



Padres Press Clips

Sunday, February 25, 2018

Article	Source	Author	Page
Padres veteran pitchers, prospects show their stuff in loss to A's	SD Union Tribune	Acee	2
Gabriel Arias, 17, plays in Padres spring training game	SD Union Tribune	Acee	3
Tyson Ross works through two innings in Padres re-debut	SD Union Tribune	Acee	5
Chris Young likes what he sees in return to Padres	SD Union Tribune	Acee	7
Ross, Young trying to rejuvenate careers	MLB.com	Cassavell	8
Different approaches for prospect bats, arms	MLB.com	Cassavell	10
Veterans Chris Young, Tyson Ross make solid first impressions in bid for spot in San Diego rotation	The Athletic	Lin	12
Ross, Young Return to Mound for Padres	NBC7	Togerson	14

Padres veteran pitchers, prospects show their stuff in loss to A's

Kevin Acee, SDUT, 2/24/18

Score: A's 8, Padres 3

Batters box: A day after Fernando Tatis Jr. homered in the spring opener, the Padres' No. 1 prospect struck out in each of his three at-bats Saturday. ... Franchy Cordero, still considered one of the Padres' top "prospects" even though he played in 30 games for the Padres in the middle of last season, hit the third pitch he saw down the right field line and over the fence. ... Manuel Margot was 1-for-3 with an RBI single in his spring debut. ... The Padres followed Friday's six-hit effort with five hits Friday.

Balls and strikes: Former Padres Tyson Ross and Chris Young made their re-debuts with the team, working two innings apiece. Ross struck out the side around a solo homer in the first and allowed another run on two singles and a walk in the second. Young walked one in two hitless innings. The veterans are vying for what could be one or two spots in the starting rotation.

Extra bases: Gabriel Arias, who will turn 18 on Tuesday, struck out twice after entering as a defensive replacement in the fifth inning. He also made a spectacular play on a grounder. ... Javier Guerra, a 20-year-old shortstop who has split time between Single-A and Double-A since being acquired in the Craig Kimbrel trade in 2015, made a diving stop of a grounder over the second base bag and flipped the ball from his glove for an out at second base in the sixth. It might have been a double play had 20-year-old Luis Urias received the ball cleanly. ... Second baseman Cory Spangenberg dove to rob Franklin Barreto on a line drive up the middle for the first out of the third inning.

On Deck: At the Los Angeles Angels, 12:10 PT at Tempe Diablo Stadium. Bryan Mitchell, acquired from the Yankees in the deal that also brought Chase Headley back, will make his debut. Mitchell has been handed a rotation spot for the first time in his career.

Gabriel Arias, 17, plays in Padres spring training game

Kevin Acee, SDUT, 2/24/18

Gabriel Arias will turn 18 on Tuesday.

On Saturday, he made a diving grab on a grounder to third base and threw out a runner in the eighth inning of a major league spring training game.

The Venezuelan also struck out in two trips to the plate, including a meek swing and miss on a pitch that darted down and away to end the Padres' 8-3 loss to the Oakland A's.

"He's going to be good," manager Andy Green said. "He should be in high school class right now instead of playing in major league spring training games at 17 years old. That play he made down the line is pretty special. Offensively, he's made a huge adjustment with his hands where I saw them previously, where his launch position is. He's going to be fine. He's not used to 3-2 sliders in (8-3) baseball games. That's like, 'Welcome to the big leagues.' He'll get used to that kind of stuff."

The exposure of Arias and numerous other prospects to a major league atmosphere is a big part of what Padres camp has been about, especially before many veterans begin playing regularly in Cactus League games.

There is no bad in this exercise. There is just learning, like the education of free swinging 19-year-old Fernando Tatis Jr. A day after subbing in and hitting a home run in his debut, the Padres' top minor league prospect started at shortstop and struck out all three times he batted against the A's.

"The experience is great for them," Green said.

Also playing the final few innings Saturday were second baseman Luis Urias and first baseman Josh Naylor, both 20. Hudson Potts, 19, played in Friday's spring opener.

Potts and Arias are among the prospects up from minor league minicamp who have for the past couple days been doing drills in big-league camp in the morning. Also working with the major leaguers on Saturday morning were 17-year-olds Justin Lopez and Tirso Ornelas.

“We’re trying to build a culture where you build continuity,” Green said. “The way you have that is if Chase Headley has Hudson Potts standing next to him, because maybe Hudson Potts is our third baseman in a few years. That said, he’s got a long way to go. So does Gabe Arias. ... They’re incredibly talented young baseball players.”

Tyson Ross works through two innings in Padres re-debut

Kevin Acee, SDUT, 2/24/18

This was a big deal because it happened.

That Tyson Ross struck out the side around a solo homer in the first, that he threw a lot of pitches and was touched for another run in the second, those things hardly mattered.

“I was just getting back into game situations,” Ross said Saturday afternoon after working the first two innings of the Padres’ Cactus League game against the Oakland A’s. “... Overall, it’s good to just be playing baseball. It’s a lot different than live BPs and bullpens that I’ve been throwing for the last few months, you get in a game situation where you have to react, roll with the punches.”

Ross, one of a half-dozen pitchers in the mix for what might be just one open spot in the starting rotation, was an All-Star for the Padres in 2014. He had a 2.81 ERA over 195 2/3 innings that year. He followed it up with a 3.26 over 196 innings in 2015.

One of the first things Andy Green decided in his first year as manager was that Ross would be his opening day pitcher in 2016.

Ross struggled in the spring, surrendered eight runs in the season’s first game and never pitched again that season. He signed with the Rangers last year, made the first of his 10 starts in mid-June, was moved to the bullpen for a couple games and released Sept. 12.

“I’m prepared this spring,” Ross said. “I had a nice long offseason to do the strength training I needed, get the throwing in. I’m in a good spot physically. Last year, I felt like I was playing catch-up the whole time. It’s hard to do at any level, let alone the big-league level. Right now, I’m physically prepared. Now, I’m just trying to get my reps in, and I’m honing my movement in my pitches, get ready for the season.”

Generally reserved this early in camp regarding pitchers, Green has seemed genuinely thrilled with how strong and unfettered Ross has appeared.

“Everything looked like it hurt,” Green said Saturday morning. “Through when he was trying to come back and then last year, as well, it didn’t look like it was free. There is a freeness to the stroke now that looks better. He’s just got to get on the mound and face hitters and get going. I’m not going to read too much into whatever the results are today. It’s a matter of getting on the mound, executing pitches and feeling good physically. And then we’ll start evaluating.”

Chris Young likes what he sees in return to Padres

Kevin Acee, SDUT, 2/24/18

Chris Young led the National League by limiting opponents to a .206 batting average in 2006, going 11-5 in 31 starts for the Padres in the franchise's most recent playoff campaign.

Young, an All-Star in '07, has been through a lot since then, in a career he is attempting to extend to a 14th season. He was the American League's Comeback Player of the Year in 2014. He won a World Series ring in '15.

On Saturday, he was pitching in a spring training game back with the team for which he started 97 games from '06-10.

He's noticed a difference in the franchise.

"Now you feel like there's sort of a vibe, an attitude (like), 'Hey, we've lost long enough; it's time to start winning here.'" Young said. "There's the talent to do so, the attitude is right, and I think the leadership is there to do it as well. It's up to us as players to get it done, and I hope to be a part of it."

If he builds off the two scoreless innings he dealt against the Oakland A's, he just might be.

Because he noticed a difference in himself, too.

"There were some positives — things I wasn't seeing much of in terms of pop-ups and swings and misses on my fastball," Young said after throwing two hitless innings with a walk and a strikeout.

Young, who was released by the Royals in June and spent the summer and fall working on mechanics, appeared to flash some of his old deception. The 6-foot-10 right-hander hiding the ball in his delivery and having the pitch get on batters before they know it is the key to his success. His fastball hasn't consistently hit 90 mph since 2007.

"I felt like there were a couple times I fell behind in the count — 2-0, 2-1 — challenged them with heaters, got swings and misses or foul balls," Young said. "That's a good sign for me when I can challenge a guy with a fastball. Last couple years, that hasn't been the case. It's early, my stuff will continue to get better, and my command will get better, and I hopefully won't fall behind as much

Ross, Young trying to rejuvenate careers

AJ Cassavell, MLB.com, 2/24/18

MESA, Ariz. -- Once upon a time, **Chris Young** and **Tyson Ross** were All-Stars in San Diego, anchors in the Padres' rotation across multiple seasons.

That time has come and gone. On Saturday, Ross took the hill for two innings in an 8-3 Cactus League defeat against Oakland. Young followed with two innings of his own. Both looked sharp, for the most part. But both have work to do this spring if they're to earn a place in the Opening Day rotation.

The roster math isn't favorable for either of them. Three rotation places are up for grabs, and **Dinelson Lamet** and **Luis Perdomo** have the early edge for two of those spots. That could leave six pitchers fighting for one job.

"Today was a great start for both of them," said Padres manager Andy Green. "They're definitely squarely in the mix."

Neither Ross nor Young is concerned about that race just yet. Both are shaking off some rust. Young was released by the Royals in June, and Ross suffered the same fate with Texas in September.

Young worked two scoreless frames on Saturday, surrendering only a walk. Ross, meanwhile, ran into some trouble, allowing two runs on three hits. But he struck out four.

The 30-year-old Ross last pitched for San Diego on Opening Day 2016. He was knocked around by the Dodgers and placed on the disabled list a few days later with a shoulder strain. He wouldn't pitch again that season, before undergoing October surgery to address thoracic outlet syndrome.

It was a bit of a hurried recovery for Ross, who slumped to a 7.71 ERA in 12 appearances for Texas in 2017. He's convinced things are different this year.

"I'm prepared this spring," said Ross. "I had a nice long offseason to do the strength training I needed, get the throwing in. I'm in a good spot physically. Last year, I felt like I was playing catch-up the whole time."

If anyone knows what vintage Tyson Ross looks like, it's the man who caught him Saturday. Former Dodger **A.J. Ellis** mustered just two singles in 14 at-bats, while striking out eight times against Ross.

"Tyson was always my nemesis," Ellis said. "It seemed like I guessed wrong every time, because his fastball and slider look so much the same to me. It's nice to be able to put a finger down and know what's coming. ... I don't notice too much of a difference. I just know the ball is coming out really well."

Like Ross, Young is fighting to find his old form. He, too, hasn't been particularly effective over the past two years. At 38, however, Young faces somewhat longer odds.

He looked up to the challenge on Day 1. Young's calling card has always been his ability to induce weak contact on pitches up in the zone. He recorded four easy fly-ball outs Saturday.

"I'm competing against myself," Young said. "My goal is to be the best I can be. I don't worry about stuff externally. If I go out and pitch like I have when I've been good in my career, I feel like I should be a big league pitcher."

Ross feels the same way. Surely, **Matt Strahm, Colin Rea, Robbie Erlin** and **Jordan Lyles** do, too. Realistically, however, only one or two places are available for them.

"It's a long list of guys," Green said. "It's going to be a good battle. ... Last spot I'd say is absolutely wide open."

Different approaches for prospect bats, arms

AJ Cassavell, MLB.com, 2/24/18

PEORIA, Ariz. -- With one of the Majors' youngest spring rosters, the Padres will take a different tack preparing their pitchers and their hitters over the next month.

Offensively, they've thrust their youngsters straight into the fire. A handful of top hitting prospects have taken center stage through two games, with regulars being eased along slowly.

On the mound, however, the Padres are going to take things slower with the quartet of top prospects they've invited to camp. **Cal Quantrill**, **Joey Lucchesi**, **Eric Lauer** and **Jacob Nix** comprised an impressive Double-A rotation last season, and all four have a chance to debut later this year.

"We're looking at their season long term, not necessarily looking at how many Cactus League innings we can get them," said Padres manager Andy Green. "The expectation is, if they throw the ball the way we think they can, that some, if not all, of them will be pitching for us at the end of the year. That means the longest year they've ever had. Extending them to get them into Feb. 24-25 games doesn't make any sense."

Prospects combined for four of San Diego's six hits in Friday's opener, including Fernando Tatis' opposite-field homer and **Luis Urias**' double off the wall. Josh Naylor and **Javier Guerra** also got in on the action with a pair of singles.

In Saturday's 8-3 loss to Oakland, however, Tatis whiffed three times in three at-bats, while Guerra and Urias botched a sixth-inning double-play ball. It won't be the last time growing pains are on display this month.

The Padres are also making a point to bring Minor Leaguers into big league camp for a glimpse into the inner workings. Friday, it was Potts. Saturday, 17-year-olds Gabriel Arias and Justin Lopez got a taste of the action.

"We're trying to build a culture where you build continuity," said Green. "The way you have that is if **Chase Headley** has Hudson Potts standing next to him -- because maybe Hudson Potts is our third baseman in a few years. That said, he's got a long way to go. So does Gabe Arias. ... But they're incredibly talented young baseball players."

Arias even got some game action, striking out twice, but making an excellent pick at third base before unleashing a rocket across the diamond.

Cordero goes yard

This offseason, Franchy Cordero was named MVP of the Dominican Winter League. On Saturday, he picked up where he left off. In his first at-bat of the spring, Cordero smashed a missile down the right-field line that stayed just inside the foul pole.

Cordero is squarely in the mix for a spot in the Padres outfield, where he could back up at all three spots. He'll need to lower his strikeout rate, but he brings speed, defense and plenty of pop.

"That's impressive athletic ability," Green said. "He flies around the field and he's got easy power."

Makita nearing debut

Right-hander Kazuhisa Makita is slated to throw one more live batting practice session before he makes his first appearance in a Padres uniform -- potentially on March 1 against Texas. Don't be surprised if he's held back after that.

The Padres are committed to keeping Makita out of game action against National League West opposition. Even by sidearming standards, his delivery is unique. He comes inches from scraping the dirt with his knuckles, and he peppers all parts of the strike zone with his six-pitch arsenal.

It's a look few hitters in the Majors have seen before (as evidenced by the spirited reactions to his live BP session Friday). And the Padres will do everything they can to maximize that deceptiveness.

Outfielders ailing

Matt Szczur and **Alex Dickerson** have been limited, as they battle through injuries early in camp. Szczur is having oblique trouble, while Dickerson has a balky elbow, and both are day to day.

Dickerson's ailment is unrelated to the back injury that cost him the entirety of his 2017 season. Coming off surgery, Dickerson was always going to be eased back into action, and the Padres noted he isn't going to receive everyday playing time this season anyway.

Both Dickerson and Szczur are in the mix for a backup role in the outfield. Meanwhile, shortstop **Allen Cordoba** is nearing a return to action after being sidelined with a concussion during the first week.

Up next

Bryan Mitchell spent his first eight professional seasons in the Yankees organization. He made his Majors debut in 2014, but played only sporadically, limited by injuries and inconsistency. In New York, there simply weren't enough innings to go around.

There's plenty of opportunity in the San Diego rotation, and the Padres have committed to Mitchell as a piece of their future. He'll make his first start for his new organization on Sunday when the Padres head to Tempe to face the Angels. First pitch is slated for 12:10 p.m. PT.

"This is pretty much what I've been trying to get to for the last three or four years," Mitchell said of his starting role. "I've kind of been stuck in that back-and-forth spot. This is exactly what I need, and I'm so honored they were able to give me the chance."

Veterans Chris Young, Tyson Ross make solid first impressions in bid for spot in San Diego rotation

Dennis Lin, The Athletic, 2/24/18

MESA, Ariz. — In a corner of the visiting clubhouse at Hohokam Stadium, Chris Young shed his uniform, eased into a pair of shorts and offered a tidy summation of two Cactus League innings.

“Rusty, a lot of room for improvement,” the towering right-hander said, “but you don’t want to have your best outing on February whatever-it-is.”

The 38-year-old wields the benefit of experience. If his minor league deal with the Padres produces the intended result, this season will be his 14th in the majors.

Saturday’s Cactus League bout, an 8-3 loss to Oakland, was not entirely devoid of significance. Young and another veteran starter made their unofficial returns to pitching for the Padres. Tyson Ross, also working on a minor league deal, started the game and gave up two runs over as many innings. Young followed with a pair of scoreless frames.

Ross’ last official appearance with San Diego was April 4, 2016. He departed that opening-day start after the worst showing of his career. The former All-Star never pitched again that season. Late in the year, he opted for surgery to address thoracic outlet syndrome.

Young underwent the same operation in 2013, three years after shoulder problems wrecked his final season in San Diego. The former All-Star earned Major League Baseball’s Comeback Player of the Year Award in 2014, submitted another solid season and faded over the next two campaigns.

Now, both pitchers are back in the Padres’ clubhouse, drawn by familiarity and an opportunity to quench their competitive thirst. Saturday, Andy Green declared himself encouraged by both performances. In response to a question, he described one rotation job as “wide open.” He indicated that, for all the promise Dinelson Lamet and Luis Perdomo showed last season, strong springs from others could muddle the picture.

If Ross truly is himself again, the 30-year-old could present the strongest case among a half-dozen or so pitchers who entered camp with minimal assurances. The right-hander was released by the Rangers in September, while he was still grappling with the recovery from a major procedure. Early in camp, he has looked closer to the pitcher he was before 2016.

“I had a nice long offseason to do the strength training I needed, get the throwing in,” Ross said. “I’m in a good spot physically. Last year, I felt like I was playing catch-up the whole time. It’s hard to do at any level, let alone the big-league level. Right now, I’m physically prepared.”

In Saturday’s initial frame, he yielded a solo home run to Franklin Barreto. He also struck out the other three batters he faced. He allowed two hits and a walk in the second. He finished with four strikeouts.

“I thought his slider had great shape to left-handed hitters,” Green said. “Looks like he’s feeling for it a little bit to righties. But overall, he’s punching guys out with a slider and a high fastball.”

The A’s made solid contact against Young on a couple of occasions, but aside from a walk, his line was unblemished.

“First time out, it felt like the ball had life,” said Young, who struck out a batter. “That’s kind of what I was looking for. Got some popups, a few swings and misses, and guys made great plays as well.”

“He won where he has to win to be good,” Green said. “He won up in the strike zone, he won in to righties. That’s a great sign.”

Presently, Clayton Richard, another veteran, and Bryan Mitchell, a newcomer acquired from the Yankees, are the only locks for the opening-day rotation. Candidates to join them include Robbie Erlin, Colin Rea, Jordan Lyles and Matt Strahm, whom Green labeled “outstanding” in live batting practice Saturday morning.

As for Lamet and Perdomo, the manager said the two youngsters will “have to show some things this spring.” Green added that, based on last year, Lamet is slightly ahead of Perdomo.

That rhetoric may have a motivational bent, even as a pair of former All-Stars may find motivation in being underestimated.

“They’re definitely squarely in the mix,” Green said of Ross and Young. “I don’t know how it’s all going to play out.”

Notes

-Padres outfielder Franchy Cordero turned on a first-inning pitch, lining a home run to right in his first Cactus League at-bat of the spring. Green sat Cordero in Friday’s opener, after what was a busy offseason for the Dominican Winter League MVP.

“He was mad he didn’t play yesterday,” Green said. “He looks great.”

Cordero, who offers a rare package of power and speed, could make the roster as a corner outfielder. Alternatively, he could provide backup at all three outfield slots or serve in platoon roles. His plate discipline remains in question, but his potential continues to intrigue scouts.

-A reminder that even the most talented teenagers face a steep learning curve: After homering Friday, top prospect Fernando Tatis, 19, went 0-for-3 with three strikeouts. Fellow shortstop Gabriel Arias, temporarily up for a taste of the Cactus League, whiffed in both of his at-bats.

Arias, who turns 18 on Tuesday, did make a crowd-pleasing play while manning third base.

“He’s going to be good,” Green said. “He should be in high school class right now instead of playing in major league spring training games.”

-Outfielders Alex Dickerson (elbow) and Matt Szczur (oblique) are currently limited, though neither is believed to have a significant injury. Pitching prospect Jacob Nix has been on a slower progression as he deals with leg soreness. Infielder Allen Cordoba (concussion) could resume baseball activities in the near future.

Ross, Young Return to Mound for Padres

Derek Togerson, NBC7, 2/24/18

The focus on Spring Training 2018 for the Padres is on the youth movement (plus one large free agent), and rightfully so. The list of prospects in camp is impressive.

But don't forget about the "old" guys. On Saturday a pair of familiar faces returned to the mound for the Friars looking to extend their careers with another run in San Diego.

Tyson Ross and Chris Young both pitched against the A's in an 8-3 Oakland win. Ross started and struck out four in 2.0 innings. But he gave up a pair of runs, one of them coming on a solo homer by A's shortstop Franklin Barreto.

Young followed Ross and looked pretty darn good. CY tossed an efficient 2.0 innings, allowing no hits with one walk and one strikeout. Both Young and Ross are among eight or nine guys going after three spots in the Padres five-man starting rotation. Clayton Richard and Bryan Mitchell are the only ones who have locked up a starting job while Dinelson Lamet and Luis Perdomo have the inside track on two more.

Offensively the Padres got a big blast from Franchy Cordero. One of the franchise's better outfield prospects, Cordero ripped a 2-run HR off A's starter Andrew Triggs in his first Cactus League at-bat. Franchy had a 30-game cup of coffee with the Padres last year and is coming off an MVP performance in the Dominican Winter League so he's put himself in the hunt for an Opening Day roster spot.

San Diego got its other run in the 2nd inning on an RBI single by centerfielder Manuel Margot to take a 3-1 lead but after that the youngsters played like youngsters. Errors by 23-year-old pitcher Walker Lockett, 17-year-old infielder Gabriel Arias, and 20-year-old infielder Luis Urias led to four unearned runs for Oakland.

The Padres fall to 0-2 in Cactus League play. They head to Tempe to play the Angels on Sunday with Mitchell making his National League debut. The Friars will not see Shohei Ohtani on the mound. The super prospect that chose the Angels instead of the Friars threw on Saturday, allowing two runs in 1.1 innings against the Brewers.