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Max Scherzer Seeks to Build Momentum After Strong Showing Against Oakland

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After months of battling injuries, Max Scherzer delivered an ace-like outing that could signal a turning point in his season with the Toronto Blue Jays.

Max Scherzer gave the Toronto Blue Jays a much-needed boost Friday night, showing flashes of his former dominance in a 7–6 win over the Oakland Athletics. The veteran right-hander struck out eight and allowed just five hits across six innings, marking his first win in nearly a year in what has been a frustrating stretch of injuries.

Scherzer kept Oakland quiet through five strong innings, retiring five straight batters by strikeout at one point. While the Athletics did manage to get to him in the sixth inning, with Nick Kurtz hitting a two-run home run and Tyler Soderstrom following with a solo shot, Scherzer limited the damage and exited with the lead intact.

“He was dominating areas up and down and out,” Blue Jays manager John Schneider said. “He is who he is for a reason.”

It was Scherzer’s first victory since July 25, 2023, when he was still with the Texas Rangers and earned a 2–1 win over the Chicago White Sox. Not long after that outing, shoulder fatigue sidelined him for over a month. That setback followed an offseason back surgery that had already kept him off the mound to start last year.

After signing a one-year, \$15.5 million deal with Toronto, hopes were high that Scherzer would provide leadership and reliability in the rotation until injury concerns resurfaced. This time, a thumb injury forced him onto the 60-day injured list, delaying his debut with the Blue Jays and raising questions about how much he had left in the tank.

Injury Comeback

Now four starts into his return, Scherzer finally looks comfortable on the mound. His command, velocity, and poise were all on display Friday in West Sacramento, California, as he carved up an Athletics lineup that struggled to make solid contact. Through five innings, the only hits he allowed were singles to Kurtz and Soderstrom.

“My body’s good,” Scherzer said after the game. “As long as my thumb is healthy, I can be myself. I can pitch like this. It’s all about my thumb.”

At 39, Scherzer has nothing left to prove, but he remains as competitive as ever. His presence could prove pivotal with Toronto sitting in the middle of a tight American League playoff race. The Blue Jays have struggled with rotation depth this season, and a fully healthy Scherzer offers a potential stabilizing force, both on the field and in the clubhouse.

Despite some late-inning tension from the bullpen, Toronto’s offense held on to secure the win. And while the scoreline was close, the bigger story was Scherzer, not just getting through a start, but thriving.

For now, it's one start at a time. But if Friday night is any indication, Max Scherzer might still have a few big games left in him.