



Padres Press Clips

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Article	Source	Author	Pg.
Padres roster review: Carlos Asuaje	SD Union Tribune	Sanders	2
#PadresOnDeck: Potts Advancing, but is Padres 2019 Third Baseman on Roster Yet?	FriarWire	Center	4

Padres roster review: Carlos Asuaje

Jeff Sanders

Sizing up the [Padres](#)' 40-man roster, from A to Z, heading into the 2019 season:

CARLOS ASUAJE

- **Position(s):** Second base, third base
- **2019 Opening Day age:** 27
- **Bats/throws:** L / R
- **Height/weight:** 5-foot-9 / 158 pounds
- **Acquired:** From the Red Sox in November 2015 trade
- **Contract status:** Earned at rate of \$550,100 while in the majors in 2018; will not be arbitration-eligible until 2024 at the earliest.
- **Key stats:** .196 avg., .286 OBP, .280 SLG, 2 HRs, 19 RBIs, 15 runs, 1 steal, 24 walks, 46 strikeouts (79 games, 218 Abs)

STAT TO NOTE

- **.243** – [Asuaje](#)'s batting average on balls in play in 2018, down more than 100 points (.346) from when he hit .270/.334/.362 in 2017. Asuaje walked more last year (11 percent, up from 8.2), struck out a bit less frequently (21.1 percent, down from 22.2) and hit balls harder more often (35.4 percent, up from 28.7), suggesting that there was plenty of bad luck in a down 2018.

TRENDING

- **Down** – After flirting with a .700 OPS in his rookie campaign in 2017, the left-handed-hitting Asuaje – who joined the organization with **Manuel Margot**, **Logan Allen** and **Javy Guerra** in the **Craig Kimbrel** trade – entered [spring training](#) competing with **Cory Spangenberg** for the starting job at second base. He broke camp on the big league roster, but was hitting .193/.256/.284 by mid-May and spent much of the rest of the season bouncing between San Diego and Triple-A El Paso. In the Pacific Coast League, Asuaje was as effective as ever – .314/.386/.463 – but failed to lock down a regular role. He was an automatic out in his few opportunities and against left-handers (.330 OPS in 60 plate appearances) and not nearly productive enough against righties (.659 OPS) to guarantee him even a bench role going forward. In fact, Asuaje was optioned to El Paso one last time at the end of August and did not return as a September call-up even when prospect **Luis Urias** injured his hamstring 12 games into his major league debut.

2019 OUTLOOK

- Even before a disappointing 2018, Asuaje was thought of as a stop-gap until Urias arrived, which finally occurred in late August. Asuaje remains a candidate to win a job as a left-handed bat off the bench, although he'll face stiff competition from a more accomplished **Greg Garcia's** arrival on a waiver claim last month. The 29-year-old Garcia is also left-handed, capable of playing shortstop, has a .696 OPS over parts of five seasons and already opened the door for Spangenberg's release. The margin of error for Asuaje could be thin in 2019.

PADRES POWER RANKINGS

(Currently 40 players on the 40-man roster)

1. [Austin Allen](#)
2. Carlos Asuaje

#PadresOnDeck: Potts Advancing, but is Padres 2019 Third Baseman on Roster Yet?

Dec 3

By Bill Center

Going into baseball's annual Winter Meetings later this week, the Padres have two huge holes to fill on the left side of the infield — third base as well as shortstop.

We've already discussed shortstop. Eventually, the position will go to **Fernando Tatis Jr.** But who will start the 2019 season at the second-toughest position on the field? Could they still resign **Freddy Galvis** as a free agent? Might **Luis Urías** start his first full Major League season at short rather than his natural position of second base?

Well, it won't be **Jean Segura** at short. The rumored trade between the Padres and Mariners that could have brought Segura to San Diego officially evaporated over last weekend when the shortstop was traded to Philadelphia.

So, shortstop is still open.

And so is third base.

The Padres have already bid adios to two starters at the position last season. Both **Christian Villanueva** (90 starts at third) and **Cory Spangenberg** (29) have been released.

Wil Myers started 36 games at third late last season as an experiment to see if that is an option for the future. The initial results were not positive.

Pending an off-season move, Myers is the leader in the clubhouse at third with minor-league veteran — and San Diego State product — **Ty France** the leading option. Some in the Padres' front-office family believe **Francisco Mejía** could be a standout at third, although the 23-year-old [No. 3 prospect](#) prefers to remain at catcher.

So . . . anything could happen at third base.

There was even speculation at the end of last season that Fernando Tatis Jr. — ranked the [Padres' N^o1 prospect by MLB Pipeline](#) as well as the [N^o2 prospect in all of the minor leagues](#) — might make his Major League debut as third for the Padres. But that was when speculation was stronger that the Padres would re-sign Galvis.

The Padres' depth chart at third base is not as deep as other positions.

France has steadily advanced through the system and finished the 2018 season with a strong cameo at Triple-A El Paso after a solid, if unspectacular, start at Double-A San Antonio.

The Padres have one Top-30 prospect at third base. That would be **Hudson Potts**, who is ranked the [N^o23 prospect in the system](#). But Potts didn't reach his 20th birthday until this past Oct. 28. He might not be ready to start the 2019 season any higher than Double-A Amarillo.

But the Padres had eight different players play third for Single-A Fort Wayne last season. And a total of 18 players — many of them listed as shortstops or second basemen — started at third base at the four lowest divisions of the Padres' minor league system in 2018.

Here's a look at third base for the Padres in 2019 as it stands now:

— Wil Myers, who turns 28 on Dec. 10, has already started at every position except catcher in his injury interrupted four seasons with the Padres and closed the 2018 season at third base.

But is third base a sustainable position for the 6-foot-3, right-handed hitter?

Myers didn't look sharp in third late last season, although he didn't debut at the position until August with little advance practice. He made six errors in 36 games and didn't field some hit balls that were ruled hits. Overall, he didn't look totally comfortable at third.

Overall, Myers hit .253 last season with 25 doubles, a triple, 11 homers, 39 RBIs and a .763 OPS in 312 at-bats around three trips to the disabled list. But he hit only .232 with 12 doubles, two homers and a .681 in his 36 games while playing third base.

— Ty France, 24, was a recent addition to the Padres' 40-man roster. The 6-foot, 215-pound, right-handed hitter was a 34th-round pick in the 2015 Draft out of San Diego State.

France has never hit as high as .280 over a full season in the minor leagues. But he has improved annually and last season batted .267 with a .464 slugging percentage and a .820 OPS with 30 doubles, two triples, 22 homers, 96 RBIs and 84 runs scored between Double-A and Triple-A El Paso.

In 25 games at the end of the season with the Chihuahuas, France hit .287 with a .382 on-base percentage and a .532 slugging percentage for a .914 OPS. He had eight doubles and five homers with 19 RBIs and 18 runs scored in 94 at-bats.

— Hudson Potts was one of three first-round picks (24th overall) by the Padres in the 2016 Draft. He advanced to Double-A last year when France was promoted to Triple-A.

Potts hit only .154 with no doubles and two homers in 78 at-bats at San Antonio.

But in 106 games as a 19-year-old at Advanced Single-A Lake Elsinore, Potts had a slash line of .281/.350/.498/.847 with 35 doubles, a triple, 17 homers and 58 RBIs in 106 games and 406 at-bats.

Among all the shortstops who spent time at third in the lower echelons of the Padres' system this season, the most interesting as a possible third baseman could be **Owen Miller**.

Miller is 22 and was the Padres' third-round draft pick (84th overall) last June out of Illinois State University. The 6-foot-1, 190-pound, right-handed hitter batted .336 with a .386 on-base percentage, a .460 slugging percentage and a .846 OPS in 75 games split between Short-Season Single-A Tri-City and Fort Wayne. He had 19 doubles, three triples and four homers for 33 RBIs.

With the wealth of shortstops in the Padres' system, Miller's fastest path for advancement could be as a third baseman.