

## **Jones ribs forgetful Franco**

### **Third baseman has fun with 46-year-old's lapse**

By Mark Bowman / MLB.com

ATLANTA -- With age comes some loss of memory. So when Julio Franco turned to leave the field after recording just the second out of the sixth inning on Saturday night at Turner Field, Chipper Jones had plenty of fun ribbing the Braves' 46-year-old first baseman.

Smiling across the diamond from his third base position, Jones looked at Franco, pointed his right index finger to his right ear and twirled it in a circular motion. That prompted the veteran first baseman to lip to Jones, "Wait until we get back into the dugout and I'm going to kill you."

"So we wrestled around in the dugout, and I body slammed him and it was over," Jones said with a smirk.

One inning later, Franco responded with his first homer of the season -- an opposite-field solo shot against Andy Pettitte. Jones says it was the body slam that provided the motivation for the chiseled veteran to finally display his power.

Franco, who platoons at first base with Adam LaRoche, took all the postgame jokes from Jones in stride. His mistake had been convincing enough that even plate umpire Jerry Layne rolled a ball to the mound, indicating he too thought the third out had just been recorded.

"When something funny happens, you can't get mad," Franco said. "You see it happen from time to time and it happened to me. Hopefully, it will happen to Chipper, so that I can get back at him."

Because LaRoche has been known to be absent-minded at times and occasionally forget how many outs there are, Jones joked, "LaRoche must be rubbing off on him." LaRoche just kind of smiled when he had heard his good friend had brought him into the conversation. But Franco fired back with a message for Jones.

"He better stay away from the first basemen," Franco said. "LaRoche is my friend."

Reitsma unharmed: The one run the Astros scored against the Braves on Saturday night brought some physical harm. Willy Tavares reached on a one-out single that drilled right-handed reliever Chris Reitsma in the left wrist. Tavares later scored on a Lance Berkman double that took a bad hop and drilled the top of Franco's right shoulder.

Fortunately for the Braves, both players had X-rays taken, and it was determined that neither had suffered any type of fracture.

"I'm good to go," Reitsma said Sunday morning. "It's just a bruise, no big deal."

The run charged to Reitsma was the first he had surrendered since April 10. In between, he had tossed 12 scoreless innings over 11 appearances.

As for Franco, he admits he never saw Berkman's sharp grounder after it took its second bounce.

"If that one would have hit me in the face, I wouldn't be right here, I'd be in the hospital getting X-Rays on my face," the first baseman said.

Jones' foot update: Jones made his fifth consecutive start on Sunday afternoon. But he admitted after Saturday night's game that his left foot, which had forced him to miss seven consecutive starts, was bothering him again.

Jones, who returned to the lineup on Wednesday, said the foot bothered him during batting practice on Saturday and continued to do so throughout the evening. He has come to the understanding that the discomfort could last throughout the season.

"I guess you're going to have some setbacks along the way," Jones said.