



Padres Press Clips

Monday, June 4, 2018

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Hunter Renfroe's grand slam launches Padres past Reds

Kevin Acee

Hunter Renfroe's left hand held the bat high as he walked up the first base line and watched the ball bounce off the second balcony fronting the Western Metal building.

"I knew it was gone as soon as I hit it," he said.

He and everyone else.

Renfroe has hit the brick edifice that looms in the corner of the left field stands at Petco Park as much as anyone since he ascended to the major leagues at the end of 2016. He's the only person to land a home run on top of the four-story building in a game. He has done so twice.

But this home run, it was something else.

The pinch-hit grand slam in the fifth inning helped win Sunday's game, putting the [Padres](#) up for good in a 6-3 victory over the [Reds](#).

Moreover, if it and the week that it punctuated with an exclamation point are more than a flash, the 375-foot blast helped solidify the notion that the real Renfroe has finally arrived.

"It's good to see," manager Andy Green said. "... He's worked hard and was hungry to show what he can do. I'm thrilled with what he did today. More opportunity will keep coming to him. I'd like to see him keep running with it."

In 14 at-bats since the Padres activated him – largely out of necessity – off the disabled list on Monday, Renfroe has seven hits, including a pinch-hit walk-off infield single on Wednesday.

He was activated despite not having performed particularly well at Triple-A, because Franchy Cordero was sent to the DL with a forearm strain.

"I didn't care if I did terrible or not down there," Renfroe said. "I knew what I was doing."

Still, to get results at the highest level is affirming, particularly for a player facing increased competition for decreasing space in the Padres' future.

"It builds confidence," Renfroe said. "You want to go out there and keep grinding, keep adjusting your swing to the pitchers."

His contribution provided what the Padres hope is Sunday's lasting takeaway.

But there were other moments of significance, not the least of which was the final score. The win completed the second consecutive series victory for the Padres, who are 5-2 on a homestand that resumes Monday with the opener of a three-game set against the Braves.

After starter [Tyson Ross](#) (5-3) left following the fifth, Adam Cimber pitched a perfect sixth and Craig Stammen a perfect seventh before lefty closer Brad Hand allowed a run in the eighth and Kirby Yates worked a three-hit scoreless ninth for his third career save.

It was the ninth time the Padres won in 12 starts by Ross. The right-hander was not as sharp as he has been but still went five innings, allowing two runs prior to departing just before the Padres showed their first real offensive spark.

Until the bottom of the fifth, [Eric Hosmer](#)'s two singles had been the only Padres hits off Castillo.

Then Franmil Reyes singled, [Freddy Galvis](#) singled on a bunt against an infield that was playing back, and Manuel Margot walked before there was an out.

After Raffy Lopez's dribbler turned into a force out of Reyes at home, Renfroe came in to hit for Ross and quickly went down 0-2. He fouled off a third pitch and took a ball from Castillo, who then hung a slider in the middle of the plate that Renfroe smacked.

The homer, which flipped a 2-0 deficit into a 4-2 lead, was Renfroe's third career grand slam and the first go-ahead pinch-hit grand slam in the majors since 2015 and the first by a Padres player since 1995.

It was the first pinch-hit home run for the 26-year-old who hit a franchise rookie-record 26 homers in 2017 but also spent a portion of last summer in Triple-A.

Renfroe came into this season needing to show he could hit consistently – and especially against right-handed pitchers. Those befuddled him in 2017, when he was forced to play against them more than was healthy for him because he was the rare Padres outfielder who stayed healthy.

The grand slam off Reds starter [Luis Castillo](#) (4-6) was Renfroe's seventh hit in 10 at-bats against right-handers since he returned. He was 4-for-28 against righties prior to going on the disabled list last month with a strained UCL.

After an offseason and spring of tinkering, he has settled into a more open stance when facing righties, against whom he has so often struggled picking up the ball out of the hand.

“Obviously you try to grow up a little bit and become a better player, a better hitter,” Renfroe said. “Just trying to do the best I can to grow. ... It's been fun. It feels good to be back and I'm glad to contribute to a few wins.”

Day 1 draft tracker: Padres pick 7th overall today

Jeff Sanders

Happy draft day.

Today, the [Padres](#) pick seventh, 38th and 74th. Official coverage at [MLB Network](#) and [MLB.com](#) starts at 3 p.m. with the first pick due at 4 p.m. Check back here throughout the day for the latest on who's going where, scouting reports on the Padres' selections and video when and if available.

For now, an update on the latest mock drafts. You can view our 2.0 version of Padres mock draft central [here](#) and learn why trading for the 74th pick affects the whole draft [here](#).

[ESPN \(Keith Law\)](#)

Alec Bohm, 3B, Wichita State

- Bohm is the only college player I've heard here, although I keep hearing them linked to Kyler Murray for their competitive balance pick. If they go high school, it's Liberatore, Stewart, Ryan Weathers, maybe Kelenic. Wild Sunday rumor: They might go way under-slot here with Steele Walker to help fund a way-over-slot pick at 38.

[MLB.com](#)

- **Mayo: Matt Liberatore, LHP, Mountain Ridge HS (Ariz.):** Another spot where the Murray rumor pops up, but for now we're sticking with giving the Padres the top high schooler on the board. That could be debated among several arms, but Liberatore seems to be the best bet as of now.
- **Callis: Ryan Weathers, LHP, Loretto HS (Tenn.):** San Diego is believed to be locked in on high school pitchers, but it will consider some of the collegians forecast above if they drop. While the Padres may rank Liberatore first among prep arms, they also may want to take the one who will accept the lowest bonus so they can spend heavily later. (San Diego also is linked to Murray, for instance.) Of the four guys in the consensus top tier of high school pitching, Weathers could last the longest and thus be most open to accepting a deal.

[CBS](#)

LHP Matthew Liberatore, Mountain Ridge HS (Ariz.)

- “With so many college players coming off the board in the first six picks, the [Padres](#) will have their choice of high-upside high schoolers here, and that is right in GM A.J. Preller's wheelhouse. Even after forfeiting their second-rounder to sign [Eric Hosmer](#), San Diego has two extra Competitive Balance picks, and the smart money is on them selecting

whichever prep arm agrees to a below-slot bonus here, then using the savings on their extra picks later. Liberatore is considered the strong favorite to be the first prep pitcher taken Monday. *Previous Mock Selection: RHP Carter Stewart, Eau Gallie HS (Florida)*”

USA Today

Matthew Liberatore, LHP, Mountain Ridge HS (Ariz.)

- “The [San Diego Padres](#) are expected to select the top prep arm available and in this scenario they have their pick of all of them. Liberatore is the consensus top high school pitcher and his stock has some helium. His fastball sits in the low- to mid- 90s but can jump to 97 and his curveball and changeup are both plus offerings already. He has the potential for three outstanding offerings and he is far ahead of his peers on the mental side of the game. [Carter Stewart](#), [Ryan Weathers](#) and Winn are all possibilities here as well. It will all depend on preference for Padres GM [A.J. Preller](#), who is notoriously tough to read.”

Fangraphs.com ...

... didn't update its mock this morning, but Friday's version offered selections for all three first-day picks.

No. 7. Ryan Weathers, LHP, Loretto HS (TN)

Less likely alternate scenario: Alec Bohm, 3B, Wichita State

- “The Padres bought a comp pick by taking on some of [Phil Hughes](#)' contract, and we think they take an underslot prep arm here. The buzz is that San Diego wants to shave off of slot here unless Bohm gets to them, which sounds like a strong possibility if Philly doesn't take Bohm at No. 3. In the event Bohm doesn't get here, they'll take the cheapest of the players they have evaluated similarly, and that's likely Weathers over fellow prep arms Liberatore and **Carter Stewart**. Kelenic is not in play here if he's on the board, and it sounds like the Padres prefer Weathers to South Alabama center fielder **Travis Swaggerty**, who would also be below slot here. Liberatore might also be a slight underslot pick here if he isn't otherwise going to be picked until No. 9 or 10, just at much less savings than Weathers. For their next couple picks, the Padres are targeting Torres, Rocker, Naylor, Oklahoma left fielder **Steele Walker**, Tennessee prep right fielder **Ryder Green**, Georgia prep right fielder **Lawrence Butler**, and Georgia prep righty **Ethan Hankins**.”
- **No. 38. RHP Lenny Torres, Beacon HS (N.Y.)**
- **No. 74. RF Ryder Green, Karns HS (Tenn.)**

RECENT PADRES FIRST-ROUND HISTORY

- 2017 | No. 3, LHP MacKenzie Gore (Currently: Fort Wayne DL)
- 2016 | No. 8, RHP Cal Quantrill (Currently: Double-A rotation)
- 2016 | No. 24, SS Hudson Potts (Currently: Lake Elsinore third baseman)
- 2016 | No. 25, LHP Eric Lauer (Currently: San Diego rotation)
- 2015 | Did not have a first-round pick (James Shields)
- 2014 | No. 13, SS Trea Turner (Currently: [Nationals](#) shortstop; [Wil Myers](#) trade)

- 2013 | No. 13, OF Hunter Renfroe (Currently: San Diego bench)
- 2012 | No. 7, LHP [Max Fried](#) (Currently: [Braves](#) bullpen; [Justin Upton](#) trade)
- 2012 | No. 33, RHP [Zach Eflin](#) (Currently: [Phillies](#) rotation; [Matt Kemp](#) trade)
- 2012 | No. 44, OF Travis Jankowski (Currently: San Diego outfield)
- 2012 | No. 55, RHP [Walker Weickel](#) (Currently: [Rangers](#) system; released)
- 2011 | No. 10, 2B Cory Spangenberg (Currently: San Diego bench)
- 2011 | No. 25, RHP [Joe Ross](#) (Currently: [Nationals](#) disabled list; [Wil Myers](#) trade)
- 2011 | No. 48, RHP Michael Kelly (Currently: [Orioles](#) system; minor league free agent)
- 2011 | No. 54, C [Brett Austin](#) (Currently: [White Sox](#) system; did not sign)
- 2011 | No. 58, SS [Jace Peterson](#) (Currently: [Orioles](#) bench; [Justin Upton](#) trade)
- 2010 | No. 9, RHP Karsten Whitson (Currently: out of baseball; did not sign)
- 2009 | No. 3, OF Donovan Tate (Currently: out of baseball; minor league free agent)
- 2008 | No. 23, 1B Allan Dykstra (Currently: out of baseball; [Eddie Kunz](#) trade)
- 2008 | No. 42, OF Jaff Decker (Currently: [Nationals](#) system; [Alex Dickerson](#) trade)
- 2008 | No. 46, 3B Logan Forsythe (Currently: [Dodgers](#) infield; [Jesse Hahn](#) trade)

Leitner's absence is felt on Padres broadcasts

Tom Krasovic

I am convinced that a few years after [Tony Gwynn](#) stopped playing baseball, had you handed him a bat and directed him to the batter's box against any of several big leaguers, righty or lefty, smoke-thrower or knuckle-ball artist, he would've smacked a line drive.

A similar vision of persistence arises with Ted Leitner, the longtime San Diego sports broadcaster and [Padres](#) play-by-play man for nearly 40 years.

Hand this man a microphone at any hour of the day, even if roused out of sleep and then blindfolded, and I'm convinced he'd still hold an audience with his storytelling and commentary on any number of topics.

Ted astounds even the professional talkers, with his versatile game.

"Boy," Bob Chandler was saying Sunday, "he's a smart guy."

Chandler shared a Padres radio booth with Leitner for more than 20 years, and considers him perhaps unsurpassed as an all-around broadcaster. His bubblegum card includes news talk shows, sports TV shows that were largely improvisational, narration of baseball, basketball and football, and emcee of various events.

So when listening to recent Pads radio broadcasts, it was odd not to hear Leitner's smooth baritone voice and flowing commentary.

He is recovering from last week's surgery to remove a cancerous kidney. The club said the surgery went as expected, and fellow Padres broadcaster [Tony Gwynn Jr.](#) reported Leitner, 70, is in good spirits.

It's possible he could return to the booth this month, although even his vast stores of energy were expected to wane in the aftermath of the surgery.

Chandler made an encouraging point. This "one kidney thing" has worked out before for the Padres.

Trevor Hoffman lost a kidney as an infant.

One was enough for Hoffman, who will go into the Hall of Fame this summer.

Minus Leitner, the broadcasts are in good hands with a combination of Mark Grant, Jesse Agler and Gwynn Jr.

However, there is a void.

Leitner draws upon nearly four decades of Padres storytelling.

Ted's style isn't for everyone, but that's true of almost every sports broadcaster not named Vin Scully. (And before the surgery, Scully chatted Ted up.)

Anyone who has attended an event where Leitner was the emcee has witnessed a special talent. Leitner was particularly deft, and comforting, as the host of "celebration of life" ceremonies for Gwynn and longtime broadcast partner Jerry Coleman.

"He's awesome at that," Chandler said. "He's absolutely the best at that."

The ability to mourn a longtime friend yet also celebrate him in front of a large audience — as Coleman would say, hang a star on that one.

"Ted's just great," Chandler said. "I don't think there's anybody like him. There's other people that can do introductions and stuff like that. Ted's just better. He's interesting, informative and entertaining."

Leitner can call a baseball game just fine, even better than just fine. But because the Pads have served up so many dud seasons, more was needed. His ability to tell stories, riff on any number of themes, maintain a zest for the job, lighten the mood and connect with casual fans has carried countless broadcasts, especially during these Padres Dark Ages.

"When you're in the pennant race and the fans are hanging onto every pitch," Chandler said, "that's a much easier broadcast."

In nine of the past 10 years, the Pads have fallen well short of playoff contention.

Leitner narrated the journeys of both Pads teams that reached a World Series, plus the three others that claimed West titles.

It'd be heartening for him to get a chance to dust off those skills during a playoff race, and to narrate what would be the team's first playoff victory on San Diego soil since 1998.

With an extra pick, Padres looking to make money work for them in draft

Jeff Sanders

To add the No. 74 draft pick and increase their bonus pool by a little more than 8 percent (\$812,200), the **Padres** will pay roughly \$7.5 million of pitcher **Phil Hughes**' salary through the 2019 season.

The Padres' opening-day payroll — entrenched firmly in the bottom third of the major leagues even with first baseman **Eric Hosmer**'s arrival on the richest contract in franchise history — affords the club the flexibility to take on that money, a move that also pushes the Padres further all-in on acquiring talent through the three-day draft, which starts today.

“It could be the difference between signing a guy and not signing a guy,” said Dan O’Dowd, a former **Rockies** general manager and an analyst on **MLB** Network. “You’re putting yourself in a position to have a chance to be that much more successful. It’s the one area they have a chance to add impact. They are not going to do it in free agency again; Hosmer might be their only buy.

“This is an organization that has to consistently build through the draft and through development.”

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MLB DRAFT

The Padres own four of the top-84 picks, giving them three first-day selections: No. 7, No. 38. Their \$10.46 million bonus pool is the seventh-largest. The suggested slot value for their No. 7 overall pick is \$5.23 million

- **Day 1:** Round 1-Round 2 Comp (4 p.m., MLB Network / MLB.com)
- **Day 2:** Rounds 3-10 (10 a.m., MLB.com)
- **Day 3:** Rounds 11-40 (9 a.m., MLB.com)

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The Padres' efforts in those departments have a great deal to do with their farm system ranking among the top three in the game. More than a third of the organization's top 30 arrived in drafts run by current GM A.J. Preller, and the Padres are poised to do damage again with a third straight pick inside the top eight and four of the top-84 picks.

Th suggested slot values of those picks make up more than \$8.6 million of the Padres' \$10.46 million bonus pool, seventh-largest this year. In particular, the addition of Pick No. 74 — only

competitive-balance picks can be traded — replaces the \$1.45 million lost when the Padres forfeited their second-round pick (No. 49) to sign 28-year-old Hosmer away from the [Royals](#).

“I think it’s like one of the alarms on my phone,” Preller said. “Every week, call the teams with those picks. Over the course of the last three years, you’re trying to add picks. That’s a year-in, year-out thing. You look at some of the better drafts historically, and it’s usually the teams that have multiple picks.”

The top of the draft has been especially fruitful for the Padres in the last two years (the Padres forfeited their first-rounder in 2015 to sign pitcher James Shields). Last year, they signed high school pitcher MacKenzie Gore — the No. 3 overall pick and the 18th-ranked prospect in baseball by MLB.com — via a franchise-record \$6.7 million bonus. The front office was significantly more creative in 2016 [six picks inside the top-85 and nearly \\$13 million in pool money](#) to play with:

- **No. 8:** RHP Cal Quantrill (Stanford) for \$3.96 million (\$330K over slot)
- **No. 24:** SS Hudson Potts (high school) for \$1 million (\$1.19M under slot)
- **No. 25:** LHP Eric Lauer (Kent State) for \$2 million (\$159K under slot)
- **No. 48:** CF Buddy Reed (Florida) for \$1.08 million (\$243 K under slot)
- **No. 71:** RHP Reggie Lawson (high school) for \$1.9 million (\$994K over slot)
- **No. 85:** RHP Mason Thompson (high school) for \$1.75 million (\$1.02M over slot)
- **No. 114:** LHP Joey Lucchesi (Southeast Missouri State) for \$100,000 (\$421K under slot)

Whether a college hitter (like Wichita State’s Alex Bohm) drops to the Padres at No. 7 or they have their choice of high school arms (Matthew Liberatore is the consensus No. 1 lefty), the additional pick this year could see the Padres writing a similar draft plan this year.

“You have more flexibility in terms of being able to add additional talent,” Preller said. “It gives you more room to be a little more creative, too, because there may be one player you weren’t expecting to fall or maybe a player that you reach up (to take) because we value them a little differently than the industry does. It might be a multiple group of players like we’ve done in the past.

“The game now is making your money work for you.”

Which, in this case, cost the Padres an extra \$7.25 million (Hughes’ salary) toward next year’s payroll.

Considering the Padres’ place in the world — rebuilding in a small market — it’s money well spent, O’Dowd says.

“That guy, whoever they decide to take and the money they got to work with,” O’Dowd said, “has a chance, from a WAR standpoint, to well exceed the dollars that he took back with Hughes.

“... I thought it was a really smart move.”

Padres notes: Jumbled pen; Raffy, Ross improvement; plan for Castillo

Kevin Acee

Andy Green got to do again Sunday what he's always said he would when presented with the chance.

For the second time this week – and just the second time this season – the Padres manager brought in left-handed closer [Brad Hand](#) to face the lefty-heavy heart of an order in the eighth inning before giving the ball to Kirby Yates in the ninth to close out a 6-3 victory over the [Reds](#).

Green did the same Tuesday against the Marlins.

Not only does the right-handed Yates do well against lefties, but the lack of leads in such situations has prevented Green from mixing up his end-of-game order.

“You don't manufacture the setting,” Green said. “It has to come to you. The game has to be played that way, and you have to look up and say, ‘Man, I'd really love Brad to face these lefties right here.’ It doesn't always work out.”

Hand struck out [Joey Votto](#), gave up a home run to Scooter Gennett and then got out of the inning. Yates allowed three hits, but thanks in large part to a nifty double play started by first baseman [Eric Hosmer](#), he did not allow a run.

Rapid Raffy

Issuing a lead-off walk to [Billy Hamilton](#), whose sprint speed is the third-fastest clocked in the major leagues this year, is a recipe for disaster in a one-run game.

That's what [Tyson Ross](#) did in Sunday's fifth inning. Ross then threw three times to first base before making his first pitch to [Jesse Winker](#). When Ross finally did make that pitch, Hamilton took off.

Catcher Raffy Lopez received the low fastball and fired the perfect throw it took to get Hamilton.

“Saw him go, and I just felt like it was a pitch that would be easy to handle for a guy stealing,” Lopez said. “Just trying to be as quick as I could, and once I got a grip and saw the flight of the ball, I was like, ‘All right. It's got a chance.’”

It was the a manifestation of a vast improvement by Lopez, who was signed by the Padres in December and spent time in January with Ryley Westman, the organization's catching

instructor. They worked on a number of mechanical things, including Lopez's arm slot and footwork.

"Throwing has been a weakness for me," Lopez said. "Just wasn't very accurate, transfers weren't very good, even the (velocity) wasn't very consistent."

The play also illustrated Ross' improvement managing base runners, including his move to first and a quicker delivery home. In 33 starts (196 innings) in 2015, Ross had 37 bases stolen against him, second-most in the majors. Just four runners have stolen a base in Ross' 12 starts (70 2/3 innings) this season.

"Two years ago, it wouldn't have been possible for a catcher – didn't matter what the arm was; if there was a bazooka back there – you weren't throwing Billy Hamilton out," Green said. "So Tyson has made a real adjustment there and gave Raffy an opportunity to make a great throw. That was a tremendous throw. A throw-and-catch as impressive as I've ever seen from Raffy. That was great."

Castillo adds good depth

Jose Castillo, the rookie left-hander who on Saturday struck out Votto, Eugenio Suarez and Adam Duvall in his first major league inning, was unavailable to pitch Sunday.

"There's no chance in the world, where he's at in the development cycle, he's going to go three days in a row right now," Green said, referencing the fact Castillo threw an inning Friday for Triple-A El Paso before being called up.

But Green certainly has plans for the hard-throwing 22-year-old.

"Our guys who have pitched in leverage situations have done a really nice job," Green said. "Where we've struggled the most over the last couple years is holding a game tight when we don't want to use ... (Craig) Stammen, Hand or Yates. (Castillo) showed yesterday he can handle that one run down or the tight situation late when it calls for him."

It's the role Matt Strahm filled in Wednesday's victory over the Marlins, pitching two perfect innings to get the Padres to the ninth down a run before they scored twice to walk off with the 3-2 victory.

"All too often the last few years the guys whose hands we've put the ball in in that situation, the lead has gotten larger," Green said. "The longer your bullpen gets and the more arms you get that look like Matt Strahm and Jose Castillo, you go, 'We've got guys who can hold us there.' That does an enormous amount for an offense, for a club."

Extra bases

- In the first inning, third baseman Christian Villanueva fouled a ball off his left ankle for the second time in four days. Having played on after the painful incident on Thursday, Villanueva had to leave Sunday's game. X-rays were negative. Villanueva will miss Monday's game with what is being called a bruise.

- The Padres say radio play-by-play announcer Ted Leitner's surgery went as expected on Thursday. His cancerous kidney was removed and the cancer had not spread. Leitner is home recovering with the hope he will return to the booth later this month.
- Eric Hosmer went 3-for-4 Sunday, his fifth multi-hit effort in the past six games. Over the past seven games, he is 14-for-27.
- Franmil Reyes hit two singles for the second game in a row. He is 7-for-21 (with three home runs) over his past six games after beginning his major league career 5-for-30 (with one homer).
- Lopez, who singled in the sixth inning for just his second hit in his past 25 at-bats, then stole the first base of his career.
- Outfielder Franchy Cordero, on the disabled list with a strained forearm, played catch for the second straight day.
- Relief pitcher Kyle McGrath cleared waivers and was outrighted to Triple-A El Paso.

Cal Quantrill strikes out 10 in Missions win

Jeff Sanders

Cal Quantrill's [spring training](#) roommates blazed the trail to the majors. The 23-year-old right-hander – selected eighth overall in 2016, before left-handers **Eric Lauer** and **Joey Lucchesi** – might not be too far behind if he replicates Sunday's effort often over the course of the summer.

Quantrill struck out a season-high 10 batters over seven shutout innings in [Double-A San Antonio's 6-0 win](#) at Springfield, continuing a recent uptick for the former first-round pick.

Ranked No. 4 in the system by MLB.com, the Stanford product scattered three hits and walk over the start to improve to 4-3 and lower his ERA to 4.15.

Quantrill has allowed two earned runs over his last three starts (17 2/3 innings) after allowing 17 earned runs over his previous three starts (14 2/3 innings).

He has 63 strikeouts, a 1.42 WHIP and a .267 opponent average over his first 65 innings with San Antonio (35-21)

Shortstop **Matthew Batten** (.125), inserted into the lineup for **Fernando Tatis Jr.**'s scheduled off-day, hit a grand slam for his first homer, catcher **Austin Allen** (.325) went 3-for-5 with a double and center fielder **Michael Gettys** (.263) went 2-for-4 with a double, a triple, a walk and a run scored.

TRIPLE-A EL PASO (28-30)

- [Chihuahuas 5, Sacramento 0](#): LHP **Dillon Overton** (2-2, 2.76) struck out three and allowed only two hits over seven shutout innings in the win. RHP **Kazuhisa Makita**(0.00) struck out a batter in a perfect eighth. 2B **Carlos Asuaje** (.318) went 3-for-4 with a double and a run scored and 1B **Allen Craig** (.254) and LF **Shane Peterson**(.250) each had two hits.

HIGH SINGLE-A LAKE ELSINORE (28-29)

- [Storm 7, Inland Empire 6](#): LF **Buddy Reed** (.341) hit a walk-off single in the ninth inning, his only hit in four at-bats. Reed also walked. 3B **Hudson Potts** (.263) drove in two runs on his ninth homer and SS **Kelvin Melean** (.233) went 2-for-3 with two doubles and two runs scored. RHP **Ronald Bolanos** (7.32) allowed six runs – four earned – in 3 1/3 innings in the start.

LOW SINGLE-A FORT WAYNE (26-29)

- [Great Lakes 3](#), [TinCaps 1](#): RHP **Luis Patino** (2-2, 4.15) struck out a career-high eight batters in only four innings. The one unearned he allowed on four hits, no walks and a hit batter was enough to saddle him with his second loss. LHP **Ben Sheckler** closed the game with two runs allowed over four innings. RF **Tirso Ornelas** (.271) and DH **Luis Campusano** (.291) both had two hits.

Transactions

- RHP **T.J. Weir** was transferred from El Paso to San Antonio as LHP **Kyle McGrath** cleared waivers and was outrighted to El Paso.
- LHP **Fred Schlichholz** was transferred from El Paso to extended spring training.

Padres ready to add to stacked Minors system

By AJ Cassavell MLB.com @AJCassavell

12:02 AM ET

LOS ANGELES -- The Padres' farm system is [the best in baseball](#), according to MLB Pipeline, and the past three Draft classes of general manager A.J. Preller and scouting director Mark Conner have played no small part in establishing that high standard.

The 2018 Draft begins today with the Draft preview show on MLB Network and MLB.com at 3 p.m. PT. MLB Network will broadcast the first 43 picks (Round 1 and Competitive Balance Round A), while MLB.com will stream all 78 picks on Day 1. MLB.com will also provide live pick-by-pick coverage of Rounds 3-10 on Day 2, with a preview show beginning at 9:30 a.m. PT. Then, Rounds 11-40 can be heard live on MLB.com on Day 3, beginning at 9 a.m. PT.

Go to [MLB.com/draft](#) to see the [Top 200 Prospects](#) list, projected top picks from MLB Pipeline analysts Jim Callis and Jonathan Mayo, the complete [order of selection](#) and more. And follow [@MLBDraft](#) on Twitter to see what Draft hopefuls, clubs and experts are saying.

Here's how the Draft is shaping up for the Padres, whose first selection is the seventh overall pick.

In about 50 words

For Conner and Preller, it's their fourth Draft together at the helm of the Padres. They're already beginning to see the fruits of their labor. Early 2016 picks [Eric Lauer](#) and [Joey Lucchesi](#) have found places in the starting rotation, while [Phil Maton](#) (2015) has become a bullpen asset. The Padres will pick seventh, 38th and 74th on Day 1 this year. They own picks in both Competitive Balance rounds but have no second-round pick, which they forfeited when they signed [Eric Hosmer](#) during the offseason. (They acquired the 74th pick in a [trade with Minnesota](#) on Sunday.)

The scoop

It's the third straight year in which the Padres own a top 10 pick, having selected righty Cal Quantrill in 2016 and lefty MacKenzie Gore in '17. Entering this year's Draft, they're both ranked among [the top 40 prospects](#) in baseball. Don't be surprised if the Padres lean toward another high-upside arm. They've been linked with high school left-hander Matthew Liberatore from Mountain Ridge High School in Arizona.

First-round buzz

Callis has the Padres selecting Liberatore, and that move would certainly fit their recent philosophy. According to Callis, Liberatore is one of four prep pitching prospects in play for the Friars, alongside right-handers Carter Stewart (Florida) and Cole Winn (Orange, Calif.) and left-hander Ryan Weathers (Tennessee).

Money matters

Each team has a [bonus pool](#) equal to the sum of the values of that club's selections in the first 10 rounds. (The more picks a team has, and the earlier it picks, the larger the pool.) The signing bonuses for a team's selections in the first 10 rounds, plus any bonus greater than \$125,000 for a player taken after the 10th round, will apply toward the bonus-pool total. Teams that exceed

their limits will be taxed, with penalties varying based on the percentage by which that limit is exceeded. This year, the Padres have a pool of \$10,462,200 to spend, including a suggested figure of \$5,226,500 for their first pick.

Shopping list

The system is already loaded with arms -- specifically left-handers -- but that won't stop Preller and Co. from going that route again. Organizationally, if there's an area that needs to be shored up, it's probably the outfield. The Padres' farm is overflowing with arms and infielders, but it lacks a depth of big-time power hitters.

Trend watch

The Padres insist they're merely taking the best players on the board. It just so happens those best players have skewed toward pitching. In each of the last three seasons they've used their highest pick on a pitcher. During that span, they've spent 21 of their 33 picks in the top 10 rounds on pitching.

Rising fast

When the Padres drafted center fielder **Buddy Reed** out of Florida in 2016, they knew they'd selected a defensive standout with remarkable athleticism. His bat was a question. In his first two professional seasons, Reed posted a .675 OPS, but he's turned things around at the plate this year. Entering play Sunday, Reed was batting .350/.385/.594 with eight homers and 23 stolen bases for Class A Advanced Lake Elsinore.

Cinderella story

Adam Cimber toiled in the Minors for five seasons following his selection by the Padres in the ninth round of the 2013 Draft. The sidearming right-hander overhauled his pitching philosophy before the 2017 season, and he's flourished since. Cimber posted a 2.90 ERA between Double-A and Triple-A last season. He was a surprise addition to the roster before Opening Day, and he's thrived in his first big league stint, having posted a 2.81 ERA with 32 strikeouts in 25 2/3 innings.

In the show

The rotation has already begun to feel the impact of the club's deep 2016 Draft class. Among all pitchers taken in that '16 Draft, Lauer and Lucchesi were the first two to arrive in the Majors. The active roster boasts four players taken by the Padres in past Drafts, including: Lauer, Cimber, **Cory Spangenberg** and **Travis Jankowski**. (Maton and Lucchesi are on the DL.)

Padres recent first-round picks

2017: LHP MacKenzie Gore (Class A Fort Wayne)

2016: RHP Cal Quantrill (Double-A San Antonio)

2016: LHP Eric Lauer (Padres)

2016: 3B Hudson Potts (Class A Advanced Lake Elsinore)

2014: SS **Trea Turner** (Nationals)

2013: RF **Hunter Renfroe** (Padres, on DL)

Renfroe's pinch-hit grand slam powers Padres

By AJ Cassavell MLB.com @AJCassavell

Jun. 3rd, 2018

SAN DIEGO -- [Hunter Renfroe](#) only got one at-bat on Sunday afternoon. Boy, did he make it count.

Pinch-hitting with the bases loaded in the fifth inning, Renfroe demolished a 1-2 slider from Reds starter [Luis Castillo](#). He sent it off the second level of the Western Metal Supply Co. Building in left field, turning a two-run Padres deficit into a two-run lead. [Cory Spangenberg](#) tacked on an eighth-inning solo shot, en route to a 6-3 San Diego victory at Petco Park.

Renfroe's towering blast marked the first go-ahead pinch-hit grand slam in the Majors this season -- and the first since September 2015, when Milwaukee's [Jason Rogers](#) took the Cardinals' [Trevor Rosenthal](#) deep. Only seven Padres have done so, and none since [Archi Cianfrocco](#) in 1995.

"I knew it was gone as soon as I hit it," Renfroe said. "... I'm swinging the bat well right now, just got to keep it going."

After four scoreless frames, Castillo found himself on the ropes in the bottom of the fifth. [Franmil Reyes](#) worked a gritty 10-pitch at-bat, swatting a leadoff single up the middle. [Freddy Galvis](#) followed with a perfect bunt hit up the third-base line. [Manuel Margot's](#) ensuing nine-pitch walk loaded the bases.

"He handled us for the first four innings," Padres manager Andy Green said. "That at-bat by Franmil locked us in a little bit there. It got us going."

With the bases loaded, [Raffy Lopez](#) bounced into a forceout at the plate, setting the stage for Renfroe, who has been excellent since returning from right elbow inflammation.

Renfroe has been particularly effective against right-handed pitching -- in stark contrast to his past performance. Since he was activated from the DL on Monday, Renfroe has 12 plate appearances against righties. He has seven hits -- including two doubles and a homer -- and two walks.

"He's made an adjustment," Green said. "Especially against righties, he's opened up a little bit. He clearly sees the ball better right now, is a little more comfortable in that setting. That's good to see. That adjustment seems to be paying dividends right now."

Renfroe's grand slam made a winner out of [Tyson Ross](#), who worked five innings of two-run ball before his spot in the batting order came up in the fifth. Ross allowed seven hits and struck out three.

ROLES REVERSED

With the heart of the Reds order due up in the eighth, Green called on closer **Brad Hand** one inning early. He figured the lefty Hand was the best matchup for lefties **Joey Votto** and **Scouter Gennett**. Setup man **Kirby Yates** handled the ninth.

"We pay attention to the lineup," Yates said, "and we expect anything."

The strategy worked, but not without a few hiccups. Hand surrendered a solo homer to Gennett, and Yates ran into some trouble of his own. **Jesse Winker** and **Tucker Barnhart** each hit two-out singles, bringing Votto to the plate as the tying run. But Yates got him to bounce to second on a check swing, ending the game.

"It made sense today with those two guys coming up," Green said. "They swung the lineup on us and got back to Votto, but Kirby did a nice job retiring him to end it."

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Tacking on: An inning after Renfroe's heroics, Reyes started yet another rally with a base hit. He advanced to second on Galvis' groundout, and Reds manager Jim Riggleman opted to walk Margot in favor of the lefty-hitting Lopez. The logic seemed sound enough: Lopez was in a 2-for-24 rut, and the Reds had left-hander **Wandy Peralta** on the mound. But Lopez snuck an RBI single up the middle, giving the Padres a 5-2 lead.

Golden glove: **Eric Hosmer** went 3-for-4 on Sunday, but his biggest contribution came in the ninth. After **Scott Schebler** led off the frame with a single, **Billy Hamilton** hit a slow chopper to first base. Hosmer quickly assessed the situation and realized there would be no chance to double up the speedy Hamilton on a return throw from second. Instead, he had the presence of mind to step on first and deliver a perfect strike to Galvis, who applied the tag for a double play.

"That's a huge play," Yates said. "He's an above-average baseball player for a reason, and it doesn't have to do with catching the ball, throwing the ball. He's baseball savvy. There's some bearings spinning in that brain where he's ahead of the game a little bit."

Added Green: "I wouldn't think another first baseman in the game makes that play."

SOUND SMART

Hand's slider is one of the sport's premier pitches -- especially against left-handers. Somehow, Gennett has managed to solve it -- twice. Over the past two seasons, lefty batters have hit just two home runs against Hand's slider, according to **Statcast™**. Gennett has both of them -- including a grand slam last Aug. 10 in Cincinnati.

HE SAID IT

"Anybody that's ever doubted him has probably learned not to doubt him. Those kinds of challenges, he's risen up and met. We're thrilled with his response to how the season started." - Green on Renfroe

UP NEXT

Clayton Richard has struggled against NL West opposition this year, but he's been excellent against everyone else. There's little explanation for those splits, but Richard wouldn't mind for that trend to continue Monday. The Padres open a three-game home series with the Braves, and Richard gets the ball at 7:10 p.m. PT. Atlanta counters with **Julio Teheran**.

Padres have flexibility in Draft, thanks to trade
Deal for reliever Hughes provides San Diego with Day 1 selection
By AJ Cassavell MLB.com @AJCassavell
12:01 AM ET

SAN DIEGO -- A week ago, the Padres dealt for [Phil Hughes](#). But that portion of the trade was always secondary. They really traded for the No. 74 pick in today's Draft -- and all the bells and whistles that come with it.

When the Padres signed [Eric Hosmer](#) during the offseason, they forfeited their second-round pick. They also forfeited the approximate \$1.45 million value of that pick in their bonus pool. It was money they could no longer use to sign their Draft picks.

Under general manager A.J. Preller, the Padres have been one of the most active teams in pursuing deals to acquire comp picks -- the only types of picks that can be traded. In 2018, with the Padres already down a Draft selection, it took on even more significance.

"It was like one of the alarms on my phone," Preller said. "Every week, call the teams with the comp picks."

Enter Hughes. The Twins designated the righty reliever for assignment earlier in May. They appeared destined to eat the \$22 million or so remaining on his contract. Then Preller called.

Negotiations were relatively straightforward. How much of Hughes' salary would the Padres be willing to eat? The two sides settled on \$7.25 million for the 2019 season.

"Excitement," said scouting director Mark Conner, when asked for his reaction to the trade. "It just allows more flexibility. ... The more picks we get, the more money we get, the more fun we get to have."

There's a chance Hughes could become a worthwhile reliever in the Padres 'pen. Sure, he owns a 6.59 ERA in nine appearances this season. But the Padres have had success revitalizing pitchers post-thoracic outlet surgery. Two-fifths of their rotation -- [Clayton Richard](#) and [Tyson Ross](#) -- were once thoracic outlet patients.

Make no mistake, however. The "Phil Hughes trade" wasn't the "Phil Hughes trade" at all in the eyes of the San Diego front office.

The Padres added a Day 1 Draft pick, and Preller is clearly bullish on his scouting department's ability to evaluate talent. As important, they added \$812,200 to their bonus pool. Conner now has \$10,462,200 to spend on selections in the top 10 rounds (plus any bonus greater than \$125,000 later in the Draft). That's the seventh largest pool in baseball.

"The game now is about making your money work for you," Preller said. "... The group that's doing the calculations, looking at our budget, is important. You have to figure out what's the best bang for your buck. Having the extra pick gives you more options."

In short: the Padres will select 42 baseball players in the Draft. They'd like to make certain that most of those 42 players end up in their organization. They now have a bit more wiggle room to ensure that that happens.

Wiggle room. Also known as money.

"There's a lot of excitement from the agents," Preller quipped.

The Draft begins today with the first two rounds (and their ensuing comp rounds). MLB Network will broadcast the first 43 picks, while MLB.com will stream all 78 picks on Day 1. The Padres will select seventh, 38th (in the competitive balance round) and 74th.

MLB.com will also provide live pick-by-pick coverage of Rounds 3-10 on Tuesday with a preview show beginning at 9:30 a.m. PT. On Wednesday, Rounds 11-40 can be heard live on MLB.com beginning at 9 a.m. PT.

"If you have a really good Draft, you look up in three or four years, and there's always an impact," Preller said. "Same thing if you don't have quite as good a Draft. And the more times you pick, the more chances you have to impact the system."

The Padres now have an extra pick, and they have extra money to secure those picks. And they have Phil Hughes.

Young fans enjoy Padres' Play Ball Weekend

By AJ Cassavell MLB.com [@AJCassavell](#)

Jun. 3rd, 2018

SAN DIEGO -- How else would San Diego celebrate Play Ball Weekend? By playing ball in Petco Park's park area beyond center field, of course.

The festivities for Major League Baseball's Play Ball Weekend -- two days aimed at engaging young fans and encouraging continued participation in youth baseball and softball -- began on Saturday.

The Padres played host to a "Youth Game Takeover," featuring a seven-inning game with a plastic bat and ball in the Park at the Park area beyond center field. It kicked off a number of activities on Saturday and Sunday at Petco Park.

Before both of the Padres' games against the Reds, youth players were honored on the field. Thousands of Little Leaguers paraded around the warning track on Sunday ahead of the series finale against Cincinnati. As was the case on Saturday, a handful of those Little Leaguers took part in the pregame ceremony.

In the eyes of Padres skipper Andy Green, it's an immensely meaningful weekend.

"It's unbelievably important, especially when you've got three kids and everybody wants to be on a screen now," Green said. "The more kids you can get out playing baseball, it's better for the future of our game. It's better for the kids. We want them to experience what we believe is the greatest game there is."

Villanueva exits with ankle contusion
Padres' rookie third baseman will get a day of rest
By AJ Cassavell MLB.com @AJCassavell
Jun. 3rd, 2018

SAN DIEGO -- [Christian Villanueva](#)'s standout rookie season took an unfortunate turn during Sunday's 6-3 victory over Cincinnati.

The Padres' slugging third baseman fouled a ball off his left ankle and exited the game immediately, though he isn't expected to miss significant time. He was diagnosed with a left-ankle contusion and likely won't play Monday.

Villanueva fouled a ball off the same area of his lower leg on Thursday, but remained in that game.

"No fracture is what I'm hearing," Padres manager Andy Green said. "Just a bruise. We'll evaluate him to see where he is. Tomorrow probably is going to be a good day to be down, but he might be available off the bench, ready to go. Just in the course of things, we'll give him a day [off] tomorrow, then come back against the lefty the next day."

Should Villanueva miss any time, it would be a blow for the Padres. His 1.2 WAR, according to [Baseball-Reference.com](#), is second on the team this season, trailing only [Eric Hosmer](#). Villanueva is hitting .241/.305/.546 with 15 homers, second most in the National League. His hot start has thrust him squarely into the NL Rookie of the Year conversation.

The Padres called upon [Cory Spangenberg](#) to fill in for Villanueva on Sunday, and Spangenberg would later hit a crucial insurance homer in the bottom of the eighth. He is expected to start Monday in Villanueva's place.

Q&A: GM A.J. Preller and scouting director Mark Conner on the Padres' approach to the draft

By Dennis Lin Jun 3, 2018

On the eve of the 2015 season, Padres general manager A.J. Preller took aim at immediate impact by trading Carlos Quentin, Cameron Maybin, Matt Wisler, Jordan Paroubeck and the 41st overall selection in that year's draft to the Atlanta Braves in exchange for Craig Kimbrel and Melvin Upton Jr.

In San Diego, priorities have shifted since then.

A week ago, as Padres executives and scouts prepared to ensconce themselves inside an auditorium at Petco Park, Preller [effectively paid more than \\$7 million](#) to acquire a competitive-balance pick, 75th overall, from the Minnesota Twins.

Having purchased that avenue for adding to their farm system, the Padres will enter the latest draft on Monday with four of the top 84 picks and the seventh-largest bonus pool.

"The more times you pick, the more chances you have to impact the system," Preller said. "It's all part of the big picture, of continuing to add talent year in and year out."

(The 41st pick from three years ago happens to be one such example: Third baseman Austin Riley was recently ranked the game's 23rd-best prospect by *Baseball America*.)

Preller and scouting director Mark Conner met with members of the media on Sunday to preview their fourth draft with the organization. Below are excerpts from the session. Questions and answers have been lightly edited for clarity.

What are the broad implications of having an extra pick and an additional \$800,000 or so in bonus pool money?

A.J. Preller: You have more flexibility in terms of being able to add additional talent. It gives you a chance to be a little more creative, because there may be one player that we weren't expecting to fall, there may be a player that you reach up for and that we evaluated a little differently than the industry does. And it might end up being multiple players, like we've done in the past. The game now is about making your money work for you. ... I think the group that's doing the calculations and looking at our budget is probably equally important, because you're trying to figure out what's the best bang for your buck. Having the extra pick gives you more options. It definitely creates more challenges for the group as well.

Had you been working to replace the second-round pick you lost when you signed Eric Hosmer?

AP: (Smiles) I think that's one of the alarms on my phone. Like, every week, call the teams with the comp picks. (Only competitive-balance picks can be traded.) Over the course of the last three years, we keep trying to add picks. You look at some of the better drafts historically, it's usually the teams that have multiple picks. ... It wasn't just losing the Hosmer pick. It's something we try to do year in, year out.

Mark, what was your reaction when A.J. told you that you would have an extra \$800,000 to work with?

Mark Conner: Excitement. It just allows more flexibility. There's a lot of players in this draft that are together talent-wise, and, hopefully, our group has done a good job of separating them makeup-wise. The more picks we get, the more money we get, the more fun we get to have.

What are your thoughts on the overall talent this year's class?

MC: It's a fairly deep draft. I would say there's a lower plateau at the top. There's not a ton of difference. I think some teams can get players at pick 20 that are as good as pick 12. There's a lot of depth of good, quality talent. And I think it goes fairly deep into the second, third, fourth, 10th round. There are big-leaguers out there in every round.

You've shown you're not afraid to select high school talent, but as the window for winning approaches, does that change your willingness to select more polished college players?

AP: I think we're always going with the proverbial best player available. A couple years ago, it was (Cal) Quantrill, (Eric) Lauer, (Joey) Lucchesi, some college pitchers. We took (high schooler) Reggie Lawson (in the second round). Last year, it was MacKenzie Gore, with our first pick at least. The marching orders are (to) take the best guy available. If that leads to seven straight college guys and we think those are the best guys on the board at the time, so be it. It's the same way from the high school standpoint. It's not like the NFL or NBA where they go right to the major leagues. You want to stockpile, and if you look up and you have three catchers, that's a good thing. That gives the front office options. That gives the club options.

When you're looking at position players, how much emphasis do you place on guys who get on base and have plate-discipline skills?

MC: I think it's an individualized thing. We definitely emphasize guys that get on base, that control the strike zone, guys that have the ability to barrel the baseball, impact the baseball. I think if you control the baseball in this game, both from a pitching standpoint and from a hitting standpoint, whoever controls the line of scrimmage basically has the best advantage at the major-league level. But you need talent to go with it, so when we're looking at hitters we definitely want guys that can control the strike zone, put the barrel on the ball and get on base.

Are you viewing this as one of the last years you'll have this many early-round picks? With the presumption that the team will start winning more games, is this a final opportunity of sorts to add to the talent base?

AP: I hope this is the last time we're picking this high. ... Every year, we're always going to put a premium on adding picks and having more selections. Hopefully, this is the last year we're picking in the top 10. We'll see what happens.

Renfroe's pinch slam carries Padres over Reds, 6-3

7:34 PM PT
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO -- [Hunter Renfroe](#) couldn't help but admire his pinch-hit, go-ahead grand slam as it flew toward the brick warehouse in the left-field corner at Petco Park.

He held his bat out with his left hand for a moment before flipping it and beginning his trot.

"I knew it was gone as soon as I hit it, so I was thinking, 'Get around the bases without falling,'" Renfroe said after his slam lifted [Tyson Ross](#) and the [San Diego Padres](#) to a 6-3 victory against the [Cincinnati Reds](#) on Sunday.

The Padres took two of three in the matchup of last-place teams. This series victory came after the Padres took three of four from the NL's other last-place team, the [Miami Marlins](#).

Batting for Ross, Renfroe drove a 1-2 pitch from [Luis Castillo](#) (4-6) off the second deck of the Western Metal Supply Co. Building to give the Padres a 4-2 lead with one out in the fifth inning. It was Renfroe's third career grand slam, first for the Padres this season and his first career pinch homer. It was his third homer this season.

Renfroe came off the disabled list Monday. He missed more than a month with an inflamed right elbow.

Coming off the bench, Renfroe said he was "just going out there and seeing the ball as well as I can, try to hit the ball in the air. The guy was throwing 97 with sink, so he was obviously doing very well up to that point. Just go out there and hunt strikes and do the best I can. I was trying to be as quick as possible to the ball and just stay through it as long as possible."

Castillo had loaded the bases on singles by [Franmil Reyes](#) and [Freddy Galvis](#), and a walk to [Manuel Margot](#). Reyes was forced at home on [Raffy Lopez](#)'s dribbler before Renfroe's slam.

"Impressive by Hunter," Padres manager Andy Green said. "Got three sliders from him I think; third slider he'd seen enough and got out front and got it down the line. It was as good a swing as we've had all year."

Said Castillo: "I didn't execute that pitch. He put a good swing on it and he hit a grand slam. I was focused on getting a ground ball to turn a double play but sometimes things don't go the way you want to and he hit a homer.

Interim Reds manager Jim Riggleman said the game "turned on us real quick. They put four on the board and such a huge hit by Renfroe."

Ross (5-3) gave up two runs and seven hits in five innings, struck out three and walked two. He's won three straight decisions, over four starts.

He allowed [Eugenio Suarez](#)'s leadoff homer to left in the second, his 11th, and [Scooter Gennett](#)'s RBI single in the fifth.

With the Padres leading 5-2, Green had closer [Brad Hand](#) face the heart of the Reds' order in the eighth, including lefty-hitting [Joey Votto](#) and Gennett. Votto, who had three hits, struck out, but Hand then allowed a homer to Gennett, his 12th. Suarez struck out, [Adam Duvall](#) singled and [Jose Peraza](#) flied out.

[Cory Spangenberg](#) homered for San Diego in the eighth, his fourth.

[Kirby Yates](#) pitched the ninth for his first save. Votto came up with two on and two outs and grounded out to end it.

Castillo (4-6) allowed four runs and six hits in 4 2/3 innings, struck out three and walked one.

"I was pitching really good for the first inning then after that I don't know what happened in the fifth and I lost the battle today," he said.

Lopez hit an RBI single in the sixth.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Padres: Rookie 3B [Christian Villanueva](#) left the game after fouling a ball off his left ankle in the first inning. He was replaced by Cory Spangenberg. Villanueva also fouled a ball off his left ankle on Friday night but stayed in the game. Villanueva has 15 homers, second in the NL behind [Bryce Harper](#)'s 18.

UP NEXT

Reds: RHP [Sal Romano](#) (3-6, 6.00) is scheduled to start the opener of a three-game home series against Colorado on Tuesday night. Colorado will counter with LHP [Kyle Freeland](#) (5-5, 3.43).

Padres: LHP [Clayton Richard](#) (3-6, 4.74) is scheduled to start the opener of a three-game home series against NL East leader Atlanta on Monday night. He is 2-2 with a 3.22 ERA in his last five starts, with 29 strikeouts and five walks. The Braves will counter with RHP [Julio Teheran](#) (4-3, 4.03).

This Day in Padres History—

June 4

By Bill Center

June 4, 1970—The Padres select catcher **Mike Ivie** with the first overall pick of the amateur draft.

June 4, 1997—Center fielder **Steve Finley** is 3-for-5 with a double, triple and a homer for four RBIs in a 7–5 Padres win at Coors Field in Colorado.

June 4, 1998—**Andy Ashby** allows a run on eight hits and four walks with eight strikeouts in a 5–1 win over Houston at Qualcomm Stadium. It is the third straight complete game pitched by Ashby.

June 4, 2006—Right-hander **Chris Young** allows two hits and a walk over eight innings and **Trevor Hoffman** completes the shutout with a perfect ninth as the Padres defeat the Pirates 1–0 in Pittsburgh on a RBI single by Brian Giles.

June 4, 2016—The Padres trade right-handed starting pitcher **James Shields** to the Chicago White Sox for right-handed pitcher **Erik Johnson** and 17-year-old infielder **Fernando Tatis Jr.**

A.J. Preller, Mark Conner Discuss Draft on the Eve of Day One

By Bill Center

Today is one of the red number days on baseball's annual calendar—the first day of the annual amateur draft.

Sunday afternoon, Padres General Manager **A.J. Preller** and Director of Amateur Scouting **Mark Conner** met with the media to discuss the 2018 draft.

They even identified who the Padres would be taking:

“The proverbial best player available,” said Preller with a straight face.

Having just added the No. 74 pick in the trade with the Twins that also brought right-handed reliever **Phil Hughes** to San Diego, the Padres have a total of \$10.48 million to spend on their 2018 draft picks.

They also have four of the draft's first 84 picks—Nos. 7, 38, 74 and 84.

“I hope it's the last time we're picking this high,” Preller said as he started the discussion Sunday in the Padres' dugout. “I hope it's the last year we pick in the top 10.”

“I think we're always going to look at value with draft picks. Obviously, we get the competitive balance pick that MLB gives out to teams based on market size. Every year we're going to put a premium on adding picks and having more selections.”

“Each draft is different. A few years ago it was **(Cal) Quantrill, (Eric) Lauer, (Joey) Lucchesi** . . . college pitchers. We've taken high school pitchers **Reggie Lawson** early and **MacKenzie Gore** with our first pick (last year).”

“Today, the marching orders are the best guy available. It that leads to seven straight college guys because those are the best guys on the board, so be it. It could be the same way from a high school standpoint. It's not like the NFL or NBA with these guys going right into the Major Leagues.”

“From that standpoint, you want to stockpile. If you have three catchers, that's a good thing because it gives the front office options . . . the club options.”

Conner talked about the excitement of the three-day draft from the view of the scouts who compile the reports on the thousands of players available.

“It’s exciting for the scouts,” said Conner. “They put a time and effort for years into getting to know these guys as scouts. To see the picks pay off and the hard work pay off . . . to see a guy get to the big leagues and have an impact at the Major League level, that’s what we look for on the amateur side.”

Conner then discussed the 2018 draft.

“It’s a fairly deep draft,” he said. “I would say there is a low plateau at the top. There’s not a ton of difference. I think some teams can get players at pick 20 that are as good as at pick 12. There’s a lot of depth of good quality talent. I think it goes fairly deep into the second, third, fourth, 10th round.”

“A.J. challenges us to do our jobs, to dig in deep, to make sure we’re looking at them from all different angles. We watch them play games and that’s the fun part. There’s a lot of different things that tell us what these players are and what they’re going to become and that’s the thing he’s instilled in us and what I preach to our staff.”

“Hopefully it pays off over the next three days. Our guys do a lot of work and they want a place for the players they believe in. It gives us a lot of conviction. We have a room that is very open. Everyone understands they have a different perspective. We’ve all hit on players, we’ve all missed on players. It’s a free-flowing dialogue in there. Like I said, there are a lot of players in this draft who are together talent-wise.”

“The more picks we get, the more money we get, the more fun we get to have. Right now, we’re revisiting every name on the board.”

“For the most part, the board is pretty much put together and set,” said Preller. “We’ll go back and revisit and have some last-minute debates to make sure. We’ve going through some scenarios the past 24 hours. You have to be positive for every scenario. Now in the draft, you have a set amount of money. You have to figure what is the best bang for your buck. When you have more picks, you have more selecting and more chances. After the end of day one, you strategize for the next day. Next three days an adrenaline rush.”

“The whole goal is to get a big leaguer in each round,” said conner. “You can’t enjoy it until the three days are over. Afterwards, you’re constantly looking at each year’s draft . . . what could have been, what should have been. You learn constant lessons from the draft.”

Braves open West Coast swing at Padres

STATS Jun 4, 2018 at 12:04a ET

SAN DIEGO — All that stands between the [San Diego Padres](#) and their best homestand of the season are the [Atlanta Braves](#).

And while that looks like a formidable challenge on paper, given the fact that the Braves just won three of four from the [Washington Nationals](#) to reclaim first in the National League East, it's even a bigger hurdle when you consider the way the Braves handled the Padres last year.

The Braves won five of seven games against the Padres. And it wasn't really that close.

But the Braves flew across the country from Atlanta on Sunday night to open a six-game West Coast trip to San Diego and the [Los Angeles Dodgers](#). The Padres, meanwhile, are 5-2 after seven games of a 10-game homestand leading into a stretch where they play 19 of 21 games on the road.

The Padres' recent run improved their record at Petco Park this season to 14-19.

"We've played better on the road (11-14) than we have at home," Padres manager Andy Green said recently. "We need to play better at home against the better teams."

The Padres' recent successes at Petco Park could be a little deceiving. They won back-to-back series against the only two teams with worse records in the National League than the Padres — the [Miami Marlins](#) and the [Cincinnati Reds](#).

The Padres-Braves series opens Monday night with right-hander [Julio Teheran](#) (4-3, 4.03 ERA) starting for the Braves and left-hander [Clayton Richard](#) (3-6, 4.74) going for the Padres.

Teheran will make his 13th start of the season. He has allowed 30 runs, 52 hits and 30 walks with 54 strikeouts in 67 innings.

Teheran has had success against the Padres in the past. He is 4-2 against San Diego in his career with a 3.76 ERA in eight starts. He picked up a victory last year in Atlanta in his only outing against the Padres, giving up two runs, five hits and four walks with five strikeouts in six innings.

Meanwhile, Richard's overall statistics this season are a bit misleading. Given the fact that the Braves are from the NL East could work to Richard's advantage Monday night.

Richard has made 12 starts this season:

–In his six starts against teams from outside the NL West, Richard has allowed 13 runs, 35 hits and six walks with 33 strikeouts in 44 innings — posting a 2.66 ERA and 0.93 WHIP. The Padres are 3-3 in Richard's starts outside the division, and he is 2-2. Richard has given up one home run to teams outside the division.

–However, in his six starts against NL West teams this season, Richard has given up 27 runs (26 earned), 37 hits and 19 walks with 28 strikeouts in 30 innings — posting a 7.80 ERA and 1.87 WHIP. The Padres are 2-4 in Richard’s starts inside the division and he is 1-4. He has given up eight homers to NL West teams.

But Richard has had almost no luck during his career against the Braves. He is 0-6 with a 6.75 ERA in nine games (six starts). He has given up 26 runs (25 earned), 53 hits and 11 strikeouts with just 17 walks in 33 1/3 innings against Atlanta.