



# Padres Press Clips

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## 30 top prospects in the AFL -- 1 from each team

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The [Arizona Fall League](#) has long been a haven for the best prospects in all of baseball to come together and put the finishing touches on their development on the way to the big leagues. This year is no different, with 15 players from MLB Pipeline's [Top 100 prospects list](#) slated to play starting on Tuesday.

Six clubs are sending their No. 1 prospect to the AFL, and each team is sending an impressive array of up-and-coming talent. Here is a list of the top prospect from each organization that fans can check out in AFL action next week.

### AL East

Blue Jays: Vladimir Guerrero Jr., 3B ([TOR No. 1](#); [MLB No. 1](#))

Guerrero, the top prospect in this year's Fall League, batted .381 with 20 homers, 78 RBIs and more walks (42) than strikeouts (38) at 19 this season while ascending to Triple-A. He'll need to improve his defense at the hot corner to avoid a move down the positional spectrum, but it's a generational-type bat capable of shattering records this fall en route to a 2019 big league debut.

Orioles: Ryan McKenna, CF ([BAL No. 12](#))

McKenna, 21, led all Orioles farmhands in average (.315), OBP (.410), hits (148) and runs scored (95) while splitting his season between Class A Advanced Frederick and Double-A Bowie. The 2015 fourth-rounder swung the bat particularly well in the Florida State League, hitting .377/.467/.556 with 97 hits over 67 games, and impressed with his center-field defense at both stops.

Rays: [Lucius Fox](#), SS ([TB No. 9](#))

The speedster Fox performed well in the Florida State League but scuffled during the final month of the season in Double-A after celebrating his 21st birthday. He ultimately posted a .692 OPS with 29 stolen bases across the two levels. In 2017, Fox finished with a .691 OPS and 30 steals.

Red Sox: Michael Chavis, 3B/1B ([BOS No. 1](#); [MLB No. 69](#))

After Chavis ranked third in the Minors with 68 extra-base hits and fifth with 31 homers last year, he missed the first 80 games of 2018 with a suspension for testing positive for a performance-enhancing substance during the offseason. When he returned, he batted .298/.391/.538 (mostly in Double-A) to continue to establish himself as one of the best power-hitting prospects in the game. His strong arm is an asset at third base.

Yankees: Estevan Florial, OF ([NYY No. 2](#); [MLB No. 45](#))

Florial played in Fall League a year ago, batting .286/.383/.414 for the Scottsdale Scorpions, and returns after losing half of the 2018 season to a right hamate injury. He has one of the highest ceilings in the league as a potential 30-30 player who can handle center field. Florial has well above-average raw power, speed and arm strength, though he'll have to prove he can make consistent contact at the plate.

## AL Central

Indians: [Yu Chang](#), SS ([CLE No. 6](#))

Spending his age-22 season with Triple-A Columbus, Chang produced a .256/.330/.411 line with 13 home runs while playing the bulk of his 127 games as a shortstop. He's improved defensively in every season and committed just nine errors in 94 games at short with Columbus. Now 23, Chang is back in Fall League this year after hitting .304 over 15 games with Mesa in 2017.

Royals: [Khalil Lee](#), OF ([KC No. 2](#))

Though Lee intrigued clubs as a high school left-hander with a low-90s fastball and a promising slider, the Royals preferred him as an outfielder and made him a full-time position player after taking him in 2016's third round. He has a chance to have solid or better tools across the board - his arm strength is his best attribute -- and displays some of the best patience in Kansas City's system as well as the ability to fit anywhere in the outfield.

Tigers: [Daz Cameron](#), OF ([DET No. 8](#))

When the Tigers got Cameron from the Astros as part of the [Justin Verlander](#) trade late last season, he had turned in what looked like a breakout season. He kept it going in his first year with Detroit, playing across three levels and reaching Triple-A at age 21. Cameron was particularly strong during his Double-A stint with a .285/.367/.470 line to go along with 12 steals in 53 games.

Twins: [Brent Rooker](#), OF ([MIN No. 7](#))

After a stunning first summer of pro ball that saw Rooker reach the Florida State League and hit 18 homers in 62 games, any encore was bound to seem like a disappointment. Yes, the strikeout rate (26.4 pct) was a bit high, but he spent his first full season in Double-A and led the system in homers (22) and finished third in RBIs (79).

White Sox: [Luis Robert](#), OF ([CWS No. 4](#); MLB No. 44)

Shortly before international signing rules drastically changed, the White Sox spent \$52 million (\$26 million bonus, matching amount as a penalty for exceeding their bonus pool) in May 2017 to land Robert. Damaged ligaments in his left thumb limited him to 50 games this summer, but Robert's five-tool potential was obvious. He has electric bat speed, well above-average foot speed and the range and arm strength to play anywhere in the outfield.

## AL West

A's: [Grant Holmes](#), RHP ([OAK No. 15](#))

A right shoulder injury wiped out much of Holmes' year, but he did manage to return for two starts during the final week of the regular season and then fired four no-hit frames for Class A Advanced Stockton in the California League playoffs. The 22-year-old righty had been a workhorse before getting hurt, logging a combined 282 1/3 frames during the 2016-17 seasons.

Angels: [Jahmai Jones](#), OF ([LAA No. 4](#))

Things didn't exactly go according to plan for Jones in his third full season of pro ball, as he saw his batting average and OPS drop considerably from 2017. On the plus side, his walk rate did go up, and he reached double digits in home runs (10) and steals (24) while reaching Double-A

before his 21st birthday. Jones did all that while making the transition from the outfield to second base.

Astros: Forrest Whitley, RHP ([HOU No. 1](#); MLB No. 8)

MLBPipeline's highest-rated pitching prospect, Whitley worked just 26 1/3 innings this season because of a 50-game suspension for violating the Minor League drug program and oblique and lat injuries. When he did take the mound, Whitley continued to show the ability to miss bats with four pitches: a lively mid-90s fastball, a 12-to-6 curveball, a power slider and a fading changeup.

Mariners: Evan White, 1B ([SEA No. 2](#))

The Mariners' 2017 first-rounder was a force during the second half as he slashed .320/.400/.512 with eight home runs, 16 doubles and 40 RBIs over his final 64 games in the California League. He's yet to hit for much power, but there's a lot to like in White's ability to hit for average and get on base in addition to his near-elite defense at first base.

Rangers: Julio Pablo Martinez, OF ([TEX No. 2](#); MLB No. 56)

When the Rangers failed to sign [Shohei Ohtani](#), they used their surplus international bonus pool money to sign Martinez for \$2.8 million in March. He's a well above-average runner who plays a fine center field, and he has more power than a typical 174-pounder thanks to his bat speed and strong hands and wrists. Unlike most Fall League players, Martinez has yet to play in a full-season league after spending most of his pro debut at short-season Spokane.

## NL East

Braves: Cristian Pache, OF ([ATL No. 6](#); MLB No. 68)

After taking a big step forward offensively in the Florida State League (.285/.311/.431), Pache earned a promotion to Double-A at age 19 in August. He held his own, especially at the outset, but finished the season 1-for-22. One of the best defensive outfield prospects in the game, a stint in Fall League will help Pache hit the ground running back in Double-A in 2018.

Marlins: [Monte Harrison](#), OF ([MIA No. 1](#))

The tooled-up Harrison improved his stock as much as any player in last year's Fall League, showing a power-speed combo that ultimately led to him being acquired from the Brewers in the offseason [Christian Yelich](#) trade. It was on display again in the 22-year-old's first Double-A campaign, as Harrison totaled 19 homers and 28 steals but also struck out in 36.9 percent of his plate appearances.

Mets: Andres Gimenez, SS ([NYM No. 1](#); MLB No. 55)

The Mets don't shy away from pushing their young players aggressively, and Gimenez has responded, reaching Double-A before he turned 20 and putting up his best offensive numbers (.281/.347/.409) stateside. The 2018 Futures Gamer is a tremendous defender at a premium position, and while he likely will never have a ton of pop, he's starting to grow into more extra-base thump at the plate.

Nationals: Carter Kieboom, SS ([WAS No. 2](#); MLB No. 39)

Keiboom was plagued by injuries during his first full season but put it all together this year to reach the Double-A level at age 20. Playing in 123 games across two levels, the 2016 first-round pick hit .280/.357/.444 with 16 home runs and 31 doubles.

Phillies: Sixto Sanchez, RHP ([PHI No. 1](#); MLB No. 21)

Sanchez has one of the most electric arms of any pitching prospect in baseball, with the chance to have three above-average to plus pitches when all is said and done. His climb to the top of the pitching prospect rankings was slowed by elbow inflammation in 2018, limiting him to just 46 2/3 innings. Sanchez hasn't pitched since June 3, so the innings in Arizona could help him make the jump to Double-A next year.

## NL Central

Brewers: Keston Hiura, 2B ([MIL No. 1](#); MLB No. 30)

The best pure hitter in the 2017 Draft lived up to his reputation in his first full season by hitting .291 with 13 homers and 33 doubles while reaching Double-A in his first full season. The Brewers already have the 22-year-old second baseman on the fast track to the Major Leagues, and the hope is that he'll get a jumpstart on the 2019 season with a productive campaign in Fall League. Hiura also stands to benefit from additional work at second base after lingering issues with his throwing elbow limited him to DH duties for the first month-plus this season.

Cardinals: [Conner Greene](#), RHP ([STL No. 27](#))

In his first season with the Cardinals after coming over from the Blue Jays in the [Randal Grichuk](#) trade, Greene was so-so as a starter in Double-A. He improved somewhat with a move to the bullpen and a bump up to Triple-A and has the power repertoire to excel in that role. Greene'll continue to work on the transition to relief in Fall League while hoping to improve his command (6.4 BB/9 in 2018).

Cubs: Nico Hoerner, SS ([CHC No. 6](#))

The Cubs' first-round pick (24th overall) in June, Hoerner is the top 2018 Draft pick playing in Arizona. Though he played just 14 games in his pro debut before straining ligaments in his left elbow while diving for a ball, that was long enough to show why scouts considered him one of the best offensive-minded middle infielders available. Hoerner has exceptional hand-eye coordination, an advanced approach and developing power.

Pirates: Cole Tucker, SS ([PIT No. 5](#))

A broken thumb kept Tucker, an Arizona native, from attending Fall League a year ago, but now he's ready to go. The tall and athletic shortstop tied for the system lead in stolen bases with 35, his third year of 25 or more steals. Tucker was swinging a hot bat at the end of the season, including hitting a pair of playoff homers for Double-A Altoona.

Reds: Taylor Trammell, OF ([CIN No. 3](#); MLB No. 17)

The Futures Game MVP has all the tools needed to be an elite-level player and finished third in the organization with 25 steals despite missing some time with a concussion in August. Trammell has an advanced approach at the plate (career .372 OBP) and is still learning to tap into his power. The 21-year-old could see time in all three outfield spots this fall.

## NL West

D-backs: Jon Duplantier, RHP ([ARI No. 1](#); MLB No. 80)

Durability concerns coming out of Rice forced Duplantier down to the third round of the 2016 Draft, but he answered those questions with a huge first full season across two levels and a trip

to the Futures Game. While he pitched well in 2018, biceps tendinitis forced him out for nearly two months, so the right-hander is making up for lost innings in Fall League.

Dodgers: Keibert Ruiz, C ([LAD No. 2](#); MLB No. 39)

One of the game's best catching prospects, Ruiz held his own offensively this year as the second-youngest regular (age 19 for most of the season) in the Double-A Texas League. He's a switch-hitter with advanced feel for the barrel and developing power, with most of his home runs coming as a left-hander. Ruiz is improving defensively and could become a solid receiver with arm strength to match.

Giants: Heath Quinn, OF ([SF No. 10](#))

The second-highest pick (third round) in Samford history behind only Phil Ervin, Quinn has a similar offensive profile but has had difficulty staying healthy in pro ball. Hamate and shoulder injuries affected his first full pro season, while a hamstring strain sidelined him for a month in 2018. He drives the ball to all fields and has deceptive athleticism for a 6-foot-3, 220-pounder, showing solid speed once he gets going.

Padres: Buddy Reed, OF ([SD No. 13](#))

The 2016 second-rounder struggled in his first pro season but rebounded in 2018 to hit .271 with 48 extra-base hits and 51 steals in 122 games between two levels including Double-A. The 6-foot-4, 210-pounder boasts some of the best tools in this year's Fall League, though questions remain about his hitting ability.

Rockies: Sam Hilliard, OF ([COL No. 9](#))

First drafted by the Twins as a left-handed pitcher out of Crowder (Mo.) JC in 2014, Hilliard signed as an outfielder after a year at Wichita State in 2015. He's still somewhat raw at the plate, but Rockies officials once likened him to Larry Walker because he's a tooled-up right fielder who bats from the left side. Hilliard has plus raw power, speed and arm strength, giving him 20-20 potential and the ability to play anywhere in the outfield.

# Padres part ways with reliever Jose Torres

Kevin Acee

The Padres quietly parted ways with relief pitcher [Jose Torres](#), designating him for assignment on Tuesday.

Torres was placed on the suspended list shortly before [spring training following a December incident](#) in which he was arrested and charged with domestic assault. He was [suspended for 100 games](#) on June 8 for violating the domestic violence policy set forth by [MLB](#) and the MLBPA.

Torres, 25, was arrested Dec. 23 in Phoenix after an incident in which, according to court records, he brandished a weapon and punched a hole in a door during an argument with his wife.

Torres was charged with assault with a deadly weapon, criminal damage and making threats or intimidation.

The case has been delayed several times. According to the Maricopa County website, three of the charges have been dismissed. Charges of assault with a deadly weapon and criminal damage are pending. Torres' trial is scheduled to begin Oct. 15.

The Padres have seven days from the time Torres was DFA'd to trade him or place him on waivers. After the seven days, if he has cleared waivers, he can be sent to the minors or released. The Padres are expected to release Torres.

The left-hander, acquired by the Padres in late 2015 as part of the [Yonder Alonso-Drew Pomeranz](#) trade with Oakland, had a 4.21 ERA over 68 1/3 innings in 2017.