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Anderson's 3 RBIs lift White Sox over Twins

By Brian Hall / MLB.com / June 6, 2018

MINNEAPOLIS -- Hector Santiago said he dropped down and threw sidearm in a game for the first time on Wednesday night in Minnesota.

The White Sox starter was willing to do anything to beat his former team.

Tim Anderson had two hits and drove in three runs to support Santiago's start as the White Sox beat the Twins, 5-2, on Wednesday night at Target Field.

"They beat the [heck] out of me last time in Chicago, so it was nice to come back here and get a win against them," Santiago said. "I dropped down and threw some sidearm pitches today. [Brian] Dozier's like, 'Is that the first time you've done that?' I was like, 'Yeah, you're the first person I threw a sidearm to.' You have some good fun. You go out there and have fun, but you're competing and trying to beat those guys."

Santiago (2-2) surrendered two runs on six hits and three walks in five innings. Four relievers combined for four scoreless innings with two hits allowed, while striking out eight. Joakim Soria pitched the ninth for his sixth save in eight chances.

Anderson tied the game at 1 with an RBI single in the fourth inning and followed with a two-run single in the sixth to put Chicago in front for good. Adam Engel plated another run with a sacrifice bunt to give the White Sox their fourth win in the past six games.

"We have guys that are really grinding and just trying to put together what they can in terms of what they can control, which is the biggest thing," Chicago manager Rick Renteria said. "You can't control wins and losses. You can control the moments that you have. ... So far, we've had some good ballgames over the last four or five days."

Santiago, who signed with the White Sox in the offseason after two seasons with the Twins, had his worst start of the season in Chicago on May 5 against Minnesota when he allowed eight runs in 3 1/3 innings.

The left-hander managed his way out of trouble on Wednesday. Minnesota had a runner on in every inning against Santiago and stranded four runners over the first two innings.

Santiago struck out Miguel Sano with two runners on in the first. With runners on second and third in the second, Santiago fielded a grounder and threw to start a rundown that retired Mitch Garver trying to score, and Eddie Rosario flied out.

"I was trying to minimize there, keep it there and give our team a chance to come back and answer back," Santiago said.

Santiago erased a one-out walk in the third by getting Sano to bounce into a double play.

Chicago finally broke through with four runs in the sixth against Twins starter Jake Odorizzi (3-3) and reliever Ryan Pressly.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Anderson was at the plate when the tying run came across with one out in the sixth. With the bases loaded, Pressly unleashed a wild pitch that bounced in front of the catcher, Garver. Yolmer Sanchez raced home and scored without a throw.

Anderson lined a two-run single on the next pitch to score two more runs

SOUND SMART

White Sox center fielder Engel made a running catch on a sinking liner from Eduardo Escobar in the third inning that registered a catch probability of 33 percent, according to Statcast™. Statcast™ measured Engel with a sprint speed of 29.6 feet per second in running down the ball for a four-star play.

Engel covered 85 feet in 4.6 seconds. The Major League average is 27 feet per second sprint speed.

BUMMER OPTIONED

Chicago optioned left-handed reliever Aaron Bummer to Triple-A Charlotte after the game and will make a corresponding roster move prior to Thursday's game. Bummer is 0-1 with a 3.26 ERA, but had pitched just once in the past seven games.

MITEL REPLAY OF THE DAY

Engel's sacrifice bunt to score Anderson in the sixth almost ended up in a bunt hit. He pushed the ball toward Sano at first base. Sano's throw bounced to Dozier covering first and Engel simultaneously touched first.

Engel was initially called safe, but replay showed that Dozier pinned the ball between his hand and the heel of his glove and the call was overturned.

UP NEXT

James Shields (1-6, 4.48 ERA) will try to get back in the win column in the finale of Chicago's four-game series in Minnesota. The White Sox will try to offer Shields some support in the 12:10 p.m. CT start. Shields hasn't won since Opening Day against Kansas City. He's received zero runs of support in three of his last four starts. He's 0-2 with a 2.86 ERA in that span. The Twins send Jose Berrios to the hill.

White Sox Draft picks keep rebuild on right path

Chicago eager to develop 20 position players and 20 pitchers selected

By Max Gelman / MLB.com / June 6, 2018

CHICAGO -- After three days and 40 rounds, the White Sox Draft is complete, and thanks to having the No. 4 overall pick, Chicago reeled in quite a haul.

Up and down the Draft, the White Sox were pleased with their selections, said Nick Hostetler, the director of amateur scouting. With the White Sox in the second year of a rebuild, Hostetler said the successful development of the picks over the next few years will show that the "path we're taking is the right one."

- Draft Tracker: Every White Sox pick

The White Sox took 20 pitchers and 20 position players, including five shortstops, five outfielders, five catchers, two second basemen, two third basemen and one first baseman. College players made up 29 of their 40 selections, down from 34 last season.

"We wanted to walk out of here today feeling like we had both some floor and some ceiling with the players and the Draft as a whole, so we were happy with the way that that played out," Hostetler said.

The White Sox took second baseman Nick Madrigal on Monday with their top selection; he's largely regarded as the Draft's best college hitter. Madrigal shook off a broken wrist sustained in February to hit .406/.470/.586 in 32 games for Oregon State this season, and possesses the tools and quickness to be an above-average defender.

Hostetler said Monday he believes Madrigal will be able to play at Class A Advanced Winston-Salem at some point this season. Madrigal will split his time between second base, shortstop and third base.

Chicago rounded out Day 1 with outfielder Steele Walker out of Oklahoma in the second round (No. 46 overall). The White Sox view Walker as a center fielder, though he played mostly right field this year because Oklahoma quarterback, and No. 9 overall selection to the A's, Kyler Murray, played up the middle.

Day 2 saw the White Sox select six more college players and two high schoolers. Their top Day 2 selection was Konnor Pilkington, a left-handed pitcher from Mississippi State. Pilkington ranked 60th overall on MLB Pipeline and is unusually young for a college Draft pick -- he doesn't turn 21 until September.

Hostetler also said Tuesday that he received envious texts from multiple other teams after the White Sox took Virginia pitcher Bennett Sousa in the 10th round. Sousa projects as a left-handed bullpen specialist in the Majors.

The White Sox began Day 3 with high school shortstop Kelvin Maldonado and then a run on college pitching. Chicago's 12th- through 15th-round selections are all college juniors, and the first three -- 12th-rounder Isaiah Carranza, 13th-rounder Jason Bilous, and 14th-rounder David Martin -- were ranked in MLB Pipeline's Top 200.

Maldonado was the White Sox top target heading into the day, Hostetler said.

"He's a true shortstop with plus run tool, showed the ability to swing the bat," Hostetler said. "I got a chance to see him down in Puerto Rico in January. Really loose swing, it's fluid. There's still a ton of room for strength to add onto that frame that he has."

The pitchers selected right after Maldonado helped the White Sox boost their depth of power arms in the system, Hostetler said. The White Sox were "very, very pleased" that they were all able to fall to them.

"A little bit of inconsistency on all of their parts is probably why they fell a little bit," Hostetler said, adding that the White Sox development staff was in the Draft room to go over and "make sure that we're comfortable with taking him and knowing that they feel comfortable trying to correct any mechanical flaws that may hinder the player in the future."

Chicago made a few notable selections in the late rounds Wednesday. In the 37th round, the White Sox took second baseman Cannon King, the son of broadcaster Larry King, one year after taking his older brother Chance. Then in the 38th round, the White Sox selected Matthew Klug, an inspiring outfielder whose mom passed away in 2016 and his dad less than a year later.

White Sox draft HS player who lost both parents

38th-round pick Klug shocked by club's gesture

By Max Gelman / MLB.com / June 6, 2018

CHICAGO -- Most 38th-round Draft picks won't make the Majors. Most 38th-round Draft picks don't have as heartbreaking a story as Matthew Klug, either.

Klug, a high school outfielder from Georgia, lost his mother in November 2016 after a 16-year bout with COPD and emphysema. In November 2017, he lost his father after a seven-year battle with cancer. Additionally, Klug's best childhood friend passed away in November 2015 from an undiscovered brain tumor.

When the White Sox told Klug they planned on drafting him, he was speechless.

"My head coach from Brookwood [High School] kept it a secret for about a month, so I'm still in shock," Klug said Wednesday night in a conference call with reporters. "I don't really know what to say or feel, but I'm honored that they would do that for me, and just what I've gone through was what they noticed and wanted to do that for me, it just means everything for me.

Klug said he didn't play a lot this year and had no plans to play in college, but never considered quitting the Brookwood team. He said his parents, especially his father, taught him to stay positive and keep grinding.

"When I seriously had a conversation with myself about it, or even my brother, it just didn't seem like there's no chance I would've done it," Klug said. "Knowing that I was in the dugout staying positive, picking up my teammates, just something that I always stood for, something I know my parents would want me to do.

"If I had just quit this year and gave it up, my parents would be disappointed," he added.

The White Sox discovered Klug when director of amateur scouting Nick Hostetler read an article about him and forwarded it to their area scout, Kevin Burrell. Burrell then set the wheels in motion to make sure the White Sox selected Klug in the Draft.

"I text Nick and I said 'Are you thinking the same thing I'm thinking?' and he said, 'Absolutely,'" Burrell said. "This is an opportunity to really reach out to a young man that's gone through a lot. I'm personally honored to just be a part of that process and hopefully bring together some healing for him and for his family, and really just to honor him."

Klug said even though he's an outfielder, he idolized Braves first baseman Freddie Freeman growing up because Freeman went through something similar with his mom. That Freeman could continue to go out every day and perform inspired Klug to do the same.

The whole ordeal has given Klug a new perspective on life, he said.

"It's been the worst two or three years anybody could imagine," Klug said. "It just knocks you down, but both my parents they would have wanted me to get back up and they wouldn't want me to fall and not get back up or let it knock me down. They'd want to see me be as positive as can be and go after everything as hard as I can, and I know they're proud of me.

"It's made me realize how special life truly is and just I want to make my parents proud and make everyone I've lost proud, and hopefully I'm doing a good job of that."

Cannon King, the son of legendary TV persona Larry King, was drafted by the White Sox

By Jessica Kleinschmidt / MLB.com / June 6, 2018

Cannon King is no stranger to being in the spotlight. His dad, legendary television personality Larry King, practically created the spotlight. But when it comes to his sons pursuing their dreams, it appears he's their No. 1 fan. Cannon was drafted by the White Sox in the 37th round on Wednesday -- a feat his brother, Chance, is all too familiar with.

Cannon, an infielder from Beverly Hills High School, was drawing Draft interest last year when his older brother, Chance, was drafted, also by the White Sox, but did not sign.

Last year, during a phone interview, King said seeing one of his sons drafted was not only a thrill to him, but a thrill to Chance as well.

According to MLB.com's Matt Kelly, both King brothers caught the organization's attention "after Dennis Gilbert, special assistant to the team chairman, Jerry Reinsdorf, saw Cannon play and recommended him to the scouting department."

Whatever was said and witnessed turned out to be successful.

That's one proud papa.

Here's the complete list of players taken by the White Sox in the 2018 MLB Draft

By Vinnie Duber / NBC Sports Chicago / June 6, 2018

Round 5: Jonathan Stiever, RHP, Indiana University

Round 6: Codi Heuer, RHP, Wichita State University

Round 7: Cabera Weaver, OF, South Gwinnett High School (Georgia)

Round 8: Andrew Perez, LHP, University of South Florida

Round 9: Gunnar Troutwine, C, Wichita State University

Round 10: Bennett Sousa, LHP, University of Virginia

Round 11: Kelvin Maldonado, SS, Pro Baseball High School & Academy

Round 12: Isaiah Carranza, RHP, Azusa Pacific University

Round 13: Jason Bilous, RHP, Coastal Carolina University

Round 14: Davis Martin, RHP, Texas Tech University

Round 15: Luke Shilling, RHP, University of Illinois

Round 16: Ty Greene, C, University of California Berkeley

Round 17: Travis Moniot, SS, University of Arizona

Round 18: Romy Gonzalez, 3B, University of Miami

Round 19: Gabriel Ortiz, C, PJ Education School

Round 20: Jimmy Galusky, SS, West Virginia University

Round 21: Nick Johnson, RHP, University of Rhode Island

Round 22: Ryan Fitzpatrick, 1B, University of California Irvine

Round 23: Lane Ramsey, RHP, University of Oklahoma

Round 24: Rigo Fernandez, LHP, California State University Dominguez Hills

Round 25: Jack Maynard, RHP, University of North Carolina Greensboro

Round 26: Devon Perez, RHP, University of Oklahoma

Round 27: Ian Dawkins, OF, California State University Sacramento

Round 28: Logan Sowers, OF, Indiana University

Round 29: Taylor Varnell, LHP, Oral Roberts University

Round 30: Micah Coffey, SS, University of Minnesota

Round 31: Austin Conway, RHP, University of Louisville

Round 32: Aaron Soto, LHP, Florida International University

Round 33: Bryce Bush, 3B, De La Salle Collegiate High School (Michigan)

Round 34: Alec Valenzuela, C, Great Oak High School (California)

Round 35: Jason Morgan, RHP, University of North Carolina

Round 36: Adrian Del Castillo, C, Gulliver Prep School (Florida)

Round 37: Cannon King, 2B, Beverly Hills High School (California)

Round 38: Matthew Klug, OF, Brookwood High School (Georgia)

Round 39: Mason Montgomery, LHP, Leander High School (Texas)

Round 40: Kyle Salley, LHP, Homewood Flossmoor High School (Illinois)

White Sox shortstop Tim Anderson's talent on full display in 5-2 win over Twins

By Phil Thompson / Chicago Tribune / June 6, 2018

Tim Anderson drove in two runs in a four-run in sixth inning in the White Sox's 5-2 victory over the Twins on Wednesday night at Target Field, where, strangely, they played "Don't Stop Believin'" while hosting the White Sox.

Don't the Twins know that's their song?

At least they learned it was the Sox's night.

That was mostly because of Anderson, the shortstop whose talent was on display all night as he drove in three runs, scored another and stole his 13th base in 14 tries.

Twins starter Jake Odorizzi held the Sox to one run before he put the first two men on in the sixth and handed the reins to Ryan Pressly, who loaded the bases with one out.

Pressly got ahead 0-2 on Anderson and heard the whistles from the home crowd. That's when everything unraveled for the Twins. Pressly threw a wild pitch that brought home Yolmer Sanchez to tie the score 2-2, then Anderson's single to left plated two more as Anderson moved to second on the throw to home. Anderson stole third, and Engel bunted him in on a squeeze.

Sox manager Rick Renteria said he was impressed by "the fact that they kept grinding, chipping away. We had that one inning that we were able to go ahead with; had some really good at-bats in that particular inning. Ended up using our pen, the guys did a really nice job getting us through that, getting us the outs that we needed."

The best news for Sox starter Hector Santiago — besides winning his second game of the season to go 2-2 — was that he didn't give up a home run, which had been a recurring problem in his previous three starts.

Still, the Twins still gave him enough trouble to make his outing mostly about damage control, which he managed to do for the most part thanks to some help from the defense.

After Robbie Grossman singled and Mitch Garver doubled in the second inning, Ehire Adrianza took Santiago to the wall as the ball sailed over Engel's head in center field for another double.

Grossman scored and with no outs, Santiago was looking at trouble. Ryan LaMarre almost added three more runs, but his shot to left hooked foul and he eventually grounded out.

Brian Dozier helped Santiago out with a comebacker that led to Mitch Garver being caught in a rundown between third and home. Eddie Rosario flew out, and Santiago's escape was complete.

It was not a great night for Yoan Moncada, who struck out the first four times he came to the plate. Odorizzi, a right-hander, caught the lefty bat twice looking at fastballs to the upper inside corner.

Renteria implied that Moncada was the victim of a large strike zone.

"I'll just say that I probably wouldn't have tried to take the swing at those pitches either," Renteria said. "That's all I'll say."

Nate Jones struck out two in the eighth, and Joakim Soria earned his second save in two days, his team-high sixth of the season.

After the game, reliever Aaron Bummer was optioned to Triple-A Charlotte. The Sox plan to make a corresponding move Thursday morning.

White Sox's late draft full of surprises and one feel-good story in Matt Klug

By Phil Thompson / Chicago Tribune / June 6, 2018

The late rounds of Day 3 of the MLB draft can be a time for Hail Marys and vanity picks, but the White Sox found one sleeper who was a surprise tumbler, spent another pick on Larry King's son and used one of their last selections on prospect with an inspirational story.

Matt Klug (38th round, 1,128 overall): The Brookwood High School (Snellville, Ga.) outfielder had “the worst two or three years anybody could imagine.” In 2015, he lost his best friend unexpectedly to a brain tumor. His mom died of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) a year later and his dad lost a long bout with cancer a year after that.

White Sox scout Kevin Burrell read an article about Klug that amateur scouting director Nick Hostetler also saw and asked him, ‘Are you thinking the same thing I’m thinking?’ And he said, ‘Absolutely.’ ”

Klug said, “I was honestly speechless when they called me. I talked to Kevin Burrell earlier today, that’s when I found out about it. My head coach from Brookwood kept (their interest in me) a secret for about a month, so I’m still in shock.”

The lifelong Braves fan said that he draws inspiration from Freddie Freeman, whose mother died from melanoma in 2000. Klug said he modeled his game “mentally” after the Braves first baseman, “knowing that he lost his mom and he’s still out there every day grinding it out, staying positive, giving 110 percent all the time.”

Cannon King (37, 1,098): Broadcast legend Larry King issued a congratulatory tweet to his son, who plays second base for Beverly Hills High School. Some websites generously list the wiry, 84-year-old broadcaster at 5-foot-9. His 18-year-old son is 6-1, 178 pounds. They’re practically twins.

Isaiah Carranza (12, 348): The 6-5 Azusa Pacific University right-hander slipped to the 12th round, with a mid-90s fastball on a still-developing arm. Baseball America ranked him 116th overall in the BA 500 and one of the top prospects still available the third day of the draft.

Luke Shilling (15, 438): The 6-5 University of Illinois righty was another of several surprises that fell into the Sox’s lap. Hostetler said, “The way that it fell for us — all those guys to fall — even including Luke Shilling ... I think (it’s) a little bit inconsistency on all of their parts, why they fell a little bit. Always going to have some little mechanical issues as well.”

Kevin Maldonado (11, 318): Hostetler expained the team’s excitement over the Pro Baseball High School Academy (Puerto Rico) shortstop from seeing him in January: He’s a true shortstop with plus-run tools. ... Really loose swing, he’s fluid. There’s still a ton of room for strength to add onto that frame that he has.”

Catcher Kevan Smith is back, and contributing, for White Sox

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Sun-Times / June 6, 2018

MINNEAPOLIS — Catcher Kevan Smith played in 87 games and batted .283 with 30 RBI for the White Sox last season, enough, he thought, to keep him on the team for 2018.

Even after the Sox signed Welington Castillo to a multiyear deal as a free agent to be the No. 1 catcher, Smith thought he would be the No. 2 ahead of Omar Narvaez, but it wasn’t to be.

“It was certainly a shock,” Smith said Wednesday of opening the season at Class AAA Charlotte. “I thought last year was a strong showing on my end. But signing Welington and having a minor-league option left was not a good combination.”

An even bigger shock would open a door for Smith — Castillo’s 80-game suspension for violating baseball’s drug policy May 24.

“I don’t think any of us saw that coming,” said Smith, 29, who was on the Charlotte disabled list with a sprained ankle. “But it’s one of those things where another window of opportunity opens up, and I’ll do all I can to take advantage of it.”

After guiding Lucas Giolito, who had more than his share of rocky outings before Smith arrived this season, through a quality start in the second game of a doubleheader Tuesday, Smith caught five innings of two-run ball from Hector Santiago and followed a 1-for-4 night of solid contact with two straight sharp singles, including one in the middle of the Sox' four-run sixth that carried them to a 5-2 victory against the Twins.

The Sox got one run on a wild pitch by reliever Ryan Pressly, two on a single by Tim Anderson and a fourth run on Adam Engel's squeeze bunt. Anderson was 2-for-4 with three RBI, hiking his total to 25, and he got his 13th stolen base.

After Santiago, Bruce Rondon, Jace Fry, Nate Jones and Joakim Soria (second save in two nights, sixth of the season) combined for four scoreless innings of relief.

"Baby steps," Santiago said. "We got a couple of guys still hurt, so for where we're at, we're playing pretty good baseball right now."

Santiago prefers starting, but if he goes to the bullpen when Carlos Rodon returns this weekend, he won't complain "because I knew what I was coming into, coming into that role of long guy, starter, short guy [when he signed in the offseason]. It's a rebuild, so you let the young guys get as much exposure as they can."

For what it's worth, the Sox (20-39) are 2-0 with Smith behind the plate.

"I don't feel like I missed a heartbeat up here," Smith said. "I'm comfortable with the staff; everyone was welcoming when I got here and excited to see me. It felt like I had been here all year."

Manager Rick Renteria stopped short of saying Smith would be Giolito's "personal catcher," but look for him to catch the right-hander, who has struggled with a 7.08 ERA. In seven starts, including six last season, Giolito has a 1.99 ERA with Smith behind the plate.

"We just kind of have a good feel for each other," Giolito said. "Good communication throughout the game. He does a good job seeing when I start to get off-kilter with my mechanics here and there."

Smith is big on pregame preparation, studying hitters' tendencies and trends. He said Giolito can overthink at times.

"I told him, 'I don't want you to think about anything,'" said Smith, a former quarterback at Pitt. "Let me do the thinking for you. Just get as comfortable as possible, stay through baseballs and throw strikes."

"I wasn't scared to throw any pitch in any situation with him; that's what he needs to do."

The Sox need to win Thursday to capture a second straight series for the first time.

"Our guys are really grinding, trying to control what they can," Renteria said. "We've had some good ballgames over the last four or five days."

Nothing but positives about White Sox 38th-round pick Matt Klug

By Daryl Van Schouwen / Sun-Times / June 6, 2018

MINNEAPOLIS — In Matt Klug, selected in the 38th round of the MLB Draft, the White Sox picked a high school senior you probably will be rooting for even if he doesn't have much of a baseball-playing future.

Klug lost his mother, who died in November 2016 after bouts with COPD and emphysema, and his father, who battled cancer for seven years, a year later.

Klug, from Brookwood (Georgia) High School, was a part-time outfielder on his team, but he was such a full-time inspiration to his teammates that his coach, Titus Martin, nominated him for a local Positive Athlete award that Klug won.

Tools? Klug pales in comparison to the other Sox draftees taken in the last 20 rounds Wednesday. Makeup? The others might have to get in line behind Klug.

"It's been the worst two, three years anybody could imagine," Klug said. "A stretch of unexpected experiences and tragedy. It will knock you down, but my parents would have wanted me to get back up, to be as positive as I could be. I know they're proud of me. I'm sure my dad is looking down, going crazy that I got drafted.

"[Losing my parents] kept me humble. You know how valuable every day of life is."

Sox scout Kevin Burrell suggested the selection of Klug, who was drafted in the same round as Mark Buehrle in 1998. While Klug won't actually sign and play, his selection has been in the works for weeks.

"I was on a plane reading an article [about Klug], and it really struck a chord with me," Sox scouting director Nick Hostetler said. "Kevin was fully on board, and we wanted to make sure it was something Matthew would be encouraged by. To do something to help a kid who has been through what he has, you're proud you can do it."

When Burrell called Wednesday to tell him he had been drafted, Klug broke down in tears.

"I was speechless," said Klug, who will get a jersey and other gifts from the Sox. "My coach knew it for about a month. What I've gone through, it just meant everything to me."

Eleventh-round pick Kelvin Maldonado, a high school shortstop from Puerto Rico, was the Sox' top target on the final day of the draft, Hostetler said.

Hostetler also was pleased to get Miami Hurricanes third baseman Romy Gonzalez in the 18th round.

This and that

Avisail Garcia tested his right hamstring by running on the bases for the first time since suffering a Grade 2 strain and will test it again Thursday, hoping to go on a rehab assignment next week, he said.

The Sox' starting pitcher Saturday in Boston is listed as TBA, but left-hander Carlos Rodon is expected to make his season debut. Rodon is with the team after completing his rehab assignment following shoulder surgery in September.

Trayce Thompson (.129/.185/.248) is producing far below left-handed-hitting Daniel Palka (.282/.313/.555, six home runs), but he started against right-hander Jake Odorizzi as Palka works "on his defensive skills so he can help us and put himself in the lineup more consistently," manager Rick Renteria said. Designated hitter Matt Davidson's return from a back injury also will cut into Palka's at-bats.

After the game Wednesday, the Sox optioned left-hander Aaron Bummer to Class AAA Charlotte. A corresponding move will be made Thursday.

Headed by Madrigal, Chicago White Sox pleased with draft haul

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald / June 6, 2018

It's a wrap.

Rounds 11-40 of the draft went in the books Wednesday, and the Chicago White Sox wound up taking 20 pitchers, 10 infielders, five outfielders and five catchers over the past three days.

The Sox picked 29 collegiate players and 11 from the high school ranks. The undeniable prize of the draft is Oregon State infielder Nick Madrigal, the No. 4 overall pick.

"We're really happy with the way the draft played out for us in the sense of what type of players we were able to add," said Nick Hostetler, amateur scouting director. "We felt we have a really good mix of solid, good baseball players with the ability to be everyday players, as well as guys with higher upsides."

It was a long three days for Hostetler and the Sox's staff, and preparation for the 2019 draft already has started.

Here are some quick hits from this year's haul:

- After Oregon State is finished playing in the NCAA Tournament and Madrigal signs with the White Sox (\$6.4 million is the assigned value for the No. 4 overall pick), he is expected to make his professional debut at high Class A Winston-Salem.

Most first-round picks debut at much lower levels, but Madrigal's bat and defensive skills are off the charts.

The 5-foot-7, 165-pounder is thrilled to be the latest key addition to the Sox's rebuild.

"It means everything," Madrigal said. "Within the next couple years, hopefully we can change this franchise and get it back to a winning culture. I know they have the right pieces for it. I'm excited to be a part of it."

- On the 38th round Wednesday, the White Sox drafted outfielder Matt Klug out of Brookwood High School in Liburn, Georgia.

In 2016, Klug lost his mother to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. A year later, his father died of cancer.

"I was on a plane and saw the article (about Klug)," Hostetler said. "It really struck a chord with me."

Hostetler contacted Georgia-area scout Kevin Burrell to set up the selection.

"It's been the worst two, three years anybody could imagine," Klug said on a conference call. "It's been a stretch of unexpected experiences and tragedy. It will knock you down, but my parents would have wanted me to get back up, to be as positive as I could be.

"I know they're proud of me. I'm sure my dad is going crazy looking down that I got drafted."

- On the 30th round, the Sox drafted Micah Coffey out of the University of Minnesota.

The 22-year-old shortstop played high school baseball at Batavia and quarterbacked the Bulldogs to the 2013 Class 6A state championship.

- At Oregon State this season, Madrigal is playing second base because teammate Cadyn Grenier is one of the top defensive shortstops in college baseball.

Outfielder Steele Walker, the White Sox's second-round pick, was in a similar situation with Oklahoma.

Teammates Kyler Murray, slated to start at quarterback for the Sooners in the fall, was a superior center fielder, so Walker played the corner spots.

Murray was drafted No. 9 overall by the Athletics.

The Sox view Walker in center as a professional player.

"I see myself as a center fielder," Walker said. "I think I can go get any ball and I have the athleticism and the speed. That's where I'm most comfortable."

- With their first pick on Day 3 of the draft, the White Sox were thrilled to get 18-year-old Kelvin Maldonado on the 11th round.

The 5-foot-11, 160-pounder prepped at Pro Baseball High School and Academy in Puerto Rico.

"I saw him in Puerto Rico in January," Hostetler said. "True shortstop with plus run tool. Showed the ability to swing the bat. A really loose swing, fluid, and still a ton of room for strength, to add on to that frame he has."

Chicago White Sox making the grade through first 10 rounds of draft

By Scot Gregor / Daily Herald / June 6, 2018

This is an important draft for the Chicago White Sox.

Having traded most of their veteran players for prospects from the 2016 off-season through August of last year, and having spent a big chunk of their international pool money on outfielder Luis Robert, the Sox need this year's draft to continue stockpiling young talent.

The first 10 rounds are in the books, and the White Sox couldn't be happier with the early haul.

"We were really excited about the quality of players we got," said Nick Hostetler, the Sox's director of amateur scouting.

Oregon State infielder Nick Madrigal was the White Sox's first-round pick Monday, No. 4 overall. It's not a stretch to say the Sox instantly added their leadoff hitter of the future, perhaps as early as 2019.

"We got who we felt was the best baseball player in the draft this year," Hostetler said. "He is a high contact, high on-base guy; he plays with tremendous energy. The makeup is second to none. It's a leadership quality I have not seen in a player in a long time, both on the field and off the field.

"The way he goes about his business, his teammates idolize him. Tool-wise, he can play Gold Glove-caliber second base. We've seen him play shortstop. We're going to send him out as a shortstop, ultimately he'll probably get reps at both shortstop and second baseball, as well as some third at times to try to get him some experience there.

"That will be left up to (farm director) Chris Getz and his staff."

On the second round (No. 46 overall) Monday, the Sox drafted another collegiate star, Oklahomas outfielder Steele Walker. Even though he missed the final eight games of the season with an oblique injury, the left-handed hitter led the Sooners with a .352 batting average, 13 home runs and 53 RBI.

Baseball America had Walker going to the Astros on the first round as the No. 28 overall pick. The 5-foot-11, 190-pounder also was rated the third-best collegiate hitter in the draft, behind Madrigal and Florida third baseman Jonathan India.

"The junior season is extremely tough mentally, dealing with so much pressure, so many people analyzing you," Walker said on a conference call Tuesday. "It's not always easy, but I was able to free my mind up, free my swing up, let my ability just kind of shine forth."

"That's where the power came from, that's where the real production came from. In anything you do, there's always pressure. A free mind, a free spirit, that's the way I like to play."

Like every major-league team, the White Sox always are looking for quality pitching. On the third round Tuesday, they drafted Mississippi State left-hander Konnor Pilkington.

"He was a Friday night starter, and still is," Hostetler said. "They are still in the regional. They play Vanderbilt this upcoming week. He's a guy also that was teammates with (Steele) Walker and Nick Madrigal on Team USA. We really love the competitiveness and pitchability. The command is special. We feel it's a three-pitch mix, fastball, curve and change."

The Sox typically load up on college players early in the draft, but they picked a pair of high school players Tuesday.

On the fourth round, they drafted shortstop Lency Delgado out of Doral Academy in Miami. On the seventh round, they picked outfielder Cabera Weaver out of South Gwinnett H.S. in Georgia.

"A couple of high ceiling high school kids in Delgado and Weaver," Hostetler said. "We were very excited about adding those two players. Probably a little bit out of the norm for us with only one high school player signed in the last two years. We took two, and we are really excited about the ceiling there."

Five observations: White Sox jump on tiring Jake Odorizzi, win second-straight in Minnesota

By James Fegan / The Athletic / June 6, 2018

Is there a way to quantify whether a team won every big moment in a game? Judging by the White Sox's (20-39) slim advantage (3-for-10) with runners in scoring position over the Twins (2-for-7) in their gritty 5-2 come-from-behind win in Minneapolis, not really.

The drama of their return from a 2-1 hole in the sixth inning was that Jake Odorizzi was ostensibly smothering their offense all night, and Héctor Santiago had cleared 85 pitches before the end of the fourth inning. That the White Sox managed to turn the result of the game during the tiny window of Odorizzi tiring in the sixth and Ryan Pressly coming to his relief and splitting the plate with sliders is the sort of targeted opportunism that winning teams have been pulling on them for two months.

Maybe things are not going to just keep going wrong all year.

1. Tim Anderson as a game-changing dynamo

Anderson's BABIP has yet to adequately mirror his improved contact rates, partly because more of those balls in play are leaving the field of play entirely, but it should produce more nights like Wednesday, when spraying breaking balls across the diamond positioned him to drive in three runs.

He poked an Odorizzi splitter back up the middle to tie the game at 1 with two outs in the fourth, and whatever shame he drew from getting thrown out trying to stretch that play into a double was erased as he keyed the Sox's four-run sixth. Anderson lifted a hanging Pressly slider to left-center to plate a pair and put the Sox up 4-2 before unleashing his speed to steal third (his 13th of the year) and score on a perfect Adam Engel squeeze bunt. Somehow after all that, he managed to still be mad at himself when he struck out in the eighth.

2. Where has Kevan Smith been all season?

The newly arrived Smith didn't get any RBIs for either of his two singles, but they were both hockey assists. He sprayed a single to right field to put Matt Davidson on third for Anderson in the fourth inning, and stayed back and sprayed another Pressly slider to right to load the bases for Anderson in the sixth. He could have been credited with doing it a third time, but apparently the Target Field scorekeeper didn't

view a warning-track fly ball that Eddie Rosario took his eyes off of and dropped as being worthy of a hit. Smith has always been more than content to take the single to right field on pitches on the outer half, but he probably can only bat .375 for so long before he starts getting jammed.

3. A gritty farewell

With Carlos Rodón on the comeback trail and Lucas Giolito grabbing a quality start his last time out, this was likely the end of Santiago's time in the starting rotation no matter the result. It was an outing that laid bare his struggles while also revealing his charm as he gritted his way through five laborious innings of two-run ball, walking three, striking out two, burning through an incredible 104 pitches and flipping to his curveball on occasion to grab strikes that his typically darting fastball could not. Yolmer Sánchez robbing Ryan LaMarre of a two-run double in a dicey second inning probably changed the face of the game.

It's unlikely the Sox get through the season without turning to Santiago again, but given he's more of a swingman, putting him back into that role is a step toward getting their rotation from the future in place.

4. Bruce Rondón has a 1.90 FIP

There have been some lapses in slider command that have earned Rondón his elevated ERA, but with home runs cratering leaguewide, and his walk rate coming down into the upper band of acceptable, he's emerged as a regular late-inning contributor for the White Sox. His slider was sharp and snapping Wednesday as he struck out three in 1 1/3 innings of scoreless work and he looked like someone who had no business being available on a minor-league deal this spring.

5. Joakim Soria is a save machine, as predicted

Just like intrepid beat writers were predicting in February, Soria — who manager Rick Renteria is apparently calling “Jack” now — is racking up saves again, recording them on back-to-back nights for the first time since the end of April in Kansas City. Dropping down in his delivery, especially to right-handers, is making his curve and changeup pop significantly more than earlier in the season. He's struck out seven in 4 1/3 innings with two hits allowed in his last four outings.
