the Twins, not the Tigers, facing the New York Yankees tonight at Yankee Stadium in the first game of the division series.

Down the hall from the Tigers, you could hear the joy of the Twins. Players roamed the corridors with champagne bottles.

The onfield celebration made it look like they had won the World Series.

In the Tigers' clubhouse, though, there was silence, gloom and already a few good-byes.

There the also was the sudden awareness that the season, so likely to continue three weeks ago, was over.

Some of the talk was about the pitch that hit Brandon Inge in the top of the 12th inning with the bases loaded, but wasn't called. Umpire Randy Marsh said he hadn't heard it.

Replays showed that Inge was hit, however — and the Tigers should have been back in front. It wasn't to be.

"That's the thing," said Inge, "no matter what we did, it was like it wasn't to be."

Please see *Tigers*, Page 6B

Missed hit-by-pitch call costly to Tigers

BY TOM GAGE
The Detroit News

Minneapolis — They might have blown that lead, too.

In fact, if it had been only one run, they would have, because the Twins scored in the bottom of the 12th.

But the Tigers didn't get the call they felt they should have gotten in the top of the 12th when a pitch hit Brandon Inge in the shirt with the bases loaded.

And wasn't called. Plate umpire Randy Marsh didn't see it, didn't hear it — but most importantly, didn't call it.

"I did not have the ball hitting him," said Marsh after the run the Twins scored in the 12th turned out to be the winning run

Tuesday night, instead of the tying run or perhaps one that merely reduced the Tigers lead.

After all, there's no telling what might have happened if Marsh had said, yes, the pitch hit Inge.

One run would have been in, and instead of there being two outs when Gerald Laird came up to bat with the bases still loaded after Inge's eventual grounder to second ended up as a fielder's choice at home, there would have been only one.

But, again, the Tigers had blown other leads.

They might have blown this one, too.

Please see *Umpire*, Page 6B



Robin Buckson/The Detroit News

Tigers third baseman Brandon Inge pleads his case to umpire Randy Marsh that he was indeed hit by the pitch that would've scored a run.

Probert misses dancing mark

Sadly, **Bob Probert's** ice dancing career might be over.

The popular former Red Wings goon and his partner **Kristina Lenko** were the first couple eliminated from the Canadian reality show *Battle of the Blades*, which features eight former hockey players and figure skaters. Fittingly, Probert, 52, and Lenko performed to Steppenwolf's "Born to be Wild."



Probert

Probert teams of former hockey players and figure skaters. Fittingly, Probert, 52, and Lenko performed to Steppenwolf's "Born to be Wild."

Did Knox really score on his kickoff return?

Lions coach **Jim Schwartz** might have missed an opportunity to wipe out the 102-yard kickoff return touchdown by Chicago Bears receiver **Johnny Knox** in Sunday's 48-24 loss to the Bears.

The replay appears to show Knox releasing the ball before crossing the goal line.

The replay would've probably been inconclusive had Schwartz challenged the play. But there could've been two possible rulings: a fumble in the end zone and touchback, or 5-yard penalty for an illegal forward pass.

Tim Twentyman



M. Spencer Green/Associated Press

Johnny Knox's 102-yard kickoff return sparked the Bears' dominant second half.

Ohio State fans jealous of Cincinnati's ranking

The scarlet and gray is green with envy.

Ohio State is ranked ninth in the Associated Press Top 25, while in-state rival Cincinnati is eighth.

Almost immediately after the poll came out, radio talk shows in Columbus were flooded with outraged fans. Cincinnati coach **Brian Kelly** made light of the question of who would win a Battle for the Buckeye State.

"You settle these questions on the field," he said. "Ohio State doesn't play Cincinnati, though my son played (them) in PlayStation the other day, and Cincinnati won 91-0. So maybe we can use that."

Limbaugh interested in buying St. Louis Rams

Rush Limbaugh is teaming with St. Louis Blues owner **Dave Checketts** in a bid to buy the Rams of the NFL. Will the talk show host call them the St. Louis Elephants?

Contact us

You can reach Ruben Luna, Sports Editor, by calling (313) 223-4642, faxing (313) 496-5248 or at ruben.luna@detnews.com.