

Sunday, March 23, 2008

### Perotto's Sunday roundup, and some musings on Jack Hannahan

John Perotto reports today: "Juan Pierre is looking like the odd man out in the Dodgers' outfield, as he has been outplayed by Andre Ethier and Matt Kemp, who are likely to play on the corners, flanking center fielder Andruw Jones." There is justice in the world!

Also, "The Yankees recently kicked the tires on Oakland pitchers Rich Harden and Joe Blanton, but decided instead that they are satisfied with their starting rotation of Chien-Ming Wang, Andy Pettitte, Philip Hughes, Ian Kennedy, and Mike Mussina to abandon pursuit, while also deciding to leave Joba Chamberlain in the bullpen." There's been quite a bit of talk about how the Yankees have so much pitching depth, etc. etc. etc. Clearly, though, they realize, rightly, that the depth is likely illusory. Pettite and Mussina have had their injury and performance troubles, and Hughes, Kennedy, and Joba could all be pushing up against new highs in innings pitched, so New York would be smart to keep its eyes on who's available in the starting pitching market.

This is wrecking numerous fantasy teams: "The Rays are likely to send top third base prospect Evan Longoria to the minor leagues, in order to keep his arbitration and free agency clocks from starting." It also might well be a terrible decision from the standpoint of keeping your players happy. What's the difference in salary that Longoria is looking at here? \$300,000 at the major league level vs. what if he's in the minors? Not to mention the fact that he'll hit free agency and arbitration later. Obviously, from a pure numbers standpoint, it's a good move for the Rays, but people aren't numbers, as much as we might like to treat baseball players that way. Furthermore, the Rays might actually be competitive this year, and Longoria is probably the best option at third base. (Willy Aybar apparently would get the spot if Longoria is in the minors.)

Finally, it looks like Josh Fields is headed back to AAA as well, which also may annoy some fantasy owners. Joe Crede's PECOTA projection for the year: 249/306/422. Fields? 253/333/468. By WARP, that works out to about a win and a half. Crede's got a rep as a solid major league third baseman, despite that awful projection, so there must be someone out there who'd give up something to get him, right? Wouldn't this be a win-win for the Sox?

In fact, I was just about to suggest that the A's consider Crede, given that Eric Chavez is apparently not going to start the year with the team and Jack Hannahan is ... well, he's Jack Hannahan. Then I looked at Hannahan's PECOTA: 253/351/425. It's not much power, but you have to like that on-base ability, which is precisely what Crede doesn't have. WARP-wise, Hannahan is about even with Fields. Interestingly, past player comments in the BP books indicate that Hannahan has a "Rolenesque" glove, and that his bat is the problem. Given that very adequate hitting projection, I'd be all for sending Eric Chavez on his merry way (the Dodgers need another injured third baseman, don't they?) as soon as they can get something decent for him. I'd miss him, because he's one of my favorite A's, but as far as the talent on the field and the talent in the minor-league system, I can't really say the team needs him.

I was going to make a snide comment about how the A's ripped the Tigers off for Hannahan, but then I looked at Jason Perry's numbers. (Perry's the guy the A's sent to Detroit for Hannahan.) As a 26-year-old outfielder last year, he hit 268/367/521 in Sacramento in 333 plate appearances. He fell apart in Toledo after the trade, but it was only 58 PA's. He's basically a nice extra outfielder to have around, the same way Hannahan is a nice extra infielder. Perry would be an interesting guy to pair with Marcus Thames as an extra outfielder in Detroit, given that Thames is all-power, no-on-base, while Perry is the opposite. Plus Perry has to be better than Jacques Jones, right?

Posted by Jason Wojciechowski in Baseball, Oakland A's at 13:32