

Monday, July 4, 2005

All-Star second guessing - it's a pasttime

I'm from the Joe Sheehan school of choosing players for the All-Star game. I consider half a season of good performance a weak reason to pick someone like BJ Ryan instead of someone like Randy Johnson, a guy who'll head to the Hall of Fame someday, a guy that, despite a half season of mediocrity, is still one of the greatest players to play the game. The line is difficult to draw when you're talking about young players because you have to try to tell the difference between breakout and fluke. You have to try to maximize the Jake Peavy-type selections and minimize the Ken Harvey ones.

I also abhor the selection of relievers to the All Star game except in the extraordinary circumstance that the player is actually used as an "ace reliever"-type player, putting out fires whenever they arise, and is thus as valuable as any starter around.

Finally, with such huge rosters, I don't think we should worry so much about who's able to play because of pitching schedules and injuries and whatever. Just choose the best players who've played in the first half and let everything else sort itself out. If a manager can't get through a game with 13 starting pitchers, even if five of them can't pitch, then he doesn't deserve to be the All Star manager.

Justin Duchscherer nearly fits into the latter category, but I'd rather see Eric Chavez get the nod as the A's representative. He had a poor couple of months to start the season, but he's hitting like normal now and is probably the second-best third baseman in the league.

If we pick Chavez, who to me epitomizes All Star better than anyone else on the A's, to play third instead of Duchscherer, we need to dump a third baseman and add a pitcher. I'd drop Shea Hillenbrand and add Randy Johnson.

The rest of the players I'd drop from the American League, and how I'd replace them with: out with Bob Wickman (reliever) and in with CC Sabathia (starter) to be the Indians representative; BJ Ryan (reliever) out, Rich Harden (starter who could win a Cy Young award some day) in; Joe Nathan (reliever) out, Matt Clement (starter who should have a really good four-year run coming up) in; Danys Baez (reliever) and Garret Anderson (need room for the new Devil Ray) out, Carl Crawford (fits my philosophy better) and Freddy Garcia (need a pitcher) in. Brian Roberts and Paul Konerko I'll just have to live with.

In the NL, I'd do this: drop Cesar Izturis (pretty bad player and we're not hurting for a Dodger) and add Marcus Giles (there's a really good crop of NL second basemen right now and Giles is one of the best of them); send Chad Cordero (reliever) away and welcome Roy Oswalt (one of the best starters in baseball); drop Brian Fuentes (who?) and Moises Alou (I don't know how he made six All Star teams) and add Todd Helton (how can he not be on the team?) and Jason Schmidt (he could be losing something, but we need a Giant); drop Jason Istringhausen (reliever) and add Brad Penny (starter); and drop Brad Lidge (reliever) and add Josh Beckett (starter).

Posted by jason in Baseball at 16:22