



## SF Giants Press Clips Wednesday, March 7, 2018

**San Francisco Chronicle**

**Tim Lincecum joins Rangers with new contract, heavy heart  
John Shea**

SURPRISE, Ariz. — For the first time in his big-league career, Tim Lincecum will wear a number other than 55.

He'll wear 44.

"In honor of my brother," Lincecum said Tuesday after working out at the Texas Rangers' training facility. "That was his number. Either 12 or 44. Twelve was taken. So it's 44."

Sean Lincecum, a major part of Tim Lincecum's upbringing and an inspiration for Tim's stellar pitching career with the Giants, died last month at 37.

He was four years older than Tim, who threw on a side field Tuesday with a heavy heart, the memory of Sean fresh in his mind as he began the next chapter of his career with his third team. Tim flew to Arizona after attending Sean's funeral Saturday.

"That's a tough thing to put into words right now," said Lincecum, who declined to specify his brother's cause of death. "I've been thinking about it a lot with the services happening a couple of days ago. For me, I always looked up to my brother. He was an idol for me. He just had a lot of bad runs with choices he made in life. That's where we're at right now."

Lincecum's close relationship with his father, Chris, is well-chronicled. Chris has been his mentor, coach and friend and taught him nonconforming mechanics that helped him flourish in the big leagues.

But before Lincecum the elder worked with Tim, he worked with Sean.

"If I was 2.0, he was the 1.0. So my dad learned on him first," Tim Lincecum said. "It kind of sucked because my brother was the kind of guy ... I bent, and he broke. Different kind of body styles. It worked out differently, and then he became a hitter and hit the s— out the ball. I think he liked the 44 because ..."

Reggie Jackson?

“Yeah. I’m not trying to be Reggie or anything,” Lincecum said. “I’m just trying to carry my brother out there with me.”

Lincecum agreed to a reported \$1 million contract and will compete for a bullpen job with the Rangers. He took a physical Tuesday morning, but not all results were in by the early afternoon — “I think I got an A,” he said — so the contract wasn’t official.

Therefore, Lincecum couldn’t work out with the team. That could happen Wednesday.

The Rangers were one of two clubs to offer big-league invites. The other? The Dodgers.

The Dodgers?

Could Lincecum — the pride of San Francisco, the two-time Cy Young Award winner, the three-time World Series champ, the man who ushered the Giants into the most successful era in franchise history — see himself in Dodger blue?

“Could I? I had to think about that for a minute,” he said. “But, ultimately, I think it would be really tough to the point I would be betraying my heart.”

Lincecum laughed. He said he picked the Rangers because, “the conversations we had kind of made me feel warm and fuzzy inside.”

The Giants were among 20 teams to scout Lincecum at his Feb. 15 showcase at the Driveline Baseball facility in the Seattle area, where he had been training. Their interest wasn’t at the level of that of the Rangers or Dodgers.

“I was going to give the Giants the benefit of the doubt because it’s where I feel my heart is,” Lincecum said. “It’s a second home for me, and they’ve been so good to me over the years. With that, I tried to keep the communication up with them, but ultimately, it came down to what would fit best for me, and this opportunity was the best fit.”

The big question for the Rangers is whether Lincecum will be effective after sitting out last season and posting a 9.16 ERA in nine starts with the 2016 Angels. His last year with the Giants was 2015.

“I feel it would be tough to give up the game when I feel I’ve still got the ability to play it,” he said.

During negotiations, Lincecum’s masterful clinching victory over the Rangers in the 2010 World Series was mentioned.

“He actually apologized for it,” Rangers general manager Jon Daniels. “It wasn’t a very sincere apology.”

Former Giants pitcher Matt Moore is wearing 55 with the Rangers and said after facing the Giants on Monday that he’d be willing to give the number to Lincecum, who appreciated the gesture but said, “I’m not going to make him give it up. I feel like he’s earned that with his career, and he was here before I was.”

Lincecum is in his element again, back on the field and playing ball, which he missed last season. The way he describes it, the game has been a family affair.

“As a baseball family, I’m around my dad a lot. Even with my brother, up until the point he passed,” Lincecum said. “We were always talking about baseball. It’s one of those things that kind of has an itch in you. When you see everybody go down for spring training, it’s like we’ve got to migrate. I’ve got to head down. I don’t feel it’s right if I’m not doing the same thing, essentially.”

Lincecum’s thoughts of his brother are with him on and off the field.

“If it wasn’t for my dad that I looked up to, it would be him,” Lincecum said. “Just growing up ... I can’t even talk right now. It’s kind of making me emotional.”

With that, Lincecum signed a few autographs and walked toward the Rangers’ clubhouse, the well-loved right-hander embarking on his latest comeback bid, his glove in his arm and his family in his heart.

### **San Francisco Chronicle**

#### **Tim Lincecum joins Rangers camp: ‘I can’t wait to see him throw again’**

**John Shea**

SURPRISE, Ariz. — Tim Lincecum has joined the Texas Rangers’ training camp.

Lincecum took his physical Tuesday morning, and general manager Jon Daniels said he received some results but not all. His deal would be official once the final results are in.

Lincecum was working out at the Rangers’ facility at Surprise Stadium, and the Rangers were thrilled to have the decorated pitcher who led the Giants into their championship era.

“He just dominated the game,” manager Jeff Banister said Tuesday morning. “Fun to watch when you put yourself in the fans’ perspective. Looked different than everybody else. Was different. Two Cy Youngs I think tell the story. When you’re in a uniform on the other team, he made it extremely challenging for you. You looked up, you really didn’t want him facing your hitters in a series.”

The Giants were among 20 teams to scout Lincecum at his Feb. 15 showcase. The Rangers are signing him for a reported \$1 million, and he’ll compete for a bullpen job, perhaps the closer’s role.

There are no former Giants teammates in the Rangers’ clubhouse, but pitcher Clayton Blackburn was in two big-league training camps with Lincecum. In April, the Giants dealt Blackburn to the Rangers for a prospect.

“I can’t wait to see him throw again,” Blackburn said Tuesday at his Surprise Stadium locker. “We all respect who he was and what he did. I’m really interested to see if he’s the same guy, that explosive, nasty guy.”

Blackburn noticed a bulkier Lincecum from a picture he saw on the Internet. Lincecum worked out at the Driveline Baseball facility in the Seattle area, where he had his showcase.

“He looked great,” said Blackburn, who fondly recalled his interactions with Lincecum. “He treats you like any other guy, makes you feel welcome. You wouldn’t even know he was one of the best pitchers in baseball. You respect him.”

Lincecum, who won Cy Young Awards with the Giants in 2008 and 2009, turns 34 on June 15. He was the ace of the 2010 team that won San Francisco’s first World Series, and his epic relief work helped the Giants to another championship in 2012.

He appeared in one postseason game in 2014, the year the Giants took their third title. His final Giants season was 2015. He made nine starts with the 2016 Angels and sat out last year.

Matt Moore, who was traded from the Giants to Rangers in December, said he’s willing to give Lincecum his old jersey number. Moore is wearing 55, which he wore in Tampa Bay (he wore 45 as a Giant).

“I don’t want him to feel good,” Moore said after facing the Giants on Monday. “I want him to feel great. Part of that is being comfortable in what you’re doing and what you’re wearing.”

“It’s not like it’s something I have to have. When I saw we signed him, shoot, if that’s something he wants, it’s all his.”

Lincecum has been grieving the death of his brother, Sean, 37. The funeral was Saturday.

## **MLB.com**

### **Inbox: Does Giants' rotation still need help?**

**Chris Haft**

I understand budget concerns, but do the Giants really expect to compete with their current rotation of Madison Bumgarner, Johnny Cueto, Jeff Samardzija and two rookies? It seems we are still a No. 4 starter short of the second National League Wild Card right now.

-- Michael C., Mesa, Ariz.

You settled your own argument to a considerable extent by citing those budget concerns. They're very real, and if the Giants want to be players in next year's talent-laden free-agent market, they must avoid paying the Competitive Balance Tax.

Moreover, every organization must give its players opportunities to succeed. Minor Leaguers must be motivated by the sense that upward mobility is possible. Pitchers in Class A and Double-A are better off for noticing that Chris Stratton, Ty Blach, Tyler Beede and Andrew Suarez are receiving chances to advance to, or establish themselves in, the Majors.

You should know by now how the Giants operate. If management decides that the team needs a veteran starter to remain in contention, the necessary deal will be made before the non-waiver Trade Deadline.

Looking at the non-roster invitees, other than Steven Duggar and maybe Trevor Brown, I'm kind of shrugging my shoulders. Just curious, which ones do you think have the best chance to make the 25-man roster?

-- Robert W., Redding, Calif.

Keep an eye on utility men Chase d'Arnaud and Josh Rutledge. And outfielder Gregor Blanco is officially a non-roster player, too.

Are the Giants a legitimate contender if Duggar posts 20 steals and a .350 on-base percentage, and becomes the rangy center fielder/leadoff hitter we're all hoping for?

-- Derrick F., Livermore, Calif.

Duggar can indeed make a considerable difference. The ease with which he homered off the Dodgers' Kenta Maeda on Sunday was breathtaking. If the Giants' lineup is truly deep, however, Duggar might be suited for batting eighth. It could be best to avoid burdening him with the responsibility of leading off.

If Tim Lincecum finds success with the Rangers, and goes on to pitch 10 full career seasons, what does he need to accomplish to be a serious Hall of Fame candidate?

-- Joshua S., Eugene, Ore.

First of all, I believe that the smattering of Major League service time that Lincecum had with the Angels in 2016 will constitute enough of a 10th season to enable him to go on the Hall of Fame ballot five years after his retirement.

As you're probably and safely assuming, Lincecum hasn't done enough to warrant Hall of Fame consideration. If he's a reliever through the remainder of his career, he'd have to put together three or four extremely strong seasons just to get the voters' attention.

Consider John Smoltz, a first-ballot Hall of Famer in 2015. After injuries derailed Smoltz's career as a starter, he amassed 144 saves for Atlanta from 2002-04. Then, Smoltz returned to starting -- which, I believe, is what Lincecum wants to do -- and delivered three excellent seasons from 2005-07 (44-24, 3.22 ERA). If those numbers sound familiar, they should. They're comparable to Lincecum's 2008-10 peak with the Giants (49-22, 2.83 ERA).

That was one heck of a peak, too. According to baseball-reference.com's similarity scores, through his age-29 season, Lincecum's closest career parallel was Bob Gibson. Then came the decline. Through his age-32 season, when he last pitched, Lincecum's closest comp was A.J. Burnett.

Right now, Lincecum's career (110-89, 3.74 ERA, two NL Cy Young Awards) is reminiscent of Bret Saberhagen's (167-117, 3.34 ERA, two American League Cy Young Awards). Saberhagen received 1.3 percent of the vote from the Hall of Fame electorate and dropped off the ballot in 2007, his first year of eligibility.

**MLB.com**

**Pipeline report: Giants camp**

**Chris Haft**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. -- While bolstering their 2016 playoff club and then trying to improve their current roster after enduring their worst season in 32 years, the Giants traded away their top picks in three of their past four Drafts (third baseman Christian Arroyo, right-hander Phil Bickford and outfielder Bryan Reynolds), as well as the recipient of the largest international amateur bonus in franchise history (shortstop Lucius Fox).

Those moves have thinned out a farm system that never seems to get much love in media rankings yet still provided the nucleus for World Series championship teams in 2010, '12 and '14. San Francisco didn't have enough internal options to plug all of the holes on last year's 98-loss club, necessitating offseason deals for Evan Longoria and Andrew McCutchen.

Nevertheless, the Giants' system does have an obvious strength: outfielders. Heliot Ramos, Chris Shaw and Steven Duggar claim the first three spots on MLB Pipeline's Giants Top 30 Prospects list, while Austin Slater and Sandro Fabian check in at Nos. 5 and 6. Heath Quinn has some of the best power in the system, which was muted by hamate and shoulder injuries last year, and Alexander Canario is one of organization's best sleepers.

"We've had some success in the infield with Pablo Sandoval, Brandon Crawford, Joe Panik and Brandon Belt all homegrown," San Francisco assistant general manager Jeremy Shelley said. "As you look forward, you can see we could have long-term solutions in the outfield with guys like Steven Duggar and Chris Shaw and some of our younger player factoring in down the line."

Shaw has massive raw power and led the organization with 24 homers in 2017, though he's blocked for now in left field after Hunter Pence shifted over to make room for McCutchen in right. Duggar has on-base skills, well-above-average speed and quality range and arm strength in center field, where he's in the running for a starting job. Slater should be in line for a reserve role for San Francisco, with average tools across the board and a .282/.339/.402 line in his big league debut last year.

Ramos, Fabian and Canario have yet to advance beyond the lower levels of the system, but they should be worth the wait. San Francisco's best prospect and its first-round pick in 2017, Ramos had one of the best power/speed combinations in his Draft class and batted .348/.404/.645 in the Rookie-level Arizona League in his pro debut. He has the highest ceiling of any Giants farmhand since Buster Posey.

Fabian has some of the best feel for hitting in the system, held his own as a 19-year-old in low Class A last year and will be more dangerous once he develops a more disciplined approach. Canario has yet to make his U.S. debut, but he showed the potential for perhaps solid tools across the board in the Rookie-level Dominican Summer League, where he was MVP of its 2017 All-Star Game.

"We're excited about the development of Ramos in his first full year," Shelley said. "Canario put himself on the map with a strong summer in the DSL, and we look forward to seeing what he could do in the States. Fabian had a good year in a tough ballpark and has a chance to be very good at the plate."

#### Camp standouts

Duggar is doing everything he can to win the center-field job. He's hitting .417/.474/1.000 in the Cactus League, and while power is the least of his tools, he's tied with Mac Williamson for the team lead with three homers.

"He plays hard, goes hard," Giants special assistant Shane Turner said. "He has no real weakness. He knows the zone, he's improved stealing bases and we'll see more power. He'll be our center fielder soon because of his defense and hitting ability."

Kyle Jensen has been the biggest surprise of not just San Francisco's camp but maybe all of Spring Training. Signed to a Minor League contract in January after playing briefly in Japan a year ago, he's

batting .545/.722/1.909 and is tied with Jason Kipnis for the overall spring lead with five home runs. He's 28 and not on the Giants' Top 30, but he could claim a role as a backup first baseman/corner outfielder if he keeps this up.

## **The Athletic**

### **Steven Duggar knows his role, and that just might help him land a spot on the Giants' Opening Day roster**

#### **Jimmy Durkin**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The kid threw out every cliché in the book, like he was Nuke LaLoosh in “Bull Durham.”

“For me, it’s just day-by-day. I’m just trying to take it one day at a time. As simple as that sounds, that’s just how I go about things. Just trying to improve one day at a time and let the chips fall where they may.”

That was Steven Duggar as a TV camera and gaggle of reporters met him at his locker on Sunday after he blasted his third home run of the spring and made an impressive diving catch to rob the Dodgers of a couple runs and end the second inning.

He’s become one of the stories of the spring for the Giants. The former sixth-round pick from 2015 out of Clemson is here as a non-roster invitee, technically, but he’s firmly in the mix for a shot at the Opening Day roster. Bruce Bochy said as much Sunday.

“It’s realistic,” Bochy said. “You see him playing a lot. We’ll stay open-minded as we decide who the 25 guys are.”

But let’s go back to that quote and then take a look at the three lines Crash Davis fed LaLoosh in that great 1988 flick.

“We’ve gotta play ‘em one day at a time.”

“I’m just happy to be here, hope I can help the ballclub.”

“I just want to give it my best shot and the good Lord willing, things will work out. “

So he’s not quite quoting LaLoosh directly, but he’s definitely playing the perfect role of an unassuming rookie who has his head down trying to make the team. And you know what, his teammates are noticing.

“He’s going out and doing his work, not saying much, just going out and doing it,” right fielder Andrew McCutchen said. “That’s refreshing to be able to see that from the outside looking in.

“He’s not walking around being boastful about the game he had the day before or walking around as if he has a chip on his shoulder. He’s just doing his job, sitting at his locker, going and getting his work in the training room, whatever he needs to do, go out there on the field, practice, work hard, play the game hard. It’s good to see.”

Lest you think Duggar is an overly-trained robot when it comes to interviews, it should be pointed out that the 24-year-old is much more at ease when he's asked questions not related to his thoughts on making this team out of spring.

Ask about the details of that diving catch against the Dodgers and he'll tell you he was playing a couple steps over to get a good vision of the ball off the bat, read it well to get a good jump and only tumbled at the end of the play as a precaution after suffering a hamstring injury last year that, in addition to an elbow injury, limited him to 44 games and probably prevented him from getting a look in San Francisco.

"Normally, I can catch that ball standing up, but in spring and with what happened last year going down with the hammy injury, I just caught it, rolled, was able to hold onto it," Duggar said. "It was a big play at the time just trying to keep those guys from scoring."

But if you want to get Duggar trying to state his case about making the roster, it's not happening. After getting hit with the first cliché bomb, the reporter tried again to get Duggar to talk about where his head is at knowing that his dream could be a reality.

"I mean, again, for me, it's just, in all honesty, one day at a time," Duggar said. "You know, just trying to improve, work on the little things, prepare the right way and just go about my business every day and again, just, whatever happens, happens."

That's definitely what he's doing with seven hits in 17 at-bats this spring, those three home runs, and two stolen bases.

"He's out there trying to win a job and it's cool to see that he understands that and he understands the importance of every spring training game for him," Jeff Samardzija said. "That awareness is always important in a young kid. Some guys don't have it and don't have that sense of urgency and he seems to have it."

While Duggar is on the quieter side, he's not afraid to talk to guys and ask questions. Pablo Sandoval has been a big help early in the batting cage, fellow left-handed hitters Brandon Crawford and Joe Panik have been offering advice at the plate as well, and McCutchen and Gregor Blanco have been key with defensive tips.

McCutchen's been impressed with every aspect of Duggar's game.

"It's exciting for sure; a guy that's been able to do a lot out there," McCutchen said. "Swinging the bat really well right now, so it's fun to watch him do that, be able to not only drive the ball into the gaps but actually be able to supply some power as well. ... It doesn't look like he's going up there trying to hit homers or anything like that, just putting a good swing on balls and producing power like that."

"Defensively, like (Sunday), he ran a couple balls down and made some good catches. That's something that you want, that's something that you want to see in a guy like that. Especially being out there in center field, you want someone to take control and be able to change the game out there, not only offensively but defensively and he's shown that in the early stages of spring training."

Duggar may be the player making the best positive impression so far in Scottsdale, but he's still got some work to do. Of the 10 outs he's made, six have been by strikeout. And while the Giants have called



his glove major league ready, McCutchen — with his 11,000-plus innings in center field — says Duggar will need to get up to speed on certain aspects of the position.

“I knew, for me, when I played center, what balls I could and couldn’t get to, knew what balls the guys to my right and left could and couldn’t get to,” McCutchen said. “That’s the center fielder’s job, he’s going to have to take control and ownership of that.”

“I know Austin Jackson knows that, I know Blanco knows that. Duggar’s still fresh, so it’s something that I’m going to have to continue to talk to him about and taking ownership and control of that and the better you do that, the better off you’ll be in the outfield.”

And you’re right if you’re thinking that Duggar’s exactly the type of guy who is willing and ready to take that instruction from a five-time All-Star and former MVP.

“I’m just always looking to ask questions, looking to get better,” Duggar said. “(Sunday) I was looking over at right and seeing Cutch out there and he was going, ‘Hey, two steps over here, two steps over here.’ You know, it was good. Being able to pick these guys’ brains, especially defensively, it’s been special so far.”

Players are often too focused on getting themselves ready for the season to get too caught up in another player’s business. But they can get a sense of who belongs and Duggar is looking like he belongs.

“Absolutely, no doubt,” Samardzija said. “He comes to work every day and hangs out with the guys. He definitely checks all the boxes. It’ll be interesting to watch him grow and see how he responds to these other teams getting a little book on him and see how he adjusts. That’s always the next step. First step is proving that you’re able to do it and the second step is adjusting to the other teams’ scouting reports.”

The Crash Davis-side of his game is ready for the majors. He’s got another three weeks to continue to show that the rest of his game is ready, too.