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Boston professor will record final out of Game 6 of the World Series

Posted by Matt Rocheleau October 28, 2013 08:45 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Boston professor Andy Andres will record the final out of the World Series' sixth – and possibly final – game.

No glove, bat or ball will be necessary. He will use only a pen, paper and a keyboard.

The Cambridge resident, who teaches at Boston University, Tufts and MIT, moonlights as a “datacaster,” or scorekeeper, for Major League Baseball.

His job is to record everything that happens – each pitch, hit, error, foul ball, pickoff, obstruction call, you-name-it – and his scorekeeping is used to help create an official game box score as well as to update, in real-time, popular online game-tracking applications like MLB.com’s Gameday that fans monitor worldwide.

And, the longtime Boston Red Sox fan will be sitting in the Fenway Park press box Wednesday night as the league’s official datacaster for Game 6.

If the Sox were to beat the St. Louis Cardinals to win it all then, “It would be kind of cool to work that game,” said Andres. “I’d keep a copy of that score card.”

“But when I’m working, I’m not cheering. I’m on the job. The job requires you to really pay attention,” he added.

Andres is part of a three-member datacasting rotation who each work about 30 regular season Sox home games each year and also divide up playoff games when Boston makes it.

He started the job in 2010 and had not worked a playoff game until this season.

“It gets so much more amplified during the postseason,” he said. “The buzz in the press box during the World Series is so much different than the regular season.”

“I think all of us are a little more concerned because more eyes are watching,” he added. “A lot of customers for Major League Baseball rely on this data to be accurate and correct and fast, too.”

During the regular season, a datacaster digitally records each game while another MLB official based in New York monitors their work. After each game, the datacaster’s scorekeeping is then crosschecked against records kept by an official league scorer.

Discrepancies can lead to changes to either the datacaster’s or the official scorer’s

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records.

During the postseason, the MLB has an extra datacaster, working in a satellite location, independently record each game as yet another means of fact-checking.

“There’s lots of double-checking,” Andres said. “The bottom line is we want to make sure we got it right. We work together to make sure the record is correct.”

He has worked Game 2 of all three of the Sox’ playoff rounds, the American League Divisional Series, the American League Championship Series and the ongoing World Series.

Being at the ballpark and witnessing, in person, a number of thrilling, historic moments for his favorite team has been “special” and “cool.”

But, because the job requires him to be extremely focused and to work fast: “I’m not enjoying it like fans are.”

“I’m the record keeper,” he said. “It is an important role. But, I’m like the accountant in the back.”

Andres worked the game when Ortiz hit a grand slam that created an instantly-classic photo and propelled the Sox to an important victory en route to beating the Detroit Tigers in the ALCS.

“It was a very dramatic moment, but I was much more focused on making sure the scoring was right,” Andres said.

“But, I enjoy the work a lot. I enjoy the challenge of the job. I enjoy being the record keeper. It’s weird. Maybe it’s too much of the nerd in me.”

For the past 13 years, Andres has taught introductory science, mainly physics and biology, at Boston University.

His lifelong love of baseball, math and science led him to take on other jobs.

Since 2004, he has taught a [course](#) each spring at Tufts University on [sabermetrics](#), the statistical analysis of baseball that has grown in popularity over the past decade as more teams, including the Sox, have adopted philosophies that base player personnel and management decisions on objective, quantifiable data rather than more traditional, subjective methods, like instincts, gut feelings and superstition.

Each summer for the past five years, at MIT, he has run a [program](#) teaching the math and physics of baseball to local eighth- and ninth-graders and then coaching the youths as they play and practice the sport.

And, he said he will soon start teaching a baseball analysis class through BU on the online education platform edX.

Unsurprisingly, Andres did not want to give his own subjective opinion on how he feels this World Series will play out and who will win.

Instead, he said he referred to predictions posted on the website, [fangraphs.com](#), which uses sabermetrics to make its projections.

On Monday night, just before Game 5, the site said the Sox odds were 55 percent. The Cardinals’ odds were 45 percent.

But, “Baseball is baseball,” said Andres. “As we’ve seen lots of things can happen.”

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at mjrochele@gmail.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).

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i used to keep score when i could afford to go to games too. thats why they include a scorecard in the program. it made the game more memorable for me and didn't distract from the experience at all what does this guy do and teach? sounds like bs



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