



# ***Press Clips***

**(March 4, 2018)**

**CLIPS CONTENT**

*FROM THE OC REGISTER (PAGE 3)*

- **Angels' skeleton crew drops night game to Mariners, 4-2**
- **Angels prospect Jahmai Jones saw baseball as a way to forge his own identity**

*FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES (PAGE 6)*

- **Maldonado homers but Angels lose to Mariners 4-2**
- **John Lamb is most striking figure in Angels clubhouse by a hair**

*FROM ANGELS.COM (PAGE 8)*

- **Maldonado aims to stay strong at plate in '18**
- **Young has walking boot removed in calf rehab**

*FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (PAGE 11)*

- **Angels' Garrett Richards ready to return after two years of injuries**

**FROM THE OC REGISTER****Angels' skeleton crew drops night game to Mariners, 4-2**

By J.P. HOORNSTRA

**THE GAME:** An Angels roster lacking all but a handful of regulars lost 4-2 to a familiar group of Seattle Mariners before an announced crowd of 9,756 at Peoria Sports Complex.

**PITCHING REPORT:** Angels starter Tyler Skaggs allowed three hits in three innings, including a two-run home run to Jean Segura. He walked two batters and struck out three. The left-hander was encouraged by his changeup command. ... Right-hander Cam Bedrosian threw a scoreless inning out of the bullpen, striking out two. ... Right-hander Eduardo Paredes allowed one run, on a triple and a sacrifice fly, in his only inning of work. ... Right-hander Blake Parker struck out the first two batters he faced, then allowed a triple to Dee Gordon, walked Jean Segura and surrendered an RBI single to Robinson Cano.

**HITTING REPORT:** Martin Maldonado hit a towering home run against Mariners starter Rob Whalen in the first inning. He has four hits in his first 13 Cactus League at-bats. ... First base prospect Matt Thaiss had two hits, including a home run that cleared the 410-foot mark in center field against veteran Juan Nicasio. ... Shortstop David Fletcher continued his impressive start by going 1 for 3 with a single. He's batting .563 (9 for 16) in his first seven games.

**DEFENSE REPORT:** Playing right field, Michael Hermosillo was tested on a pair of triples to the corner. He couldn't corral either despite getting dirty.

**NEXT GAME:** The Angels will send right-hander Matt Shoemaker to the mound against the Colorado Rockies on Sunday at noon (Fox Sports West; 830-AM) at Tempe Diablo Stadium.

**Angels prospect Jahmai Jones saw baseball as a way to forge his own identity**

By J.P. HOORNSTRA

TEMPE, Ariz. — Jahmai Jones, the youngest player in the Angels' major league camp, has wowed teammates and coaches early on with his athleticism in center field. A second-round pick out of high school in 2015, Jones was unanimously ranked as a top-100 prospect by Baseball America, Baseball Prospectus and MLB.com prior to spring training.

For now, most of the hype surrounds Jones' defense, though he did bat .302 in his first exposure to the advanced Class-A California League in 2017.

Jones, 20, comes from an athletic family. His brothers T.J. and Malachi are both wide receivers in the National Football League. His father, Andre, was a standout defensive end at Notre Dame.

Growing up in suburban Atlanta, Jones said that he was expected to ply the family trade too. Like his brothers, Jones was a wide receiver in high school. He was a sophomore when he chose baseball over football for good.

“I just loved playing (baseball) as a kid and it brought me a different kind of passion than football did,” he said. “Don’t get me wrong, football’s a completely different kind of adrenaline rush, but I just saw myself doing baseball day in and day out.”

That vision coalesced during late-night batting practice sessions that often spilled past midnight. Jones counts Michael Barrett, a 12-year major league veteran and the coach of his summer league team, as an influential figure.

There were others, too. The Atlanta suburbs are dotted with former professional baseball players. Without that system of emotional and practical support, who knows. Jones might still be catching passes in college somewhere.

Yet Jones said his desire to break away from the constant comparisons to his father and brothers was strong. Football might have been “the easy route,” but Jones was intent on making a name for himself.

“I wanted to be my own man,” he said.

Angels outfielder Eric Young Jr., 12 years Jones’ senior, can relate. His father, Eric Young Sr., played parts of 15 seasons, primarily for the Colorado Rockies.

“Obviously genetics are going to play a part so he’s going to have the athletic ability,” Young said of Jones. “I see a lot of that fight in him that was in me – that’s still in me.”

#### *OHTANI UPDATE*

Shohei Ohtani will be the Angels’ designated hitter Monday against the Cincinnati Reds in Goodyear, Manager Mike Scioscia said.

Ohtani last appeared in a game Saturday, as a pitcher, in a “B” game against the Milwaukee Brewers. His last at-bats came Tuesday against the Colorado Rockies. Ohtani went 0 for 3 in that game.

Scioscia said he would like to avoid using Ohtani in a Cactus League game against any opponent the Angels will see within the next two months. That could throw a wrinkle into Ohtani’s next two appearances on a mound.

The Angels open the regular season with four games against the Oakland A’s, then three against the Cleveland Indians and three more against the A’s. If Ohtani were to continue starting every sixth day – the pattern he’s established so far – his next two outings would come March 8 against the A’s and March 14 against the Indians.

Scioscia didn't comment specifically on the plan for Ohtani's next two outings, but it sounds as if Ohtani will be allowed to stay on schedule.

Generally, Scioscia said, "we would let a guy get his work somewhere else, in the minor leagues. If we're playing a team we're not going to see for two months, or maybe later in the month, we have no problem with (Ohtani) pitching then."

#### *YOUNG ON THE MEND*

Outfielder Chris Young had the walking boot removed from his right leg. Scioscia said that Young, who is recovering from a right calf strain, has begun doing cage work and could be a week away from appearing in a game.

"Swinging the bat's important, throwing is important, but Chris is going to have an important role: he's going to have to play all three outfield positions," Scioscia said. "He's not quite there."

#### *IRON MAN MALDONADO*

Scioscia said fatigue contributed to Martin Maldonado's second-half slump at the plate in 2017. In his first year as the Angels' starting catcher, Maldonado slashed .251/.313/.412 before the All-Star break and .183/.227/.312 afterward.

However, the manager wouldn't venture to predict that Maldonado's workload will decrease after playing a career-high 138 games last season.

"Defensively, he showed that he was definitely capable to catch as many games as he did," Scioscia said.

#### *ALSO*

Jefry Marte exited Saturday's game after one inning with right groin tightness. Scioscia said the injury occurred while Marte was stretching for a ball at first base. ... Former Angels outfielder Torii Hunter visited the clubhouse. Hunter, who played for the Angels from 2008-12, is currently a special assistant in the Minnesota Twins' baseball operations department. ... Former Angels shortstop David Eckstein is in camp as a guest instructor. ... Scioscia worked with the Angels' projected starting infielders on defensive shifts.

**FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES****Maldonado homers but Angels lose to Mariners 4-2**

By JEFF MILLER

The Angels lost to Seattle 4-2 on Saturday at Peoria Sports Complex. The Angels are 4-5 in Cactus League play.

**AT THE PLATE:** Martin Maldonado homered in his first at-bat, giving him four RBIs this spring. Matt Thaiss hit his second home run to tie the score 2-2 in the fourth inning. Thaiss, 22, was a first-round draft pick in 2016 and reached double-A Mobile last season.

**ON THE MOUND:** Tyler Skaggs was pleased with his fastball command, his changeup in general and his first-pitch strikes in giving up two runs in three innings. "I want to be a bulldog," he said afterward. The runs scored on a homer by Jean Segura, the former Angels prospect who was traded in 2012 to Milwaukee in the deal that brought Zack Greinke to Anaheim. Skaggs worked expertly out of first-inning trouble. After giving up a soft single and a walk, he induced a double play grounder and then struck out Nelson Cruz to end the threat. Cam Bedrosian struck out two in one scoreless inning. Blake Parker struck out two but also gave up a run and two hits.

**EXTRA BASES:** Jefry Marte, who started at first base, left the game with tightness in his groin. ... Matt Shoemaker is scheduled to make his second start on Sunday.

**UP NEXT:** Angels vs. Colorado at Noon PST Sunday at Tempe Diablo Stadium. TV: FS West; Radio: 830.

**John Lamb is most striking figure in Angels clubhouse by a hair**

By JEFF MILLER

They have a superstar, a first-ballot Hall of Famer and an international standout.

And, yet, the Angel who really stands out in the clubhouse is a pitcher with two big league victories.

"I'm not saying I'm rocking the best 'do in this locker room," John Lamb said. "It's just something I feel like brings more character to me."

With shoulder-length blond hair, the left-hander easily draws more eyes than Mike Trout, Albert Pujols or Shohei Ohtani.

Lamb's notable locks even are the main or, of course, mane, attraction in a group that includes the magnificent beard of Matt Shoemaker and the Beatles-like mop top of Ippei Mizuhara, Ohtani's interpreter.

"I just don't rock a mid-cut very well, in my opinion," Lamb said, smiling. "Not that I rock this very well."

His look, not long ago, was even more pronounced. Lamb said he had three to five inches cut off before he reported to camp last month, his hair previously extending to nearly his stomach.

Playing this winter in Venezuela, trying to give himself the best chance to return to the Angels and continue pursuing a big league job, Lamb said he left an impression on the locals.

"Here I am, so white," he said. "Blond hair, and it's long. They looked at me like I was something from out of this world."

Lamb, 27, spent last year at triple-A Salt Lake, where he was 6-3 with a 5.37 earned-run average in 13 starts.

He figures to open this season in Utah but, given the Angels' recent history of pitching injuries, Lamb could be in Anaheim sooner than later.

The Angels used 13 starters in 2017, and that was while employing a traditional five-man rotation. They are planning to begin this season with a six-man group.

Lamb was granted free agency in November and remained unsigned through the holidays, a rather tenuous position for a former top prospect who has been beset by significant elbow and back problems.

Part of the 2015 deadline deal that resulted in Johnny Cueto becoming a Kansas City Royal, Lamb made 24 starts for Cincinnati in 2015-16 and was 2-12 with a 6.17 ERA.

"It was humbling this winter," said Lamb, who grew up in Laguna Hills. "For the first time, I didn't feel like I had a place to play. I knew something had to change if I wanted to keep chasing this dream."

He signed with the Angels in January and reported to spring training as healthy as he has been in awhile. In two appearances this spring, Lamb has pitched four scoreless innings, giving up two hits and striking out four.

"I'm grateful to the Angels organization and thankful for the opportunity," Lamb said. "I'm just trying to keep chasing a dream."

#### Ohtani to DH

Ohtani is scheduled to appear in his next spring-training game Monday, as the designated hitter against Cincinnati in Goodyear, Ariz.

It will mark his third game as a hitter. He has pitched twice this spring.

Given the Angels' plans, Ohtani could possibly have served as the DH on Sunday. But manager Mike Scioscia indicated the extra day will allow him to give those at-bats to other players who need them.

#### Marketing Ohtani

The Angels aren't just selling the notion of Ohtani being a potential two-way star this season. They're also marketing Ohtani.

The team store at Tempe Diablo Stadium is full of items related to their newest acquisition, highlighted by a framed photo capturing his swing in three stages from his Cactus League debut as a hitter. The price: \$119.99.

Available, too, are various T-shirts, jerseys, caps and a coin inside a photo commemorating Ohtani's introductory news conference at Angel Stadium (display stand included). The latter item goes for \$24.99.

Ohtani's likeness also can be found on pennants, can coolers and beach towels. Depending on sales in 2018, he could prove to be a three-way star for the Angels.

### Short hops

Outfielder Chris Young is out of the walking boot he had been wearing as he continues to progress from a strained right calf. Scioscia said Young is at least a week away from playing. ... For the seventh time in nine exhibition games, the Angels started a lineup lacking most of their regulars Saturday night against Seattle. Catcher Martin Maldonado was the lone projected opening-day starter who started. ... Former Angel Torii Hunter visited camp. He is a special assistant in baseball operations for the Minnesota Twins.

**FROM ANGELS.COM**

## **Maldonado aims to stay strong at plate in '18**

Angels catcher experienced second-half slump last season

By Maria Guardado

TEMPE, Ariz. -- No player caught more games in the Majors last year than Martin Maldonado.

In his first full season as a starter, Maldonado appeared in 137 games behind the plate for the Angels, far surpassing his previous career high of 79. While his elite defense proved key for the Angels and netted him his first career Gold Glove Award in 2017, Maldonado admits that the increased workload took its toll on his offensive production as the season wore on. He posted a .539 OPS in the second half, down from .725 in the first half.

"I failed in the physical preparation during the season," Maldonado said in Spanish on Saturday. "It's something that I thought was going to be easier than what I experienced. But this year we're working hard to create a plan during the season that will keep me at the same level for the whole year."

Maldonado said he's spoken with head strength and conditioning coach Lee Fiocchi about ways to adjust his in-season gym routine to prevent a similar offensive dropoff in 2018.



"I think the type of work I did in the gym during the season wasn't right for keeping me at the level I needed to be at physically," said Maldonado, who launched his first home run of the spring off Mariners right-hander Rob Whalen on Saturday night.

The addition of Rene Rivera could also help keep Maldonado fresher this season. Signed to a one-year, \$2.8 million contract in January, Rivera is expected to serve as Maldonado's backup, giving the Angels a defensively savvy veteran to help shoulder the catching workload.

"I think with Rene, there's no doubt that with his experience we can work him in to keep Martin a little fresher offensively," manager Mike Scioscia said. "But it still comes down to the defensive component that a catcher brings, and Martin had an unbelievable year last year. So I'm not going to arbitrarily say he won't catch as much. But I think there can be an opportunity maybe to give him those days off, which might help him on the offensive side. Defensively, he showed he was definitely capable to catch as many games as he did."

A longtime backup to All-Star Jonathan Lucroy in Milwaukee, Maldonado didn't get his first opportunity to start until the Angels acquired him in an offseason trade last winter. The 31-year-old quickly impressed the Angels with his defensive acumen, including his cannon-like throwing arm, pitch-framing skills and work with the club's pitching staff.

"He's engaged in the game," left-hander Tyler Skaggs said. "He's one of those guys where you can tell that he's going with you pitch by pitch. He wants to execute the pitch, number one. Number two, I don't even have to shake because he knows exactly what I want to throw. That just comes with relationship, that comes with being in tune with the pitcher and what he's got going that night."

Maldonado's talent was validated in November, when he won his first Gold Glove Award and unseated the Royals' Salvador Perez, who had won the award in four consecutive seasons in the American League.

"It was one of my goals at the beginning of the year," Maldonado said. "It was something that I wanted. I wanted to win it, just like I wanted to win the opportunity to play every day and show what I could do. It was something that I had been waiting for for many years."

## **Young has walking boot removed in calf rehab**

Angels outfielder still at least week from returning to field

By Maria Guardado

TEMPE, Ariz. -- Angels outfielder Chris Young, who has been sidelined with a strained right calf this spring, got his walking boot removed Saturday, though he remains at least a week away from appearing in Cactus League games, according to manager Mike Scioscia.

"We've got to start to get him into some running, which probably won't happen for a couple more days," Scioscia said. "He's hitting in the cage now, so he'll be able to bring that forward. But the work that it's going to take for him to get into the lineup and play, you're talking probably a week away, and

then we can evaluate him and see. Right now it's just going to be baby steps until that thing's 100 percent."

Signed to a one-year, \$2 million deal last month, Young is projected to serve as the Angels' fourth outfielder this season. The 34-year-old veteran batted .235 with a .709 OPS and seven home runs in 90 games for the Red Sox last year.

#### Skaggs pleased with outing

Left-hander Tyler Skaggs surrendered two runs over three innings during his second Cactus League start in the Angels' 4-2 loss to the Mariners on Saturday night at Peoria Sports Complex.

Skaggs gave up three hits, including a two-run homer to Jean Segura in the third, with two walks and three strikeouts. The 26-year-old opened the game by yielding a leadoff single to Dee Gordon and a walk to Segura, but he worked out of the early jam by inducing a 4-6-3 double play from Robinson Cano and striking out Nelson Cruz looking on a changeup to end the inning.

"I thought I threw really well out of the stretch," Skaggs said. "I worked my butt off this week to feel comfortable, and I threw most of the game out of the stretch. The fruits of the labor paid off. Everything felt good. I thought the fastball command was great up until the one pitch for the home run, but I was being aggressive out there. But most important thing, I threw a lot of first-pitch strikes, which is what I really went into the game wanting to accomplish."

Skaggs said one of his goals this spring is to work on establishing his changeup, which he threw only 8.76 percent of the time in 2017, according to Brooks Baseball.

"If I start throwing the changeup in there, it's going to be a long night," Skaggs said.

#### Camp battles

Cam Bedrosian and Blake Parker, who figure to be in the closing mix for the Angels this year, both made their second relief appearances of the spring on Saturday. Bedrosian pitched a 1-2-3 fourth and has now logged two scoreless innings in two Cactus League games. Parker entered the game in the fifth and struck out the first two batters he faced, but he then allowed a triple to Gordon, a walk to Segura and an RBI single to Cano, prompting Scioscia to lift him in favor of Tyler Warmoth.

#### The Ohtani brief

Shohei Ohtani will return to the Angels' lineup as the designated hitter on Monday against the Reds in Goodyear, Ariz., giving him two days to recover from his "B" game start against the Brewers on Friday. After his first Cactus League start on the mound, Ohtani rested for only one day before batting in a game. Scioscia said the extra day of rest is to allow Ohtani to work on some drills he hadn't been able to do in recent days as he prepared to pitch.

"There's not going to be a fixed schedule where he's definitely pitching here or is definitely doing this," Scioscia said. "Pitching-wise, it will be more of a routine, but on the offensive end, we have to be flexible

to what his needs are and where he is. There are some things he's going to do [Sunday] that he wasn't able to do."018

#### Injury update

First baseman Jefry Marte departed Saturday's game after one inning with right groin tightness. Scioscia said Marte suffered the injury while stretching for a ball at first base.

"We want to jump on it right now," Scioscia said. "Hopefully it won't keep him out too long."

Marte was replaced at first base by prospect Matt Thaiss, who crushed his second home run of the spring off Juan Nicasio in the fourth inning. Thaiss, who is ranked the Angels' No. 9 prospect by MLB Pipeline, finished 2-for-2 and is batting .313 over eight Cactus League games this year.

#### Up next

Matt Shoemaker will make his second start of the spring on Sunday, when the Angels host the Rockies at Tempe Diablo Stadium. Shoemaker allowed one run over 2 1/3 innings in his Cactus League debut against Colorado on Feb. 27. First pitch is scheduled for 12:10 p.m. PT. The game will be available on MLB.TV.

### **FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

## **Angels' Garrett Richards ready to return after two years of injuries**

Tempe, Ariz. • Sure, Garrett Richards realizes his luck has been pretty bad the past couple of seasons when it comes to injuries.

He's not interested in dwelling on all the time he missed, all the countless hours of rehab that seemed as if they'd never end, rather turning his attention to what he can do to help the Los Angeles Angels now that he's healthy at last.

A year ago, Richards had prepared to pitch for a full season after working his way back from a torn ulnar collateral ligament in his elbow for which he had stem-cell therapy instead of the more common Tommy John reconstructive surgery. Then he got hurt again in his 2017 season debut. Immediately, another season cut short.

With a rare biceps nerve irritation issue, no less — his elbow was sound and intact.

"You're frustrated. You put in a lot of work to get back, you do everything you're supposed to do and you go through the trial period, can you do this? All the doubts, being down on yourself. You get through all that and then to have it happen again, it's frustrating and it's back to the beginning," he said.

"You try and get as good as you can that day. You look back and eventually it's three months down the road or whatever."

It tested his patience.

Yet as he rehabbed again, Richards refused to get too far ahead of himself in what can be a daunting process.

He wanted owner Arte Moreno and general manager Billy Eppler to know he would do all he could to regain his old form.

"This is what I love to do and I have an obligation to this team to give them everything I possibly have," said Richards, who received a \$7.3 million, one-year contract for 2018. "Not only for my teammates but for Arte, Billy, I have an obligation to give them everything I have on a yearly basis and try to win as many games as possible. When I'm hurt, I owe it to them to try and get back as fast as possible. That's the way I look at it. So that's the kind of mindset I have when I go into it."

The 29-year-old Richards pitched April 5, then not again for the Angels until Sept. 5, building up his arm strength by starting over in a throwing program. Richards has made only six starts in each of the past two years.

Everyone is eager for a new beginning, especially with Japanese two-way star Shohei Ohtani in the mix and smiling at every chance. The pitcher and hitter dresses near Richards in the clubhouse at Tempe Diablo Stadium.

"We really feel that we're a very talented starting rotation," Angels manager Mike Scioscia said. "A big thing is the health. What we're trying to do is obviously monitor these guys. Garrett's one of a number of guys. As dominant as Garrett was three years ago, it's not outside the realm of possibility he can regain that, and that's what we're looking for."

Richards won a career-high 15 games in 2015 with his most innings ever at 207 1/3, and he had 13 wins the year before that.

Last April at Oakland and back on a big league mound for the first time in 11 months, Richards pitched beautifully before he experienced some cramping in his biceps. He left abruptly in the fifth inning and said afterward it was as if someone had punched him in his pitching arm. At that point, both Richards and Scioscia hoped the right-hander would be fine for his next start.

"For whatever reason it was damaged or whatever happened, basically my bicep just kind of shut down," Richards said. "It was a nerve issue. ... It's not a common thing whatsoever."

Richards returned to make five starts in September, going 0-2. The great thing about spending his offseasons in Chandler, Arizona, is that he could train at the Angels' facility over the winter.

"I had a normal offseason this offseason, which was cool," Richards said. "I got to do some good training and get ready to go. You try and put yourself in the best shape and the best possible chance to stay

healthy all year through the offseason and I feel really great right now, so that's all I could ask for right now.

"I think every spring it feels like a new start," Richards added. "But for me personally I'm just happy to be back playing baseball."