



SF Giants Press Clips Thursday, June 7, 2018

San Francisco Chronicle Giants to add 3 pitchers to their Wall of Fame Henry Schulman

A tsunami of nostalgia has roared through the Giants' front office, which has planned a summer of World Series reunions and alumni ceremonies.

Two weeks before the already announced Aug. 11 shindig to retire Barry Bonds' number, the Giants will convene on King Street on July 28 to induct pitchers Ryan Vogelsong, Matt Cain and Brian Wilson to their Wall of Fame.

The three won a combined seven World Series rings and meet the Wall of Fame criteria that former managing general partner Peter Magowan established: nine seasons with San Francisco, or five seasons with at least one All-Star appearance.

Wilson's inclusion suggests his reconciliation with the organization is complete. He left the Giants for the Dodgers, and after one 2013 game, he appeared to confront Giants President Larry Baer in the stands.

When Wilson came to AT&T Park in a huge surprise to throw the ceremonial first pitch before this year's home opener, he said that he and Baer had a friendly conversation that looked contentious because of his intimidating beard.

Manager Bruce Bochy said Wilson's honor is "well-deserved. I'm sure it's a proud moment for him."

The Giants also plan celebrations to honor several World Series teams, starting with 2002 (June 23), followed by 2012 (July 8), 1989 (July 15) and 2010 (Aug. 25).

Road trip: Bochy said before the season that three-city trips are good because ultimately they

save the team a flight or two across the country. Bochy has not changed his tune in spite of the Giants' struggles.

They are 12-20 on the road, including 4-6, 4-6 and 2-6 on their past three trips, all to three cities.

"We get a lot of them early," he said. "After this trip, our travel gets relatively easy."

Indeed, when the Giants get home, they will play 20 of their final 26 games before the All-Star break at AT&T Park. After this coming road trip, they won't play east of the Rockies until Aug. 17 in Cincinnati.

Briefly: Paul Goldschmidt's ownership this season amid a huge slump is bizarre. He has nearly one-third of his hits for the season — 16 of 51 — in nine games against the Giants. His eight hits in the series account for 16 percent of his hits for the year. ... Wednesday was big for Foothill High in Pleasanton. Before alum Brandon Crawford hit a walk-off single, the Giants used their 38th-round draft pick on Foothill left-hander Brett Hansen.

San Francisco Chronicle
Giants' clutch hits in 9th, 10th innings beat Diamondbacks
Henry Schulman

Danger lurks everywhere in baseball. After Paul Goldschmidt punished the Giants for eight hits in three games, they flew to Washington to face Steven Strasburg, Gio Gonzalez and Max Scherzer in a three-game series.

Hang with 'em, boys.

That might be a perfect motto for the 2018 Giants, who have hung with the leaders in a weak National League West despite a treacherous first-half schedule and enough injuries to bury a team.

The best example might be the homestand that ended Wednesday with a ninth-inning comeback and a 5-4, 10-inning win against the Diamondbacks.

The Giants lost Brandon Belt to an appendectomy two innings into the opening series against the Phillies. They still won five of six at AT&T Park with tight pitching and the type of clutch hits that Alen Hanson and Brandon Crawford provided Wednesday to give the Giants their first series win in three tries against the Diamondbacks this season.

The Giants were down to their final out before Hanson hit a pinch, two-run homer off closer Brad Boxberger to send the game into extra innings. Crawford won it with a single in the 10th off lefty Andrew Chafin after Andrew McCutchen's two-out double.

“Belt is probably the biggest part of the offense,” Crawford said. “When you lose someone like that, you kind of get tested to see how good the rest of the lineup is. We’ve had a lot of guys who have stepped up and helped us.”

Hanson’s picture should be attached to that quote.

The 25-year-old Pirates and White Sox castoff has been a godsend for the bench. Hanson’s homer, after Mac Williamson’s one-out walk, was his fourth consecutive pinch-hit. He has five home runs, same as McCutchen, and one more than Buster Posey.

Posey probably would have gotten the two-out opportunity in the ninth, but manager Bruce Bochy did not want to use him because of lingering hip and elbow injuries.

So he used Hanson, who could not remember ever tying or winning a game in the ninth with a home run.

“I went up there with a positive mentality as I approached the plate,” Hanson said through interpreter Erwin Higueros. “I wanted to get one good swing.”

That he did, enabling the Giants to win for the second time in 29 games this season after trailing in the ninth.

The game ended with a delicious twist.

Had the Giants lost, the story would have been their overly aggressive approach to Goldschmidt, allowing him to beat them over and over again. Goldschmidt had four hits and a hand in all four Arizona runs. He went 8-for-12 in the series.

Yet the Giants walked off because the Diamondbacks let their hottest hitter beat them. First base was open and Arizona had right-hander Fernando Salas ready in the bullpen to face slumping Evan Longoria when Chafin threw a 3-2 slider that Crawford was able to shoot through the right side for the winning hit.

“We couldn’t have asked for a better hitter up there,” Bochy said. “Crawford, the way he’s been playing the last five, six weeks, it’s fitting he won the game for us.”

Pablo Sandoval homered in the first inning against Clay Buchholz.

Will Smith got three huge outs after inheriting two Chris Stratton runners in the fifth. Ty Blach pitched shutout ball in the eighth and ninth.

In any list of standouts, Hanson had to be first.

“It doesn’t get any bigger than that, two outs and tying the game with a home run,” Bochy said.

“Great win for us. It could be our best win of the year.”

MLB.com

5 All-Star underdogs in the NL West

A.J. Cassavell

SAN DIEGO -- The big names headed to this year's Midsummer Classic? You already know them.

But with 68 spots to fill on two rosters, the All-Star Game always features its share of upstarts. They're as much a staple of the event as the superstars.

That should be especially true in the National League West this season, where a handful of those stars have either struggled (think Cody Bellinger, Evan Longoria, pre-June Paul Goldschmidt) or succumbed to injury (Clayton Kershaw, Corey Seager, Wil Myers).

Sure, Buster Posey and Nolan Arenado are probably headed to D.C. But the NL West could also see a handful of under-the-radar candidates emerge. Here's a look at one from each team.

D-backs: Daniel Descalso

The case for him: With the D-backs beset by injuries, Descalso has played all over the diamond, seeing time at third, second, first and left field. (He also pitched a scoreless 2/3 of an inning during a blowout loss to save the bullpen.)

At the plate, Descalso has been just as versatile, having started games at every position in the batting order but ninth. He owns a career-best 132 OPS+ and has seven homers in 178 plate appearances. He's been big in some clutch spots for the D-backs as well.

Descalso's name isn't on the ballot, and that's just as well. If he keeps up his solid start to the 2018 season and is good enough to earn an All-Star berth, it would only be fitting for him to come off the bench in a utility role.

Dodgers: Ross Stripling

The case for him: On a pitching staff with Clayton Kershaw, Kenley Jansen, Rich Hill, Alex Wood and even Rookie of the Year Award candidate Walker Buehler, it's Ross Stripling who leads the Dodgers, including position players, in fWAR at 1.9.

Stripling has appeared in 18 games, making seven starts, and he has posted a 1.52 ERA. His pace appears somewhat sustainable, too, as he owns a 1.99 FIP and 66 strikeouts over 53 1/3 innings.

No one questions the star power on the reigning NL champs. But when they struggled to start the season, Stripling's performance in the bullpen went a long way toward keeping them afloat. Now that he's transitioned to the rotation, the Dodgers are making a charge at the division lead.

Giants: Tony Watson

The case for him: Watson has been the steady left-handed presence the Giants so desperately needed at the back end of their bullpen in previous seasons.

He has posted a 2.25 ERA with 31 strikeouts over 28 innings. But perhaps most importantly, he's been a calming presence in a bullpen that's desperately needed one over the past two seasons.

Watson suffered consecutive poor outings in Pittsburgh early last month, but otherwise he's been excellent this year. Watson was an All-Star for Pittsburgh in 2014. Four years later, he might be headed back to the Midsummer Classic.

Padres: Kirby Yates

The case for him: You've probably heard this story before: The Padres claimed a slumping reliever off waivers, then he developed a new pitch and became one of the sport's top arms en route to being named an All-Star. It's precisely what happened to Brad Hand, who took part in the 2017 Midsummer Classic. Yates could soon follow in his footsteps.

Since his arrival in San Diego last April, Yates has developed a devastating splitter, and he's turned into one of the NL's best setup men. In 23 innings this season, Yates has posted a 1.17 ERA and 28 strikeouts.

Hand remains an excellent candidate for an All-Star berth. Now he's got company within his own bullpen.

Rockies: DJ LeMahieu

The case for him: Inasmuch as a two-time All-Star and a former batting champ can be under-the-radar, LeMahieu could sneak back into the conversation if he comes back strong from the left-thumb injury that sidelined him for two weeks.

There are early signs that he might. Entering play Thursday, LeMahieu was 7-for-24 since his return. He's got ground to make up -- especially given his somewhat pedestrian 100 wRC+. But LeMahieu has proven himself capable of doing that, and there could be space on the bench at second base.

Strangely enough, LeMahieu's downfall might be his inability to hit at Coors Field. He's posted a .995 OPS on the road this season, which is more than 350 points higher than his home mark of .631.

MLB.com

Craw walks off in 10th after Hanson's tying HR

Chris Haft

SAN FRANCISCO -- Moments after the Giants completed Wednesday's stirring 5-4, 10-inning victory over the D-backs at AT&T Park, Brandon Crawford prepared for the team's upcoming three-city, 10-game trip by filling a duffel bag with 10 of his bats.

These days, those bats are as valuable as gold ingots when they're in his hands.

Crawford slapped the two-out single in the 10th that scored Andrew McCutchen to break a 4-4 tie, end the Giants' 5-1 homestand and propel them into the aforementioned journey that promises to be challenging, with visits to the Nationals, Marlins and Dodgers.

Then again, after erasing a 4-2 deficit in the ninth on Alen Hanson's pinch-hit, two-run homer, such trifles as who, when and where they play don't disturb the Giants.

"Great win for us," Giants manager Bruce Bochy said. "It could be our best win this year."

That's because numerous Giants contributed to the decision that sealed a series victory over Arizona.

After starter Chris Stratton yielded three runs in four-plus innings, relievers Will Smith, Reyes Moronta, Tony Watson, Ty Blach and Hunter Strickland combined to work six innings, surrender three hits, strike out 10 and permit one run.

Another Giant who left the bench to excel was Hanson, who recorded his fourth pinch-hit in as many at-bats. With Mac Williamson at first base after coaxing a one-out walk from Brad Boxberger, Hanson pinned the second blown save in 16 chances on the Arizona closer by clobbering an 0-1 delivery over the right-field barrier.

Hanson explained his pinch-hitting prowess by saying through interpreter Erwin Higueros, "I don't let the situation intimidate me." As for his confrontation against Boxberger, who saved Arizona's victory Tuesday night, Hanson said that he strode to the batter's box with the "positive mentality and approach that I was going to get one good swing."

It was an example of what Bochy called "easy pop" -- a batter's ability to hit for power without strain, struggle or stress. "You don't look at him and think of him as a home run hitter," Bochy said of the 6-foot, 170-pound Hanson. "But when he got that ball up, I knew it was going out."

Strickland walked Daniel Descalso to open the 10th, and then he allowed him to advance to third on a wild pitch with one out. The right-hander recovered by striking out pinch-hitter Ketel Marte and inducing Nick Ahmed's popup. Arizona left-hander Andrew Chafin retired the first two hitters he faced in the 10th before McCutchen doubled to center field. Crawford ran a full

count after being ahead, 2-0, but he regained his composure.

"I probably got a little too anxious for a pitch to hit," said Crawford, who nonetheless was ready for the fateful slider that Chafin fed him. Crawford connected with it for his second hit of the game. It lifted his team-high batting average to .324 and gave him a .429 average (51-for-119) in his past 32 games.

"You couldn't ask for a better hitter at this time up there than Craw, the way he's been playing," Bochy said.

YOU GOTTA SEE THIS

If you thought that Pablo Sandoval's first-inning home run for the Giants off Arizona starter Clay Buchholz looked long, you were right. According to Statcast™, Sandoval's fourth homer of the season traveled a projected 447 feet. That's his longest since Statcast™ began operations in 2015. It's also the Giants' second-longest homer this season.

MITEL REPLAYS OF THE DAY

Giants catcher Nick Hundley demonstrated his expert knowledge of how to handle his position in the sixth inning by artfully tagging out Paul Goldschmidt as he tried to score on Jake Lamb's single. The D-backs contended that Hundley violated the Home Plate Collision Rule by the way he blocked the plate. However, a replay review confirmed that Hundley committed no violation.

In Arizona's half of the 10th, David Peralta smacked a line drive past the right-field foul pole. The only issue was whether it was foul or fair. After a brief video review, the "foul" call on the field was confirmed.

UP NEXT

Following Thursday's scheduled off-day, the Giants will begin a three-city, 10-game trip at Washington, where they're 5-17 since the start of the 2011 season. Rookie left-hander Andrew Suarez will get the first crack at reversing San Francisco's luck in Friday's series opener at 4:05 p.m. PT. Washington will counter with right-hander Stephen Strasburg, who's 43-25 with a 2.94 ERA in 104 career starts at Nationals Park.

MLB.com

SF's 4th-rounder drawing Kimbrel comparisons

Do-Hyoung Park

SAN FRANCISCO -- A month ago, Blake Rivera had a rather frank question for longtime head coach Randy Putman during his exit meeting at Wallace State Community College.

"Do you think I'm ready for professional baseball?"

That reminded Putman of the time when, a little over a decade ago, another young right-

handed fireballer -- this one by the name of Craig Kimbrel -- had asked him a similar question: "You think I can get big league hitters out one day?"

"There was no doubt," Putman recalls. "I said, 'There's no doubt you can get out big league hitters.' Rivera's the same way."

Every Draft season, fans and pundits alike look for pro comparisons for draftees -- it's much easier to contextualize a prospect's ability and anticipate his arrival when one can say, for example, "Oh, he could be the next Buster Posey."

For Rivera, the Giants' fourth-round selection in the 2018 MLB Draft at 106th overall, the comparisons to Kimbrel really write themselves -- at first glance, more due to circumstance than anything else.

Both Rivera and Kimbrel were late Draft selections after their freshman seasons -- Rivera was taken by the Giants in the 32nd round in 2017, while Kimbrel was a 33rd-round selection in '07.

They both elected to return to school instead of signing. They both dominated as sophomores. And they both shot up Draft boards thereafter -- Rivera into the fourth round in 2018, and Kimbrel into the third round in '08.

But according to Putman, the parallels extend to their talent, too. In fact, the 27-year veteran head coach actually feels that Rivera, 20, is more polished at this point than Kimbrel was back in 2008, when the six-time All-Star closer was drafted by the Braves.

"They're very similar in their stuff, as we would like to call it," Putman said. "Craig, actually, he became the pitcher that he is once he got with the Braves in the Minor Leagues. Rivera is more advanced in terms of being able to command both sides of the strike zone, the breaking pitch is a lot more consistent right now."

Armed with a power fastball and a curveball that Putman believes could already be Major League-ready, Rivera has a repertoire that mirrors that of Kimbrel, a fastball-curve pitcher in the Majors. But Rivera also spent his sophomore season developing a changeup that he's comfortable throwing for strikes.

"Ever since I've been pitching and throwing a curveball, I've gripped it the same way," Rivera said. "It's been a pitch that I've stuck with and really tried to get better with. Sometimes, I'll get up there and feel like I have better command with it than I do with my fastball."

For some young athletes, getting tagged with a comparison as notable as Kimbrel might add an added level of pressure and expectation to an experience that never lacks for either, particularly for those drafted in the first few rounds.

For Rivera, it's motivation.

"As my assistant coach, [Ben] Hawkins, has always said, 'Pressure is always a privilege,'" Rivera said. "I look at it as, yes, it's pressure on me that people are comparing me to him, but it's also motivation for me to go out and work and try to prove to these people that I can live up to these comparisons and go out and try to do the things he's doing."

Though Rivera was a starter at Wallace State, posting a 17-1 record with 170 strikeouts in 122 2/3 innings over two seasons, scouts have also been quick to pick up on the parallels, and several have asked Putman whether Rivera could follow in Kimbrel's footsteps and be a closer at the next level.

"I believe he can," Putman said. "I think he can be similar to Kimbrel, because, like I said, he's got the hard breaking pitch and he's got the velocity."

"To compare me to a guy like Craig Kimbrel is amazing," Rivera said. "He's arguably the best closer in the game. You can look at his stats and see that. Just for [Putman] to say that he thinks I'm a little more polished than he was then, that gives me confidence to say, 'Hey, if he thinks that, and if Kimbrel is where he's at now, then why can't I do it, too?'"

MLB.com

Bochy would support reunion with Lincecum

Chris Haft

SAN FRANCISCO -- Giants manager Bruce Bochy said that he would support a reunion between Tim Lincecum and the Giants, though no room exists for the two-time National League Cy Young Award winner on the current pitching staff. The Rangers, who were considering using Lincecum as a reliever, released him on Tuesday.

Bochy emphasized that he and the Giants' hierarchy have not discussed signing Lincecum, who starred for San Francisco from 2007-15. However, Bochy added, "He's somebody who's dear to all of our hearts. I would always have a spot for Timmy somewhere, [though] we don't have a spot here. ... But as far as ever needing anything, he's someone pretty special."

Wilson to join Giants Wall of Fame

In a sense, "The Beard" will remain unshaven forever.

That's a grandiose way of saying that Brian Wilson, who gained almost as much attention for his facial hair as he did for his effectiveness as the Giants' closer during their World Series championship-winning season in 2010, will join the club's Wall of Fame on Saturday, July 28.

Right-handers Matt Cain and Ryan Vogelsong, who were previously announced as Wall honorees, will join Wilson during the ceremonies that will precede the 6:05 p.m. PT game against Milwaukee. Plaques dedicated to each of them will be installed among those of the 49

previous inductees on AT&T Park's exterior wall along King Street.

Wilson, 36, was a three-time National League All-Star during his 2006-12 tenure with the Giants. He ranks third on San Francisco's all-time saves list with 171, trailing Robb Nen (206) and Rod Beck (199).

Bochy called Wilson's distinction "well-deserved."

Bochy added, "I'm sure it's a proud moment for him. I'm happy for him."

Wall of Fame honorees must have played a minimum of nine seasons for the Giants, or at least five years with one All-Star Game selection, since the franchise's move to San Francisco in 1958.

Belt improving

First baseman Brandon Belt, sidelined for approximately three weeks with appendicitis, showed up at AT&T Park and performed cardiovascular exercises for 45 minutes, Bochy said.

MLB.com

College talent is crux of Giants' Draft haul Do-Hyoung Park

SAN FRANCISCO -- The Giants, traditionally a franchise with a college emphasis in drafting, surprised many last season when they took a trio of high-upside high school prospects in the first three rounds of the 2017 MLB Draft.

But in 2018, San Francisco reestablished its focus on college talent, and pitching in particular, as it used the second overall pick on the mature bat of Georgia Tech catcher Joey Bart and took college arms with seven of its next nine picks.

San Francisco added five prospects ranked in MLB Pipeline's top 200, headlined by Bart (No. 6) and a trio of established college aces in Sean Hjelle (Kentucky, No. 44), Jake Wong (Grand Canyon, No. 72) and Blake Rivera (Wallace State CC, No. 111). The club took No. 94 prospect Brett Hansen, a left-hander from local Pleasanton, Calif., in the 38th round, but he is expected to attend Vanderbilt in the fall.

The Giants, who had drafted 19 high schoolers in the previous three Drafts, used 35 of 40 picks on collegiate talent. Ten came from junior colleges, headlined by fourth-rounder Rivera, fifth-rounder Keaton Winn (Iowa Western CC) and 13th-rounder George Bell Jr. (Connors State College), the son of 1987 American League Most Valuable Player Award winner George Bell.

In fact, of the five high schoolers selected by the Giants, only Hansen and speedy sixth-round outfielder Patrick Hilsen, drafted out of Nettleton HS (Ark.), were from the continental United States.

Shortstop Edison Mora (Round 7), outfielder Bryan Hernandez (Round 18) and catcher Angel Guzman (Round 21), the other three pre-collegians, were all drafted out of Puerto Rico.

Selected with a rare top-five pick, only the fifth in franchise history, Bart gives the Giants the sure bat they coveted (.359 average, 16 homers, 1.103 OPS in 57 games this season) in a Draft light on premier catching talent, and perhaps an heir apparent to the 31-year-old Buster Posey behind the plate, though the Giants are a "best player available" organization that doesn't consider Major League need in its drafting.

"We, as a philosophy here -- and that's throughout our organization here -- we don't draft for need for what our big league club is, because a lot can happen in a one-year period of time or different years," scouting director John Barr said.

San Francisco has built a large chunk of its homegrown core with effective drafting in the middle rounds, with a number of first-rounders (Madison Bumgarner, Chris Stratton, Posey, Joe Panik) complemented by players like second-rounder Andrew Suarez, third-rounder Mac Williamson and fifth-rounders Brandon Belt and Ty Blach.

With that in mind, the Giants' selections in the top 10 rounds suggest that this could be a class that builds towards the pitching staff of the future, with Hjelle (7-5, 3.44 ERA) and Wong (9-3, 2.81 ERA) flashing potential as rotation arms.

Rivera's curveball might be one of the best pitches in this Draft, and he has drawn comparisons to Craig Kimbrel for his journey, repertoire and mentality despite having started for two years in college. Winn excelled as both a starter and a reliever at the junior college level.

In total, the Giants drafted 23 pitchers, four catchers, seven outfielders and six infielders. According to MLB Pipeline, the Giants' top 30 prospects include 14 pitchers, two catchers, nine outfielders (including five in the top six) and five infielders.

MLB.com

Giants draft son of former MVP Bell in 13th

Do-Hyoung Park

SAN FRANCISCO -- It seems that the sons of former Dominican star sluggers are in demand these days.

In the 13th round of the 2018 MLB Draft, with the 376th pick, the Giants selected 20-year-old outfielder George Bell Jr., one of eight sons of 1987 American League MVP Award winner George Bell, out of Connors State College (Okla.).

As a sophomore in 2018, Bell slashed .360/.484/.512 with five homers, 51 RBIs and nine steals in 57 games to lead Connors State to a 49-9 season.

After growing up in the Dominican Republic, the younger Bell didn't draw enough interest from MLB clubs to be signed or drafted, leading him to Connors State, a perennially successful junior college where 12-year MLB veteran and fellow Dominican Julio Lugo had also honed his skills.

If he were to sign, George Jr. would become the third Bell son to play in the Minor Leagues.

Younger brother George Bryner joined the Oakland organization during the 2016-17 international signing period and hit .140 in 39 games in the Arizona League last season. Older brother Dean spent three years at the Rookie level in the Blue Jays' organization before his release in November 2015.

The elder Bell hit 265 homers and drove in 1,002 runs as part of a 12-year MLB career with the Blue Jays, Cubs and White Sox. During his MVP season with Toronto, he slashed .308/.352/.605 with 47 homers and 134 RBIs. He was a three-time All-Star, won the Silver Slugger Award three times and finished in the top 20 of MVP voting six times.

NBC Sports Bay Area

With pinch-hit homer, Alen Hanson shows he's worthy of additional time

Alex Pavlovic

SAN FRANCISCO — There are two steps to this breakthrough. Alen Hanson has done his part. The next step is up to manager Bruce Bochy.

Hanson has been a revelation, not just as a Joe Panik fill-in, but as a bat off the bench. His two-run blast with two outs in the ninth inning Wednesday was one of the biggest swings of the season for the Giants, who escaped with a 5-4 win over the Diamondbacks when Brandon Crawford lined a walk-off single in the bottom of the 10th.

Now, it's up to Bochy to figure out a way to ride the hot bat, and see if Hanson truly is as talented as he has appeared thus far. The timing couldn't be better for a manager who has just one lineup hole, and at a position (first base) Hanson doesn't play. The Giants are about to embark on a tough trip: Three games in Washington D.C.; four games in muggy Miami; three games in Los Angeles.

That kind of stretch requires a few off days for regulars, and Bochy said Crawford and Evan Longoria, in particular, are due. Hanson is the backup shortstop and he'll start taking grounders at third to get sharper there. He also will take fly balls, Bochy said. He nearly left Hanson in as his center fielder after the shocking blast off Brad Boxberger, but Gorkys Hernandez also pinch-hit and he got the assignment.

"He'll get some starts," Bochy said of Hanson, "But he's a pretty nice weapon coming off the bench. You've seen what he's done. He's getting some huge hits for us. He's been a shot in the arm with what he's doing, and it doesn't get any better than that (one today)."

The arcade shot off Boxberger was Hanson's second career pinch-hit homer and the third of the season for the Giants. They have benefited from a deep bench all season long, and Hanson is the hottest of the group right now. He has a hit in each of his last four pinch-hit appearances: Single, two doubles and the homer. He poked a two-run double down the line Monday night to help the Giants win that one.

"You've got a switch-hitter who is good from both sides," Bochy said. "He's got easy pop."

Bochy went on to call Hanson "dangerous" and "exciting." Crawford noted that his athleticism stood out in spring training. That makes the 25-year-old perfectly suited for a super-utility role.

Hanson has mostly played second base at the big league level but he also has 228 innings of outfield experience. The Giants will ask him to back up short and third for now.

And on days when there's no open spot, they'll hope for a contribution off the bench like the one Hanson gave Wednesday.

"That's a great win for us," Bochy said. "That could be our best win of the year."

NBC Sports Bay Area

Late heroics from Hanson, Crawford lift Giants to comeback win over D'backs

Alex Pavlovic

SAN FRANCISCO — Down to their last out, the Giants somehow clinched a happy flight.

Alen Hanson hit a huge two-run homer with two down in the ninth and Brandon Crawford lined a walk-off single an inning later. The 5-4 win over the Diamondbacks was the fifth in six games on this homestand. With two outs in the 10th, Andrew McCutchen hit a shot to center that Jarrod Dyson misjudged, turning it into a double, and setting the stage.

The Giants trailed by two heading into the bottom of the ninth, and Brad Boxberger, the excellent Diamondbacks closer, sandwiched a pair of outs around a walk of Mac Williamson. Bochy sent Hanson up for Austin Jackson and he pulled a pitch down the line, dropping a game-tying shot into the arcade. The homer was the fifth for Hansen, who has been a revelation as a backup middle infielder.

— The Giants probably deserved to lose this one just because of the way they handled Paul Goldschmidt. He entered the series with a .208 batting average, but he looked like his old self Monday and had three hits Tuesday. He doubled in his first at-bat Wednesday and singled the second time up. Still, Chris Stratton pitched to him with a runner on second and no outs in the fifth and a low curveball was banged off the wall for an RBI double. The sixth-inning decision was way worse. With two outs and a runner on second, Reyes Moronta grooved a 2-2 fastball and Goldschmidt hit another RBI double.

— Stratton had his shortest start in over a month. He was pulled in the fifth and charged with three earned on seven hits and two walks. The last time he failed to get an out in the fifth was April 28, the day he returned from the paternity list.

— Pablo Sandoval hit a loud and long homer in the first. The solo shot was measured at 447 feet, making it the longest homer of the season for Sandoval. The exit velocity was 109.5 mph. He has only hit one ball harder this season.

— Clay Buchholz — yes, that Clay Buchholz — struck out seven and gave up just two runs over six innings.

NBC Sports Bay Area

Down on the Farm: Where should Joey Bart rank among Giants top prospects?

Dalton Johnson

From Joey Bart to the Giants' final pick of the 2018 MLB Draft — Lucky No. 1,186 — Brian Sabean, Bobby Evans and co. are rolling the dice. Nobody, even the smartest of the baseball brainiacs, knows the future of athletes before they pick up a ball or swing a bat on a professional field. Has this stopped you from reading any further? No? Ok, let's continue.

The hope with Bart, the Giants' highest draft pick since selecting Will Clark in 1985, is that he will have a more successful career than the next 1,212 players picked.

"Looking at the players available in this draft, the pool of players you're evaluating, with this pool of players, to be able to get Joey Bart and be able to select him for the Giants, it was really good for us," John Barr, the Giants' vice president in charge of scouting, said after the team selected Bart.

The Giants envision Bart as a future bat in the middle of the order. Despite Buster Posey being signed through 2021 with a team option for 2022, the team did the right thing and drafted talent over need with the Georgia Tech catcher. So, before Bart plays his first minor league game, where does the No. 2 pick in the MLB Draft rank among the Giants' top prospects?

I asked the same question on Twitter — a land full of rational sports fans — and the hopeful cheering section believes Bart should be a top-five Giants prospect right away.

Currently, the most up to date prospect rankings are MLB Pipeline's — the prospect news website of MLB.com. The Giants' top five prospects by their rankings are Heliot Ramos, Chris Shaw, Steven Duggar, Tyler Beede, and Austin Slater.

Anywhere you look, the Giants will be ranked near the bottom in prospect rankings. Ramos is the one prospect with untapped potential, Shaw has MLB power right now and Duggar can be a big-time player if his bat is ever even close to his glove. Dear Twitter, you may be right on this one.

Ramos will rightfully remain the Giants' No. 1 prospect for a while even with down numbers this season. His potential is simply too high. Though Ramos is hitting just .239 this season, he is only 18 years old going up against players who have been able to buy scratchers for years now.

Shaw, currently on the shelf with a groin injury, has shown a hole in his swing this season at Triple-A with 61 strikeouts to seven walks. At the same time, he's proved his power is for real for the second straight season. Shaw hit 10 home runs in the River Cats' first 36 games.

Duggar needs room in his trophy case for his future Gold Glove awards and is hitting .325 over his last 10 games. His spot too is secure, bringing us to Beede and Slater.

The last two seasons have been a disappointment for Beede. Due to a groin injury, Beede's season was cut short in 2017, putting his MLB debut on hold. Before his injury, he was 6-7 with a 4.79 ERA. And this year hasn't been better in the box score. Beede did make his MLB debut this year, but his tendency to miss the strike zone was on full display.

Beede's command isn't on par with control. In two starts with the Giants, Beede struck out nine and walked eight, earning an 8.22 ERA in 7.2 innings. And in Sacramento, he has a 5.60 ERA in nine appearances. Take a look at Beede's last start, the essence of who he is right now — seven strikeouts and five walks in six innings. The former first-round pick has an arsenal to make major league bats whiff. What he will be for the Giants in the future has become an even bigger and murkier question.

Slater proved to be a productive bat for the Giants last season when he hit .282 in 34 games. His bat is clearly ahead of Triple-A competition, hitting .368 with a 1.057 OPS this season in Sacramento. He has only played six games for the Giants in 2018 and where he fits on the current roster remains unknown. Slater's game is solid all the way around and his defensive versatility makes him even more interesting. No one part of his game jumps out, but plenty of teams could use his service.

This all brings us back to Bart. Where does he fit? We have already eliminated the top three spots. With his upside, we're bumping Slater down and Bart into the top five. Can he jump Beede, the Giants' top pitching prospect, too?

As either a part of the starting rotation or a possible move to the bullpen down the road, the 25-year-old Beede can still play a big part of the Giants' future. Beede is staying in the top five, as No. 5.

At Georgia Tech, the 6-foot-3, 225-pound Bart gradually improved from Year 1 to Year 3. Here's his rise as a freshman to a junior — Freshman: .299/.351/.382, .733 OPS, 1 home run; sophomore: .296/.370/.575, .945 OPS, 13 home runs; junior: .359/.471/.632, 1.103 OPS, 16 home runs.

“I don't know where he's going to start (in the minors) but you look at the size of the kid and his success and intangibles...you would think someone like this would be on the fast track,” Bruce Bochy said after the Giants picked Bart.

After going from the Yellow Jackets' catcher for three years, to the No. 2 pick in the 2018 MLB Draft, Bart immediately becomes the Giants' No. 1 catching prospect and No. 4 overall.

The Athletic

Giants go for upside and pitching depth on Day 2 of the MLB Draft

Melissa Lockard

The Giants played Day 1 of the draft in a traditional fashion, selecting arguably the top collegiate position player available with the No. 2 overall pick and selecting a polished college right-hander with some projection with their second-round pick.

On Day 2, the Giants went for a bit more upside, targeting several pitchers from the NAIA and the junior college ranks with intriguing arsenals. The Giants also added two high school picks with plenty of projection.

Below is a look at the Giants' Day 2 selections:

Third round: Jake Wong, RHP, Grand Canyon University

Overview: After splitting his freshman season between the bullpen and the rotation, Wong moved into the rotation at GCU the past two seasons. He threw a career-high 89 2/3 innings this year and had a career-best 2.91 ERA. He struck out 88 and walked 29. Wong had some impressive individual game performances this season, including a 10-strikeout effort against Penn State and a six-inning outing against Illinois when he allowed just two hits and one run.

Outlook: At 6-foot-2, 215, Wong has a sturdy, starter's frame and plenty of arm strength. His fastball sits in the 92-94 mph range and can touch 96 at times. The pitch is firm and can be hit when batters are expecting it, however. Wong also has an above-average changeup and solid curveball, as well as a slider. Wong is a good athlete who repeats his delivery well and he has solid command. He projects as a fourth starter in the big leagues.

Fun Fact: Wong is the highest-ever draft pick from Grand Canyon University.

Fourth round: Blake Rivera, RHP, Wallace State Community College (Hanceville, Ala.)

Overview: Rivera was dominant in his second season at Wallace State, posting a 1.75 ERA and striking out 98 in 67 innings. He was mostly a reliever, although he made four starts and often went multiple innings in his relief outings. He finished second on his team in innings pitched and first in wins (he went 10-0). In two years of community college, Rivera struck out 170 in 122 2/3 innings.

Outlook: Rivera has a solid fastball-curveball combination, with both pitches generating swings

and misses. The curveball is potentially a plus pitch that sits in the low-80s and gets plenty of sharp downward movement. His fastball can bump up to 96 in shorter outings and sits 91-93 in longer appearances. Rivera also has a changeup and the development of that pitch could allow him to stick in the rotation. He should have a solid career as a reliever if starting doesn't work out, however.

Fun Fact: If at first you don't succeed, try, try again — the Giants selected Rivera last year in the 32nd round after his freshman season, but he elected to return for his second year of community college and improved his draft stock considerably. The Giants shouldn't have trouble signing him this time around.

Fifth round: Keaton Winn, RHP, Iowa Western Community College

Overview: Like Rivera, Winn dominated the junior college circuit this season. Winn posted a 2.23 ERA and he struck out 59 in 36 1/3 innings. Winn mostly pitched in relief, starting two games out of his 19 appearances. Winn has a commitment to pitch at Mississippi State next year, but has already indicated to the Des Moines Register that he plans to sign with the Giants.

Outlook: Winn has a lively arm and he can run his fastball up to 95 mph. He also has a swing-and-miss slider that has tight, late movement. Winn also has a changeup that he didn't throw a lot in college but is a pitch that could help him move into a starting role. He is an excellent athlete with a strong build at 6-4, 220. In high school, he lettered in multiple sports. Winn has a repeatable delivery and has been durable thus far.

Fun Fact: Like Rivera, Winn was selected by the Giants last season after his first year of community college ball. Winn moved up 15 rounds after going in Round 20 last season.

Sixth round: P.J. Hilson, OF/RHP, Nettleton Senior High (Jonesboro, Ark.)

Overview: A two-way player in high school, Hilson flashed plus speed both on the bases and on the mound, where his fastball was clocked as high as 94 mph. Hilson hit .402 with 18 extra-base hits and 23 stolen bases as a senior. He has a commitment to play at Alabama. The Giants are likely to have to go over-slot to sign Hilson at this spot.

Outlook: A plus athlete, Hilson is a switch-hitter with above-average speed who projects to be a top of the order hitter in the pros. He has a short, line-drive swing from both sides of the plate and could add more over-the-fence power as he matures physically. Defensively, Hilson showed good instincts in center field and he has more than enough arm and speed to stay at that spot.

Fun Fact: Through the first 10 rounds, Hilson is the youngest player in the Giants' draft class. He turns 18 on August 25.

Seventh round: Edison Mora, SS, Puerto Rico Baseball Academy

Overview: The Giants waited until their seventh pick to select an infielder, taking the rangy Mora out of Puerto Rico.

Outlook: Mora is a string bean at 6-2, 160, but he figures to fill out his frame as he matures physically. He has above-average speed and a strong arm. Mora has a decent approach at the plate, but there is still plenty of development left for him to undertake once he turns pro. Mora will turn 18 on Aug. 13.

Fun Fact: The Puerto Rico Baseball Academy is the alma mater of Astros star Carlos Correa.

Eighth round: Solomon Bates, RHP, USC

Overview: Bates becomes the Giants' first pick out of the state of California. The USC right-hander split his season between the Trojans bullpen and rotation, posting a 3.14 ERA in 77 innings. He struck out 79 and walked 21. Bates struggled with the longball, allowing 10 home runs.

Outlook: Bates has a firm fastball that can touch 95 and sits in the 91-94 mph range as a starter. Bates' best secondary offering is a hybrid curveball/slider. He is another solidly built right-hander. Bates has a strong lower-half that he uses well. He redshirted as a freshman, so even though he has one more year of college eligibility, he is likely to sign, perhaps even below-slot.

Fun Fact: Bates opened a lot of eyes on May 20 when he threw seven shutout innings against Oregon State, which has arguably the best lineup of any college team this season.

Ninth round: Ben Madison, RHP, Central Baptist College

Overview: Madison set a CBC school record this season with 172 strikeouts in just 96 2/3 innings pitched. He had a 2.70 ERA. The 6-3 right-hander was Honorable Mention All-American for the NAIA. He was a two-way player at CBC, also playing in the outfield.

Outlook: Madison is a big, physical right-hander who can touch the mid-90s with his fastball. He also features a swing-and-miss curveball and a developing changeup. He is a good athlete who repeats his delivery well and can field his position. His command can come and go, and if he can't improve in that area, he will likely move to the bullpen. Because he was a two-way player, Madison hasn't put his full energy into pitching yet, so there is still plenty of projection with his development.

Fun Fact: He twice had 18-strikeout games at CBC. Madison began his career at Crowder Community College and he struck out 75 in 57 2/3 innings in his one season there. He also played football in high school, suiting up at quarterback, wide receiver and free safety.

10th round: Alex DuBord, RHP, Faulkner University

Overview: DuBord helped take Faulkner to the NAIA World Series this year when he went 7-1 with a 4.01 ERA in 51 2/3 innings. He struck out 55 and walked 14. DuBord pitched at Neosho County Community College before joining Faulkner this season.

Outlook: DuBord's fastball sits in the low 90s, topping out at 93, but there is the potential for more velocity out of his 6-6 frame. He gets plenty of leverage out of his delivery and some

deception. DuBord also features a tight breaking curveball. He is likely to be used as a starter in the pros initially but could eventually land in the bullpen.

Fun Fact: DuBord is from Fargo, South Dakota. He naturally lettered in hockey, as well as baseball, in high school.