

## A Rain-Soaked Saturday Win for the Mets and for Santana a 2-1 Lost on Sunday



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Pirates CF, Andrew McCutchen received the 'Larry Doby Award' for his outstanding play the previous season. (Photo Danny Torres)

PITTSBURGH—Sitting inside the spacious PNC Park press box, I couldn't help but wonder if Saturday night's game would go the full nine innings. Prior to the start of the 7:10 pm game, the weather forecast wasn't too promising. It was cloudy and already a few rain drops had started to fall. For Pittsburgh, whether it's rain or snow, be prepared for something. That something would be a 20-minute delay and eventually after 1 hour and 38 minutes a Mets shortened 5-1 victory over the Pirates.

It was Heritage Day-Josh Gibson night at PNC Park and the 'Buccos' and 'Amazin's' would don replica Negro League jerseys. The Pirates honored the Pittsburgh Crawfords while the visiting Mets were the NY Cubans. There was also a pre-game ceremony where Pirates CF, Andrew McCutchen received the 'Larry Doby Award' for his outstanding play the previous season. The presenters were Sean Gibson, executive director of the Josh Gibson Foundation and Raymond Doswell, Vice-President of curatorial services. McCutchen is truly one of the few bright spots in the Pirates line-up.

Jon Niese (8-5), who threw 83 pitches over 5 innings would strikeout five batters, walk a batter and only give up one run. The losing pitcher, James McDonald (2-3) would give up six hits, five runs and five walks. What surely was frustrating for Pirates manager, John Russell, was seeing his starter walk Niese twice in a rain-shortened game.

With the Mets ahead 2-1 going into the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, one would hear an unbelievable roar from the fans (Let's not forget this is Pittsburgh) as David Wright hit his 19<sup>th</sup> homer of the year. It was a blast to left-center that caused a ripple effect throughout the stadium as Mets fans who journeyed to the land of **Roberto Clemente** hoping their presence would give their team a much-needed win AWAY from CitiField. The Mets still have an impressive record at home.



**Statue of Roberto Clemente by Susan Wagner at the entrance of PNC park dedicated in 1994 (Photo Danny Torres)**

As the rain continued to fall, the umpiring crew after an hour and six minute delay decided to call the game. A homer by Wright gave the Mets a much-needed victory

Going into Sunday's matinee, Santana (10-8) knows he doesn't have a reliable closer: meaning his mission is to simply complete the game. Unfortunately he pitched well enough but gave up two costly long balls to former Mets Lastings Milledge and José Tabata. Once again which has been for most the season, the Mets' bats were silent. With this start, Santana tossed his third complete game and the Mets once again miss the opportunity to sweep the Pirates.

For the record, the last time the Mets (62-62) had a three- series sweep was against the Indians back in June. That month, Santana pitched the series opener against Cleveland. He was 5-3 then. This is already the third week of August and he only has five more wins to show.

Once again, the Mets are back to playing .500 baseball. Not too much of a surprise.

Posted by WGR