



Padres Press Clips

Wednesday, January 2, 2019

Article	Source	Author	Pg.
Padres roster review: Manuel Margot	SD Union Tribune	Sanders	2
Padres roster review: Phil Maton	SD Union Tribune	Sanders	5
Padres roster review: Francisco Mejia	SD Union Tribune	Sanders	8
New Year's resolutions for all 30 teams	MLB.com	Leitch	11
Tatis Jr. Hitting .308 with Two Homers in Seven Dominican Republic Playoff Games	Friar Wire	Center	12
Padres Relief Corps is Talented, Deep and Young	Friar Wire	Center	14

Padres roster review: Manuel Margot

Jeff Sanders

Sizing up the Padres' 40-man roster, from A to Z, heading into the 2019 season:

MANUEL MARGOT

- **Position(s):** Center fielder
- **2019 Opening Day age:** 24
- **Bats/throws:** R / R
- **Height/weight:** 5-foot-11 / 180 pounds
- **Acquired:** Trade with the Red Sox in November 2015
- **Contract status:** Earned \$556,900 in 2018; will not be arbitration-eligible until 2020 at the earliest.
- **Key stats:** .245 avg., .292 OBP, .384 SLG, 8 HRs, 51 RBIs, 50 runs, 11 steals, 32 walks, 88 strikeouts (141 games, 477 at-bats)

STAT TO NOTE

- **29.4** – Margot's sprint speed in feet per second, tied for 11th in the majors among qualifying center fielders, begging the question: Why isn't he more successful as a base-stealer? Margot was 11-for-21 in steal attempts a year after going 17-for-24 in 2017.

TRENDING

- **Down** – After posting a .721 OPS in 2017 in his first full year in the majors, Margot – long-billed as the center fielder of the future – appeared poised to take a large step forward. Instead, Margot started his season in a 2-for-20 skid, had a ball to his ribs send him to the DL in early April and was hitting

.199/.241/.294 as late as May 23. In addition to tinkering with his running style to get more out of his elite speed (see above), the Padres asked him to make significant changes to his swing. The on-the-fly adjustments, in part, may have had something to do with Margot regressing in batting average, on-base percentage and slugging, as his line dropped from .263/.313/.409 to .245/.292/.384. One silver lining: His strikeout rate dropped from 20 percent to 17 percent even though his walk rate ticked downward, from 6.6 percent to 6.2 percent. Margot, as expected, was a plus in the outfield even if his ultimate zone rating dropped from 6.0 to 1.0, but provided very few of the highlights expected with someone aiming for “superstar” status as he declared a year earlier. Margot at least ended the year with momentum, scoring the game-winning run on the last Sunday of the season in a three-hit game that included a homer, a triple, a stolen base and a walk-off run on a ball that kicked away from the plate. The initial throw went to first base and Margot darted home from third, scoring safely when Arizona’s infielder hesitated with the return throw to the plate.

2019 OUTLOOK

- The Padres remain intrigued with the power-speed potential of **Franchy Cordero**, who himself is coming back from season-ending elbow surgery. Manager **Andy Green**, speaking at the winter meetings, essentially said the center field is Margot’s to lose, although he did not quite get as much offseason work as hoped. A foul ball off his left foot (bone bruise) in the Dominican winter league ended that stint after just eight at-bats.

PADRES POWER RANKINGS

(Currently 40 players on the 40-man roster)

ADVERTISING
[inRead invented by Teads](#)

1. **Eric Hosmer**

2. Austin Hedges
3. Manuel Margot
4. Franchy Cordero
5. Joey Lucchesi
6. Ian Kinsler
7. Eric Lauer
8. Dinelson Lamet
9. Jose Castillo
10. Anderson Espinoza
11. Travis Jankowski
12. Robbie Erlin
13. Miguel Diaz
14. Greg Garcia
15. Austin Allen
16. Pedro Avila
17. Brett Kennedy
18. Ty France
19. Javy Guerra

Removed from the roster

- Carlos Asuaje (claimed by the Rangers)

Padres roster review: Phil Maton

Jeff Sanders

Sizing up the Padres' 40-man roster, from A to Z, heading into the 2019 season:

PHIL MATON

- **Position(s):** Right-handed reliever
- **2019 Opening Day age:** 26
- **Bats/throws:** R / R
- **Height/weight:** 6-foot-3 / 220 pounds
- **Acquired:** 20th round in 2015 (Louisiana Tech)
- **Contract status:** Earned \$548,700 in 2018; will not be arbitration-eligible until 2021 at the earliest.
- **Key stats:** 0-2, 4.37 ERA, 55 strikeouts, 23 walks, 1.54 WHIP, .269 opponent average (45 games, 47 1/3 innings)

STAT TO NOTE

- **2,634** – Average revolutions per minute on Maton's pitches, 11th-best in the majors among pitchers with at least 500 pitches. The elite spin rate allows Maton's velocity – 91.8 mph on his four-seamer in 2018 and 79.3 mph on his breaking ball – to “play up” in the strike zone.

TRENDING

- **Down** – The first player from **A.J. Preller's** first draft class to reach the majors, Maton, AKA “Spin Rate” (see above), cruised through the minors despite average velocity numbers. He posted a 1.38 ERA in 23 games in his pro debut in 2015, a 1.74 ERA in 38 games in 2016 and made it to San Diego in

2017 after posting a 2.84 ERA in 23 games at Triple-A El Paso. To that point, Maton had allowed four homers as a pro. Then he allowed 10 in the majors in posting a 4.19 ERA in 2017, largely because batters slugged .531 against his four-seamer. The fastball was more effective in 2018 (.471 slugging), but the slugging against his breaking ball jumped from .138 in 2017 to .321 in 2018. Maton's command, too, was shakier in Year 2, jumping from 2.9 walks per nine innings in 2017 to 4.4 per nine innings in 2018. The right lat strain sustained in mid-May also did Maton no favors. He had a 0.56 ERA in his first 16 innings (17 strikeouts, 7 walks) and a 6.32 ERA in 31 1/3 innings after a 35-game stay on the disabled list.

2019 OUTLOOK

- When trades first began reordering the back of the Padres bullpen in the summer of 2017, Maton was named as a possible candidate to close games. But struggles with consistency have relegated Maton to a middle-relief role, one he'll have to fight to keep as several, flame-throwing young relievers – think **Trey Wingenter**, **Jose Castillo**, **Andres Munoz** – have either arrived in San Diego or are knocking on the door.

PADRES POWER RANKINGS

(Currently 40 players on the 40-man roster; the list below reflects only the players reviewed thus far in the series)

1. [Eric Hosmer](#)
2. [Austin Hedges](#)
3. [Manuel Margot](#)
4. [Franchy Cordero](#)
5. [Joey Lucchesi](#)
6. [Ian Kinsler](#)
7. [Eric Lauer](#)
8. [Dinelson Lamet](#)
9. [Jose Castillo](#)

10. Anderson Espinoza
11. Travis Jankowski
12. Robbie Erlin
13. Miguel Diaz
14. Phil Maton
15. Greg Garcia
16. Austin Allen
17. Pedro Avila
18. Brett Kennedy
19. Ty France
20. Javy Guerra

Removed from the roster

- Carlos Asuaje (claimed by the Rangers)

Padres roster review: Francisco Mejia

Jeff Sanders

Sizing up the Padres' 40-man roster, from A to Z, heading into the 2019 season:

FRANCISCO MEJIA

- **Position(s):** Catcher
- **2019 Opening Day age:** 23
- **Bats/throws:** S / R
- **Height/weight:** 5-foot-10 / 180 pounds
- **Acquired:** Via trade with Cleveland in July 2018
- **Contract status:** Made his MLB debut in 2017 and has played in only 32 games in the majors; will not be arbitration-eligible until 2022 at the earliest.
- **Key stats:** .179 avg., .258 OBP, .375 SLG, 3 HRs, 8 RBIs, 6 runs, 0 steals, 5 walks, 19 strikeouts (21 games, 56 at-bats)

STAT TO NOTE

- **.860** – Mejia's OPS as a right-handed hitter against left-handed pitching in the minors in 2018, more than 100 points better than his OPS as a left-handed hitter against right-handers.

TRENDING

- **Up** – From a rankings standpoint, Mejia is on the rise, as Baseball America ranked him No. 28 in its top-100 before the 2017 season and No. 20 before this season. He is, however, down to No. 24 in the end-of-year update after an up-and-down stay in San Diego after the Padres acquired him for **Brad Hand** in July. Mejia earned the September call-up after pairing a .328/.364/.582 batting

line with seven homers and 23 RBIs in 31 games at Triple-A El Paso. He was the first Padre to homer in his first two at-bats in his first start with San Diego and his third homer was a walk-off grand slam, joining **Everth Cabrera** as the only Padres rookies to accomplish the feat. Despite the upside as a catching prospect – a switch-hitter with elite arm strength behind the plate – there are concerns. He struck out in 30.6 percent of his 62 big league plate appearances and walked just five times, saddling him with an on-base percentage (.250) significantly below his .347 career rate in the minors.

2019 OUTLOOK

- It's January and the Padres still have both Mejia and **Austin Hedges** on the roster. Because Mejia is a switch-hitter with experience in the outfield and at third base, there are certainly ways the Padres could move forward with both catchers on opening day. Hedges is the better overall defender and a proven commodity to the pitching staff, although the Padres remain confident – at least more so than the Indians – that Mejia will continue to develop into an above-average defender. Barring a trade that moves one off the roster, it's feasible that Hedges starts 90 to 100 games behind the plate and Mejia picks up the other 60-70 while bouncing around the field.

PADRES POWER RANKINGS

(Currently 40 players on the 40-man roster; the list below reflects only the players reviewed thus far in the series)

1. [Eric Hosmer](#)
2. [Austin Hedges](#)
3. [Manuel Margot](#)
4. Francisco Mejia
5. [Franchy Cordero](#)
6. [Joey Lucchesi](#)
7. [Ian Kinsler](#)
8. [Eric Lauer](#)

9. Dinelson Lamet
10. Jose Castillo
11. Anderson Espinoza
12. Travis Jankowski
13. Robbie Erlin
14. Miguel Diaz
15. Phil Maton
16. Greg Garcia
17. Austin Allen
18. Pedro Avila
19. Brett Kennedy
20. Ty France
21. Javy Guerra

Removed from the roster

- Carlos Asuaje (claimed by the Rangers)

New Year's resolutions for all 30 teams

By Will Leitch MLB.com

Padres: Let's let everybody know we're coming

The Padres are stealthily, studiously building something intriguing out there. But fans -- and the rest of baseball -- need to see some forward movement to start believing. With the D-backs and Giants taking a step back, this would be a terrific season to show it.

Tatis Jr. Hitting .308 with Two Homers in Seven Dominican Republic Playoff Games

By Bill Center

Fernando Tatis Jr. and **Franchy Cordero** are already into winter league playoffs in the Dominican Republic while regular seasons in Venezuela, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Panama ended over last weekend.

Playoff action in Venezuela, Mexico and Puerto Rico will start Jan. 2. The only league still in regular-season play is Australia.

Tatis, who turns 20 on Jan. 2, has hit in all seven of his playoff games for Estrellas. He is 8-for-26 (.308) with a double, two homers, three walks, six RBIs and five runs scored. He has a .379 on-base percentage and a .577 slugging percentage for a .956 OPS. He finished the regular season with a .263/.379/.488/.866 slash line.

Tatis is ranked the [Padres' No1 prospect](#) and No2 overall in the minor leagues.

Cordero, 24, is 7-for-25 (.280) with two doubles, two triples, three walks, two RBIs and three runs scored for Escogido in the Dominican Republic playoffs. He has a .357 on-base percentage and a .520 slugging percentage for a .877 OPS. He finished the regular season in the Dominican Republic with a .232 average and a .705 OPS.

Catcher **Francisco Mejía**, 23, who is Tatis' teammate at Estrellas, hasn't appeared in the playoffs since going 2-for-8 in the first two games

of the round-robin portion of the playoffs with a double, a walk and two runs scored.

Other Padres prospects still active going into post-season play are catcher **Luis Torrens** with regular-season Venezuela champion Magallanes, second baseman **Esteban Quiroz** with Los Mochis in Mexico and center fielder **Aldemar Burgos** with Carolina in Puerto Rico.

Torrens, 22, hit .325 in 26 games in Venezuela with six doubles, 15 RBIs and 10 runs scored. He had a .345 on-base percentage with a .398 slugging percentage for a .742 OPS. He would have finished 10th in the Venezuela batting race if he had enough at-bats to qualify.

Quiroz, 26, hit .255 for Los Mochis with six doubles, a triple, six homers, 18 RBIs and 22 runs scored in 32 games after also competing in the Arizona Fall League. Quiroz had a .422 on-base percentage and a .520 slugging percentage for Los Mochis for a .942 OPS.

Burgos, 21, hit .276 in Puerto Rico with a .321 on-base percentage and a .439 slugging percentage for a .760 OPS. Burgos had five doubles, a triple, three homers, two stolen bases, 12 RBIs and 15 runs scored in 28 games.

Shortstop **Javy Guerra**, 23, finished the season in Panama hitting .235 (16-for-68) with four doubles, 10 RBIs and 10 runs scored and a .602 OPS in 19 games. Infielder **Allen Córdoba** finished with a .260 average (13-for-50) in 14 games with a .663 OPS. Their Panama West team did not qualify for the playoffs.

Right fielder **Michael Gettys**, 23, is hitting .307 (31-for-101) with two weeks to go in the Australian Baseball League regular season. He has eight doubles, two triples, six homers, 23 RBIs and 18 runs scored in 28 games. He has a .398 on-base percentage and a .604 slugging percentage for a 1.002 OPS.

Padres Relief Corps is Talented, Deep and Young

Dec 31, 2018

By Bill Center

The bullpen is one area where the Padres are perennially strong.

That was certainly the case in 2018 when the Padres bullpen ranked third in the National League with a 3.54 earned run average.

And that should certainly continue in the future.

Four of the Padres' top 10 returning relief pitchers were rookies in 2018. And two of their [Top-30 prospects](#) — **Andres Muñoz** and **Dylan Coleman** — are relievers.

In fact, the Padres have nearly three dozen pitchers in their organization who either have worked in a Major League bullpen or have the projected credentials to be a Major League reliever.

A look at the top relievers in the Padres system starting with the Major League bullpen:

— **Kirby Yates** has gone from being a waiver acquisition to being the Padres primary closer in less than two seasons. The 5-foot-10, 210-pound, 31-year-old right-hander had a 2.14 ERA and a 0.92 WHIP in 65 appearances with the Padres last season. He had 12 saves in 13 chances. He had 90 strikeouts against 17 walks in 63 innings — a rate of 12.9 strikeouts per nine innings with a 5.3-to-1 strikeout-to-walk ratio. In two seasons with the Padres, Yates has a 2.88 ERA in 126 appearances with 177 strikeouts in 118 2/3 innings.

— **Craig Stammen** has also completed two years with the Padres after signing as a free agent. The 6-foot-4, 230-pound 34-year-old had a 2.73 ERA in a team-leading 73 appearances in 2018. Stammen also had a 1.038 WHIP with 88 strikeouts against 17 walks in 79 innings. In two seasons with the Padres, Stammen has a 2.94 ERA in 133 appearances covering 159 1/3 innings.

— **Matt Strahm** will compete for a spot in the Padres rotation this spring. If that doesn't work out, the Padres will be happy to see the 6-foot-1, 185-pound left-hander return to the bullpen. In 41 appearances (five starts) last season, Strahm had a 2.05 ERA and a 0.98 WHIP with 69 strikeouts in 61 1/3 innings. Strahm, who turned 27 last Nov. 12, allowed only 39 hits in those 61 1/3 innings. Strahm's five starts in 2018 came in "bullpen games."

— **Robbie Erlin** returned from 2016 "Tommy John" elbow reconstruction surgery to make 39 appearances (12 starts) for the Padres in 2018. Overall, the 28-year-old left-hander had a 4.21 ERA and a 1.138 WHIP. But he had a 2.05 ERA and a 0.80 WHIP over his 52 2/3 innings in 27 appearances as the long man out of the Padres bullpen.

— **José Castillo** advanced from Double-A San Antonio through Triple-A El Paso before reaching the Padres bullpen on June 2 as a powerful 6-foot-5, 246-pound left-hander. Castillo, 22, had a 3.29 ERA in 37 appearances with the Padres after posting a 2.05 ERA in 22 minor league appearances. Castillo had a 0.91 WHIP and a .170 opponents' batting average with the Padres with 52 strikeouts (12.2 strikeouts per nine innings) against 23 hits and 12 walks in 38 1/3 innings.

— **Robert Stock** made his Major League debut with the Padres last June 24 at the age of 28. After posting a 1.69 ERA in 32 appearances at Double-A and Triple-A to open the 2018 season, Stock had a 2.50 ERA and a 1.261 WHIP in 32 appearances for the Padres. He allowed 37 hits and 13 walks with 38 strikeouts in 39 2/3 innings. The 6-foot-1, 214-pound right-hander turned 29 on Nov. 21.

— **Trey Wingenter** had a 3.45 ERA in 40 appearances with Triple-A El Paso before making his Major League debut with the Padres as a 24-year-old on Aug. 7. In 22 Major League appearances, the 6-foot-7 right-hander had a 3.79 ERA and a 1.263 WHIP with 27 strikeouts in 19 innings.

— **Phil Maton**, 25, has a 4.28 ERA and a 1.417 WHIP over 91 appearances in parts of two seasons in the Padres bullpen. The 20th-round pick in the 2015 draft is a 6-foot-3, 220-pound right-hander.

— **Brad Wieck**, 27, allowed one run on three hits with 10 strikeouts over seven innings in his first five Major League appearances with the Padres. The 6-foot-9, 255-pound left-hander had a 2.53 ERA with Double-A San Antonio and Triple-A El Paso before joining the Padres.

— **Miguel Diaz**, 24, was a Rule 5 pick by the Padres before the 2017 season. He returned from the minor leagues last August and had a 4.82 ERA in 11 relief appearances with 30 strikeouts in 18 2/3 innings. The 6-foot-4 right-hander made six starts in the Arizona Fall League after the 2018 season with a 4.87 ERA.

Relievers among the Padres Top-30 prospects.

— Andres Muñoz is ranked the [Padres' No. 22 prospect by MLB Pipeline](#). Muñoz regularly hits triple digits with his fastball despite carrying only 165 pounds on his 6-foot-2 frame. The 19-year-old native of Los Mochis, Mexico, signed with the Padres in 2015. In 20 appearances with Double-A San Antonio last summer, Muñoz had a 0.95 ERA, a 1.16 WHIP and a .175 opponents' batting average. He also averaged a strikeout per inning.

— Dylan Coleman is ranked the [Padres' No. 26 prospect](#) after joining the organization as the fourth-round pick in last June's draft out of Missouri State University. The 6-foot-5, 22-year-old right-hander had a 3.18 ERA and 1.37 WHIP in 18 appearances between Short-Season Single-A Tri-

City and Single-A Fort Wayne in his first professional summer. He had 29 strikeouts in 22 2/3 innings.

Other relievers to follow:

— **Gerardo Reyes** was added to the Padres' 40-man roster in November. The 5-foot-11 native of Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, was part of the three-team, 2014 trade that also brought **Wil Myers** and José Castillo to the Padres. Reyes, 25, had a 2.77 ERA and 1.301 WHIP in 45 2018 appearances between Advanced Single-A Lake Elsinore and Double-A with 69 strikeouts in 55 1/3 innings. He then posted a 0.00 ERA with a 0.89 WHIP and .089 opponents' batting average in 18 innings for Obregon in the Mexican Pacific winter league.

— **Kyle McGrath**, 26, struggled last spring in a four-game cameo with the Padres and was outrighted to Triple-A El Paso. But the 6-foot-2 left-hander had a 2.75 ERA and a 1.146 WHIP in 43 appearances with the Chihuahuas.

— **T.J. Weir**, 27, had a 2.89 ERA in 44 appearances in 2018 for San Antonio and El Paso. The right-hander also had a 1.16 WHIP and .217 opponents' batting average in 71 2/3 innings.

— **David Bednar**, 24, was the Padres' 35th-round pick in the 2016 Draft out of Lafayette (Pa.) College. He has advanced steadily through the Padres' system and had a 2.73 ERA and a 1.36 WHIP in 47 appearances with Lake Elsinore in 2018. He also had 96 strikeouts in 69 1/3 innings — or 12 1/2 per nine innings.

— **Travis Radke**, 25, pitched for all four full-season teams in the Padres' minor league system in 2018 and finished with a 2.63 ERA in 45 appearances (one start) with 16 saves and a 0.88 WHIP. The 6-foot-4, 237-pound left-hander also had 91 walks in 78 2/3 innings (10.4 strikeouts per nine innings). He then had a 2.81 ERA in seven Fall League appearances.

— **Elliot Ashbeck**, 25, had a 3.22 ERA in 42 appearances between Lake Elsinore and San Antonio in 2018. The 6-foot-3 right-hander also had 82 strikeouts in 78 1/3 innings.

— **Hansel Rodriguez** is formerly a Padres' Top-30 prospect as a starter. The 6-foot-2, 21-year-old was turned into a reliever in 2017. Since then, injuries have plagued the right-hander who had a 0.96 WHIP and a .129 opponents' batting average in eight appearances with Lake Elsinore last summer.