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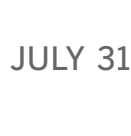


ANGELS

Mike Trout encouraged by progress of back injury: ‘Everything’s going well’



Angels' Mike Trout stands in the dugout before the team's game against the Texas Rangers on Saturday at Angel Stadium. (Jae C. Hong / Associated Press)



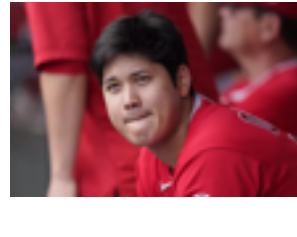
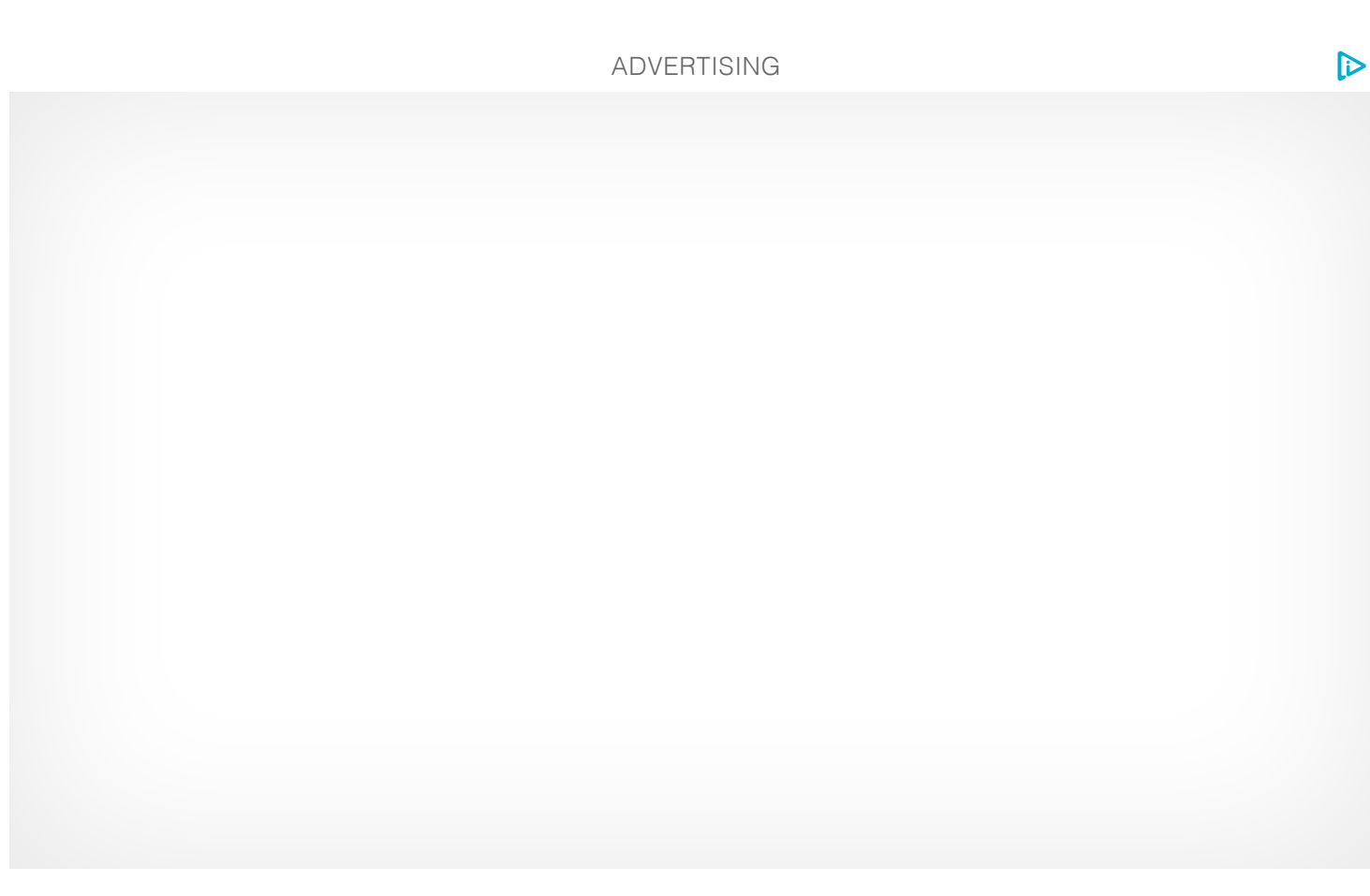
BY SARAH VALENZUELA
STAFF WRITER | FOLLOW

JULY 31, 2022 2:19 PM PT

[Mike Trout](#) had some positive news to share Sunday regarding his [back injury](#).

“I saw the doctor. I was supposed to see the doctor today, saw him Thursday,” Trout said before the Angels’ game against the Texas Rangers at Angel Stadium. “Everything’s going well, he’s happy with the progress. Start rotation stuff, I think Wednesday. A few days after that, if it feels good, start swinging again and then take it day by day.”

Trout said he wasn’t feeling any discomfort and has been in a core program to strengthen the muscles around the injury. When he does get back into games, he said he has to keep the same routine before games to make sure the injury does not return.



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“I think that’s what [athletic trainer Mike Frostad] was initially getting at: keeping a routine so it doesn’t come back,” Trout said. “Once you let it settle down and let the inflammation get out of there and build the muscles up around it, I think it should be good.”

There is no timeline for his return.

The center fielder has been out with a back issue since July 12 and was later put on the injured list, retroactive to July 15, with left rib cage inflammation. On Wednesday, the team revealed a more specific diagnosis to the source of the issues: costovertebral dysfunction at T5. The injury term, according to doctors who spoke with the Los Angeles Times earlier in the week, refers to a joint that connects a rib to his spine — which became inflamed.



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Trout is unsure how the injury showed up, but the theory he’s mulled over is that he aggravated the area with overuse. Over the last month before he was injured, he was taking more swings between the indoor batting cages and outdoor batting practice.

The update from Dr. Robert Watkins, a spinal surgeon, gave Trout a sense of relief.

“It’s always good to hear that. He didn’t have no concern,” Trout said.

Asked about the reaction to many thinking his career was doomed, Trout said: “It’s just one of them things that’s scary, you know, it’s a back thing. Baseball players, you go through stuff. I get it. You like hearing news, you know, when you talk to a doctor that knows what he’s talking about. And Watkins is one of the best.”

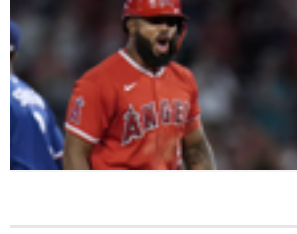


Angels' Mike Trout in action against the Philadelphia Phillies on June 4 in Philadelphia. (Laurence Kesterson / Associated Press)

Aside from his core program, Trout said he has been jogging and trying to keep his body in shape. A few days ago, Trout did a brief leg workout with starting pitcher Noah Syndergaard, which included some lunges while wearing a lightly weighted vest.

Interim manager Phil Nevin said he was encouraged by Trout’s update.

“He was excited when he met with [Watkins],” Nevin said. “He came right in [to the clubhouse] and we talked, really excited with how he feels and the progression that he’s gone through.”



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Ohtani set to start Wednesday

On the topic of returning stars, Nevin said that [Shohhei Ohtani](#) is scheduled to pitch Wednesday against the Oakland Athletics.

Nevin was then asked whether that meant Ohtani would not be traded. The trading deadline is Tuesday at 3 p.m. PDT.

“I’m not involved in that,” Nevin said with a light-hearted tone. “Right now, he’s scheduled to pitch Wednesday and, you know, on a personal note, I hope it’s for me.”

ANGELS

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Sarah Valenzuela is the Angels beat writer for the Los Angeles Times. She previously worked at the New York Daily News, where she covered the New York Liberty and contributed to coverage of the New York Mets and New York Yankees. Before that, the Queens native was a freelancer with bylines in Thrillist and Self Magazine, worked as a production assistant with SNY-TV and MLB.com and briefly was a general assignment reporter for the Bronx Times. Valenzuela graduated from Syracuse University’s Newhouse School of Public Communications.

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