

Chris Slone/Alex Hider  
PDT Sports

CINCINNATI — With the support of his home fans behind him, Todd Frazier belted 39 home runs — 15 in the final round — on his way to to the Home Run Derby championship Tuesday night in Cincinnati. Frazier is just the second player in the event's history (after Ryne Sandberg in 1990) to win the Derby in his home park.

The Reds' third baseman credits this victory as one of his greatest accomplishments so far as a major league player. "It's up there, definitely top five for sure," Frazier said. "Bringing this hardware home is something I've always wanted to do and it's just unbelievable feeling. Right now, I'm pretty exhausted. So my energy level is not that high as it was earlier. Once I wake up in the morning, understand really what happened, it is going to be exciting to see this in my house."

Frazier by far faced the toughest road to the finals but was able to answer in each round. In the first round, Frazier outdueled two-time Derby champion Prince Fielder by smacking 14 homers, the last of which proved to be his longest of the evening. His final homer of the round landed 455 feet away.

Frazier faced another uphill battle in the second round. The Blue Jays' Josh Donaldson set the bar at nine homers, and Frazier had only managed six halfway through his round. However, Frazier got hot as the time ran short, hitting four straight homers before beating the buzzer with his 10th. In the finals, Frazier faced off with Dodgers' slugger Joc Pederson, owner of the night's longest homer at 487 feet. Pederson again set the bar high, hitting 14 homers, equaling the night's high of home runs in a round.

But Frazier wouldn't be denied. After another late-round push, he tied Pederson with seconds left in the round.

Moments later, he took the lead for good by crushing the first pitch he saw in the bonus round over the left field fence. Despite the Reds not having the best first half of the season, Frazier isn't convinced Cincinnati is out of the hunt, especially after his magical night.

"... This is the way you play the game, you play for your family, your friends because you love the game," Frazier said. "Your fans are right behind you in your court. We're having a tough year this year, let's be frank. Still got a lot of games to go. That Wild Card can come real quick. You saw what the Dodgers did that one year. You never know what's going to happen ..."

#### NOTES

**Home field advantage** — Frazier credited the sell out crowd at Great American Ball Park for his heroic comeback, round after round.

"Big-time impact," Frazier said. "Just hearing the crowd roar, call my name, adrenaline. And those last minutes of each round really picked me up and drive the ball out of the park a lot more. It was a lot of fun. I appreciate that a lot."

**Times they are a-changin'** — With all of the uncertainty about the new Home Run Derby rules, from the running clock to the elimination bracket, the final product passed with flying colors, earning rave reviews. As far as the clock, Frazier was a big fan.

"It made for a little more opportunity," Frazier said. "It made for you're going to have to pick up the pace up a little bit. You swing at everything really, once you're down, no matter how much time you've got. When you've got the opportunity, you have to hit it out no matter where the ball's pitched. I felt like a little kid out there out there sometimes in the back yard swinging at everything. It was pretty cool."

**Game shortened on account of rain** — Because weather threatened the Cincinnati area throughout the day, Major League Baseball shortened the clock from five minutes to

four minutes. Frazier was a proponent of the rule change and believes the Home Run Derby should remain at four minutes.

“When it went from five to four minutes, I was pretty happy,” Frazier said. “I knew five minutes was a long time. I think everybody was happy about that because eight guys only, and you go from one round to the next and it helped out. You knew you were getting 30 seconds once you hit it over 420, which was even better. I think this is a good standard of what we need to do ... “

**Short and sweet** — Frazier’s average home run was 420 feet over the three rounds, among the lowest of all competitors.