

## "I struck out as many as 7 yesterday."

The Los Angeles Dodgers has released James Paxton (36), a veteran left-hander with 72 wins in the Major League. Seven starting pitchers are on the injured list, and the decision came a day after Paxton won eight games this season with outstanding pitching, which led to panic in the U.S. as well.

The Los Angeles Dodgers reported on the 23rd (Korea time) that they had dealt with Paxton for Designated Assignment (DFA) and called up prospect River Ryan (26) ahead of their showdown with the San Francisco Giants.

The timing of his release was also ironic. On the previous day, Paxton struck out a whopping seven against the Boston Red Sox, leading the Los Angeles Dodgers to victory by allowing four hits (one homer) and four walks (three runs) in five innings. As a result, he became tied for second place with the most wins in his team, but ended up releasing him.

The Major League's official website MLB.com also reported the decision, "It is surprising given that Paxton has had a good start to the season. However, as such, Paxton can be traded to a team looking for a starting pitcher in the coming days."

Moreover, it was surprising that seven starting pitchers alone are injured, with Tyler Glasnow, Walker Buehler, and Yamamoto Yoshinobu all on the injured list. There is also a sense of whether one starting pitcher should have released Paxton in an urgent situation.

Paxton's ability to play innings, which is not reliable, is cited as the first reason. While starting 18 games, Paxton only pitched 89 ½ innings. He played in less than five innings per game, which is attributed to unstable ball control, as shown in the 4.8 walks per nine innings. Although he has not been a good player with three walks per nine innings in his career, he has made up for his shortcomings by displaying strong ball control with more than 11 strikeouts per nine innings. This year, however, he has displayed ups and downs in his strikeout ability, with

only 6.4 strikeouts per nine innings, and thus has become a player who has virtually no advantage.

On top of that, starting with the four consecutive home games against San Francisco, the main starting pitchers such as Clayton Kershaw and Glasnow returned, and traffic arrangement was also needed.

Ryan, who replaced Paxton, is one of the top four prospects in the Los Angeles Dodgers team. He was drafted by the San Diego Padres in the 11th round of the 2021 MLB Rookie of the Year draft and joined the Los Angeles Dodgers in a trade with Matt Beaty in 2022. Sliders are his main weapon because of his strength in fastballs with up to 99 miles of maximum vertical movement. He is highly regarded as a second starter based on his neat arm movements and outstanding athletic abilities. He also had a 2.76 ERA in five games and 19 strikeouts in  $16 \frac{1}{3}$  innings in Triple-A this year.